

VOICES

LEADING THE WAY

**EXPERIENCES
REGARDING
THE INTERSECTION
BETWEEN**

**ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE AND**

**ECONOMIC AUTONOMY
OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN**



FIMI

**ma
ma
cash**

**VOICES LEADING THE WAY:
EXPERIENCES REGARDING THE
INTERSECTION BETWEEN
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND
ECONOMIC AUTONOMY OF
INDIGENOUS WOMEN**

General Coordination:

Teresa Zapeta

FIMI's Executive Director

Nadezhda (Nadia) Fenly

Program Coordinator of Research and Impact Themes in the Life of Indigenous Women.

Authors:

Community Indigenous Researchers, participants of the Diploma; Economic Autonomy and Environmental Justice

- ❖ *Belen Itahi Bautista Quiroz. Mixteca from Oaxaca, Mexico.*
- ❖ *Elvi Cheruto Kaptoyo. Pokot from Kenya, Africa.*
- ❖ *Namayani Rapey Edward. Masai from Tanzania.*
- ❖ *Anabella Pilar Perén Curruchiche. Maya from Guatemala.*
- ❖ *Shapla Swarna Ruram. Garo from Bangladesh.*
- ❖ *Salome Suchiang. Pnar from India.*

Copyright

© International Indigenous Women's Forum FIMI, 2019

Translation

Heca Translations S.A.C.

Lima, Perú.

Layout and Design

Eloísa Washington

Masaya, Nicaragua.

Photographies

Isabel Flota

FIMI's Institutional Communication Officer

CONAMI

Reviewers and editorial support :

Marco Lara Klahr

Renata Riebeling de Ávila

Joseé Daris

María Manuela Sequeira

Lorena Verónica López Mejía

Printed by:

Bolonia Printing

Managua, Nicaragua

All the rights reserved

The contents of this publication may be freely used and copied without authorization but acknowledgement is requested.

This publication had the financial support of Mama Cash, within the framework of the GAGGA Alliance.

The comments on this publication can be submitted to International Indigenous Women's Forum, FIMI- info@iiwf.org



**ma
ma
cash**

CONTENT

I. Introduction	3
II. Starting Point: The Path Traveled By Indigenous Women	6
II.1. Empowerment And Violence	6
II.2. Intercultural Research: A Healing Tool.....	12
III. The Methodological Route. The Path Traveled.	15
III.1. About The Intercultural Researchers	17
III.2. Content And Methodology Of The Diploma Course	23
IV. The Indigenous Women’s Vision Of Environmental Justice	30
IV.1. Environmental Justice And Indigenous Worldview	30
IV.2. Environmental Justice, Livelihoods, And The Right To Food.....	32
IV.3. Assessment Of The Strategies Used By Indigenous Women For Environmental Justice	34
a) Organization.....	35
b) Mobilization.....	35
c) Articulation.....	36
d) Communication	36
e) Political Advocacy.....	37
f) Use Of National, Regional, And Global Legal Channels.....	38
V. The Indigenous Women’s Vision Of Economic Autonomy	40
V.1. Economic Autonomy, Recovering Productive Ancestral Practices.....	41
V.2. Discrimination And Exclusion Of Indigenous Women Impede Economic Autonomy	43
V.3. Spiritual Healing, A Step Towards Reaching Economic Autonomy.....	45
V.4. Economic Autonomy And Indigenous Community Economy	47
V.5. Economic Entrepreneurship Of Indigenous Women.....	48
a) Characteristics Of Intercultural Entrepreneurship.....	50
b) Some Considerations About Tools For Intercultural Business Management.....	50
i) Swot Foda.....	50
ii) Value Chain.....	51
iii) Product Registration	52
iv) Business Plan	53
v) Financing And Credit.....	54

vi) Marketing.....	54
V.6. <i>Main Demands Linked To The Economic Autonomy Of Indigenous Women According To Each Region</i>	55
a) <i>Asia</i>	56
b) <i>Africa</i>	57
c) <i>Latin America</i>	58
VI. Intersection Among Indigenous Women, Environmental Justice, And Economic Autonomy	61
VII. Conclusions And Recommendations. Fertile Ground And Harvest	66
VII.1. <i>Conclusions and recommendations of the Garo People’s study</i>	67
a) <i>Recommendations</i>	68
i) <i>Specific recommendations for the study in Tanzania</i>	69
VIII. Bibliographic References	73

ACRONYMS

IIFW International Indigenous Women Forum

IIU Indigenous Intercultural University

FILAC Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean

SAP Structural Adjustment Program

FPIC Free, Prior and Informed Consent

CSW Commission on the Status of Women

IITC International Indian Treaty Council

CADPI Center for Autonomy and Development of Indigenous Peoples

MILAC Indigenous Women of Latin America and the Caribbean

UNO United Nations Organization

GLS Global Leadership School

OAS Organization of American States

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

SWOT Strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and Threats



I. Introduction



I. INTRODUCTION

The study “Voices leading the way: experiences regarding the intersection between environmental justice and economic autonomy of indigenous women” is the result of a Diploma Course aiming to contribute to the development of abilities, skills, and potential of indigenous women to move forward towards economic autonomy, based on principles of responsibility with the environment and environmental justice.

Six indigenous community researchers from Mexico, Guatemala, Tanzania, Kenya, Bangladesh and India have participated in leading the coordination of the Research and Impact Issues on Indigenous Women’s Life program of the International Indigenous Women Forum - IIWF, adopting an indigenous methodology called “learning ‘by doing’” under the Diploma Course modality, which has been accredited by the “Francisco de Vitoria” Institute of International and European Studies of the Carlos III University of Madrid and the Intercultural Indigenous University (UII), which is an Emblematic Training and Education Program of the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC).

The indigenous community researchers have documented and processed relevant information on how economic enterprises are responsibly created and promoted within the context of environmental justice in their respective countries, and IIWF has systematized the process in a single document, being conscious about the fact that, in order to promote the empowerment of indigenous women, it is a priority to revalue the traditional knowledge and ancestral wisdom that they possess, and understand that empowerment is a holistic process wherein women are the ones that

empower themselves, integrating individual and collective dimensions.


The Diploma Course has been a motivating environment for the systematization and exchange of know-hows and their entire spiritual dimension, designed to allow indigenous women to develop and proactively assume the leadership they assume in their respective community contexts.

For indigenous women, economic autonomy is linked to the struggle for land, territory and natural resources, and it constitutes a demand to achieve environmental justice. The Diploma Course has been a platform for the exchange of knowledge about good practices for the promotion and defense of the economic autonomy of indigenous women and their right to access environmental justice.

Other cross-sectional aspects of the program have been the intercultural and interdisciplinary approach, the differentiated and intersectional perspectives, the revaluation of traditional knowledge and ancestral wisdom, the reflective and critical inter-learning processes and the collective construction of knowledge from the exchange of experiences, anecdotes, symbols, interpretations and levels of conceptualization.

The authors have sought to reflect on and reclaim the strength and wisdom of women in the studies, accepting that it is time to leave behind studies where they are characterized mainly as victims. They have stated that making the roots, knowledge and contribution of Indigenous Peoples visible is essential to empower and begin to heal the history of communities that have been severely violated by colonialism and capitalism.

They have also recognized that the strength and



solutions to create change is found not only within each one of them, but also in each and every one in the communities; in their wisdom and in nature. It must also be recognized that the contributions of research go beyond a written proposal, as they belong and are directed to the plan of life; and that it is through the creation and strengthening of networks at different levels that they can find great solutions.

Receive this study with the words of the authors:

“Writing knowledge, leaving a written trace –even if it comes from an oral culture– for preservation and transmission are equally relevant, and they must be available for generations to come.”



II. Starting Point: The path traveled by Indigenous women



II. STARTING POINT: THE PATH TRAVELED BY INDEGENOUS WOMEN

II.1. EMPOWERMENT AND VIOLENCE

As indigenous women have participated in various fields, they have gradually incorporated the concept of empowerment in order to frame their demands and priorities; although they have always applied a double dimension to the concept, since they include not only empowerment at the individual level as women, but also empowerment at the collective level as Indigenous Peoples.

Empowerment has been defined by the Indigenous Peoples themselves as: “The process through which their status as owners of their own development and life plans is expressed. It is based on self-determination and autonomy, as well as its organizational and managerial processes, and control over resources linked to their territories through their cultural, spiritual, productive and economic activities, from the local levels to the national and international levels.”

The concept of empowerment implies, according to Indigenous Peoples, “applying a holistic approach to the development of daily activities, and using ancestral knowledge in cultural, territorial, environmental, social, political, spiritual, educational and health processes, based on its worldview,”⁽¹⁾ applying the human rights approach

¹ Regional Consultation Workshop in preparation for the third Indigenous Peoples’ global meeting in IFAD “Economic empowerment of indigenous peoples with a focus on women and youth” San Salvador, El Salvador, November 22-27, 2016

that allows for continuing the building of relations of equality and respect between Indigenous Peoples and the rest of the Society, in order to “achieve full and effective empowerment.”

The intersection between empowerment and the fight against violence that indigenous women deal with has been an ongoing focus in that journey, “for the empowerment of Indigenous Women, it is essential to have a life free from all forms of violence, recognizing the right and access to ancestral territories and ensuring specific budgets directed to them.”⁽²⁾ This issue has already been referred to in the Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women from 1995, in which indigenous women made it very clear in their statements that human rights violations they are not only based on gender equality relations, but also on the interaction between gender and other aspects of their identities.

In this regard, the Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women states that: “The ‘strategic objectives’ and actions recommended by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action are focused on women’s equal access and full participation in decision making, equality in social status, equality in remuneration, in integrating and taking into account gender perspectives and analysis in the public debate. These objectives are illusory and meaningless if the multiple inequalities are not addressed at the same time. On this matter, they added that equality in

² Ibid

remuneration and social status in the so-called First World is possible thanks to a development model that, in addition to not being sustainable, increases the violation of women's, Indigenous peoples' and other nations' human rights. When adding too much emphasis on gender discrimination and gender equality, the Platform depoliticizes the structural issues which indigenous women deal with⁽³⁾

In addition to the multiple and serious personal, community, social, and direct criminal implications in each country, violence against women is “global and systemic in nature” and is “rooted in power imbalances and structural inequality” with respect to men, identifying a link between such violence and discrimination, as noted by the United Nations Organization.⁽⁴⁾

Structural causes include, according to the source itself, economic inequalities, which “can be a causal factor,” it says, “both at the level of various acts of violence and at the level of broad economic trends that create or exacerbate the conditions conducive to such violence” at local, national and global levels, while their discrimination “in areas such as employment, income, access to other economic resources and lack of economic independence reduce the women's ability to act and make decisions, and increase their vulnerability to violence”.⁽⁵⁾

Factors such as asymmetric family and social relationships, neoliberal economic policies and their particular structural adjustments, the globalization of social structures, and the complex dynamics of human mobility deepen, in general, these economic inequalities; in addition to, of course, the devastating effects of climate change.

This results in a vicious circle where these

3 Op. cit. Note 10, p. 9

4 General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, “In-depth study on all forms of violence against women. Report of the Secretary General” [Spanish version], New York, July 2006, p. 17, available at <https://www.acnur.org/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2016/10742.pdf> [accessed on July 18, 2019].

5 Ibid., p. 36.

inequalities, which are reflected “in the lack of access and control over economic resources such as land and personal property, salary, and credit can place them in a situation of running a greater risk of violence. In addition, restrictions on control ... over [of] economic resources, such as household income, may be a form of violence against women in the family”.⁽⁶⁾

In contrast, “While economic independence does not protect women from violence, access to economic resources can increase ... [their] ability ... to make meaningful choices, specially to escape from violent circumstances and obtain access to protection and repair mechanisms”.⁽⁷⁾

The “Supplementary Report to the Research Study on Violence against Women of the Secretary General of the United Nations,”⁽⁸⁾ prepared by the International Indigenous Women's Forum (IIWF)⁽⁹⁾ with an intersectional perspective identifies the following items as the principal manifestations of violence against indigenous women:

- ✦ *Neoliberalism and aggressive development*
- ✦ *Violence in the name of tradition, the household and the Government*
- ✦ *Armed conflicts and militarization*
- ✦ *Migration and displacement*
- ✦ *Those affected by HIV/AIDS*


It is about the structural manifestations where exclusion, discrimination and the suppression

6 Ibid., p. 37.

7 Ibid

8 IIWF, “Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous Women Confront Violence. Supplementary Report to the Study on Violence against Women of the Secretary General of the United Nations”, 2006, available at <https://www.IIWF-iiwf.org/archivos/8162f56478b843333dc95a1f5f381ab1.pdf> [accessed July 20, 2019].

9 Founded two decades ago as a result of the political incursion of indigenous women during the first Beijing Conference (1995) and with increasing prominence in subsequent editions, the most important international deliberative space on this subject, and other areas.



of rights against indigenous women and their socio-cultural context are interwoven, and their consequences in their daily lives, spirituality, security, access to services, food, health, work, education, land ownership, development expectations, legal equality and, in general, the real possibilities of a decent life for themselves, their communities and future generations. Regarding the specific ground of economic inequalities in this supplementary report, IWWF agrees with the abovementioned diagnosis of the United Nations, but it goes further, warning about the intersections among multiple discriminations suffered by indigenous women.

The concerns of Indigenous Women with regard to neoliberalism have not been reflected in initiatives for progress, in the topic of economic justice, nor in the demands historically made for women's human rights. For example, the devastating impact of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) in the provision of services to the most disadvantaged people (especially women), which has received rather much attention, is focused on meeting the basic needs of health services, education, water, and other needs. Indigenous Women share this problem and have organized themselves in order to demand the governments take on the responsibility to meet the basic needs of the people as indicated, for example, in Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, ... they also emphasize [the fact] that even before the structural adjustment programs were imposed, indigenous communities did not have access to public services such as education, health services, infrastructure or employment programs.⁽¹⁰⁾

Of particular interest is the mixed creative and propositional tone of this supplementary report, with emphasis on “initiatives for economic and environmental justice” (p.28). It includes, for example,


“that in order for economic and environmental policies to be effective in terms of protecting Indigenous Women from the multiple forms of violence inherent in neoliberal policies, they must be designed to address the realities of indigenous life.” In this regard, “environmental regulations must be consistent in all indigenous territories and not only circumscribed to national borders [,] which often do not correspond to the boundaries of indigenous territories” (p. 27).

Another issue that indigenous women have incorporated into the debate on environmental justice has been the international recognition of ecological violence. In events about this issue,⁽¹¹⁾ the impact of pollutants on the right to health and reproductive justice of Indigenous Peoples, and specifically on indigenous women has been analyzed. They have assessed that these conditions violate their right to subsistence, cultural and spiritual survival, self-determination and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). In that context, indigenous women began to coin and promote the term “ecological or environmental violence” being understood as lethal and deliberate exposure to pesticides, mining wastes and other sources of toxic contamination.

The intersection was also promoted by indigenous women in advocacy actions before the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), whose mandate is to monitor and review the progress and difficulties encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as in the incorporation of the gender perspective in the activities of the United Nations. For indigenous women, it has involved a greater effort to achieve their participation and influence the commitments adopted by the CSW. Only in 2005, after 49 sessions of

10 Op. cit. IWWF, p. 27.

11 Organized by CITI, IWWF, CADPI, FILAC in California (2010), Chickaloon, Alaska (2012), New York (2018), Mexico (2019).



the Commission, indigenous women achieved, after intense lobbying, the adoption of the first resolution concerning indigenous women. “Indigenous women beyond the 10-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action” (Resolution 49/7), which calls for the adoption of measures to ensure “full and effective participation of indigenous women in all aspects of society.” The aforementioned resolution allowed for drawing attention to the particularities of indigenous women and the need for the CSW to consider the diversity of women.

In 2012, once again thanks to the advocacy efforts of indigenous women with the support of several Governments, it was achieved that the CSW would adopt a second resolution “Indigenous women: key agents for the eradication of poverty and famine” (Resolution 56/4). With a more detailed text, it urges the Governments and agencies of the United Nations system to adopt measures aimed at the empowerment of indigenous women and the fulfillment of the rights for the eradication of poverty and famine. In this case, it excels the previous resolution, since it includes the concept of empowerment that goes beyond their participation.

This resolution introduces the concept of empowerment as a more holistic issue, covering different areas such as the creation of policies and programs, the possibilities of choice, the need for consultation, respect for traditional knowledge, access to various types of resources and social services, support for organizations and cooperatives, among other aspects. It also recognizes equal rights to own land and other goods, the link between poverty and discrimination and the generation of violence. It also highlights the importance of collecting and disseminating disaggregated data about indigenous women. The concept of empowerment includes full and effective participation, but goes beyond highlighting inequality and questioning power

relations.⁽¹²⁾

At present, although the concept is widely used, it is rarely defined. There is an implicit consensus that the empowerment of a person or group implies access to power from a multidimensional approach since it has implications at the individual, organizational, political, psychological, economic, and even spiritual levels. Empowerment for indigenous women is not only the ability to make decisions, but also the ability to build upon those options and challenge the power structures that generally subordinate them.


“Empowerment implies that, through individual conscience, people accept themselves and develop confidence in their abilities and skills, which gradually leads to a collective approach, a group awareness about rights, and abilities to face challenges and overcome injustices through collective resistance. Through collective mobilizations, an impact is sought in the spaces of power, leading to participation that changes the conditions that produce and recreate the systems of oppression, gaining skills to act.”⁽¹³⁾

Although empowerment is considered a multidimensional concept, it has been important in indigenous women’s organizations to analyze the implications that it carries for them. While there has been much debate about the concept of poverty from an Indigenous Peoples perspective, it is important to highlight that this condition is strongly linked to violations of land rights and control over natural resources. It is important to consider discrimination and exclusion as causes of the unequal distribution of resources, such as land, tools of production, financing, technology, etc.

It is impossible to analyze the economic status of indigenous women without reference to their

12 FILAC. MILAC. Empowerment and Indigenous Women from reflection to Action. Working Paper. 2015.

13 Indigenous Women’s Summit in Oaxaca, México, 2002



relationship with the land, territory, and natural resources. This link includes aspects that go beyond socio-economic or political aspects since it includes aspects of their worldview, collective and ancestral history, sacred sites, rituals, and the continuity of the identity of their peoples.

Despite the existence of several international legal instruments, such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Indigenous Peoples are commonly displaced, expropriated, and their territories are exploited. Generally, indigenous women do not own official titles to their lands, which facilitates exploitation without the free, prior and informed consent by the extractive industries backed by governments.

Faced with this conflictive situation, indigenous women are mostly victims of forced displacement, migration, ecological degradation and armed conflicts. Land appropriation is not impartial with regard to gender and the rights of indigenous women interact with violations of collective land rights (IIWF, 2010). To the external threats to rights over indigenous lands, the internal limitations that often govern in favor of indigenous men within the communities themselves are added to the case of women.

As the Special Rapporteur for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples stated (2015)(14):“The effects of such kind of violations are evident in situations where indigenous women lose their traditional livelihoods, such as for gathering food, agricultural production, and shepherding, while compensation and job positions after land confiscation tend to benefit the men of the indigenous communities. The loss of lands and the exclusion of women can make them more vulnerable to abuse and violence, such as sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking. On the other hand, the side effects of violations of land

14 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz. Human Rights Council 30th session. August 6, 2015. A/HRC/30/41

rights, such as loss of livelihoods and deterioration of health, often disproportionately affect women in the performance of their care duties and protection of the local environment” (A/HRC/30/41, par. 16).

According to a study by IIWF (2010), indigenous women in all regions have a major role in the reproduction of persons, the environment, and Indigenous Peoples, both physically and spiritually. This role has multiple and greater dimensions; in the first place, due to the lack of public services in the indigenous territories, which means that indigenous women assume full care of all persons: girls and boys, the elderly, persons with different abilities, displaced persons, etc.

In this sense, women have a central role in the face of the food crisis that has resulted from the destruction of local food production in favor of transnational companies that currently monopolize the provisions with low subsidized prices and large social costs, creating a growing demand for health services due to malnutrition and obesity.

Women care, feed, and heal their peoples and Mother Earth. They are carriers of traditional knowledge that is passed on and is learned from generation to generation. This power, derived from the fact of being bearers of ancient wisdom, is often not recognized or valued by public entities, cooperation agencies, and not even in the communities themselves, where patriarchal customs are strongly maintained.

This global perspective confers absolute relevance to the Diploma Course of Indigenous Women: Economic Autonomy and Environmental Justice, which is the result of IIWF’s global strategic lines of action for its right to full equality under the terms of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.(15) IIWF is aware that access to environmental justice for indigenous

15 Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/sp/professionalinterest/pages/cedaw.aspx> [reviewed on July 20, 2019].

women is possible when the development of their abilities is adequately interconnected with their political participation and with actions that promote their economic autonomy.

Therefore, economic autonomy is understood as the ability of indigenous women to generate their own income and resources:

Profundamente vinculada a la esencia del Deeply

- a) *Enhancing their individual and collective management abilities;*
- b) *Improving their skills, applying their traditional knowledge, know-hows, and bio-cultural innovations;*
- c) *Promoting equal conditions among men and women within and outside their communities, so that together they can ensure the exercise of their individual and collective human rights and the self-development of their communities and Peoples.*

linked to the essence of the Diploma Course and an interrelated topic of its methodological process was indigenous spirituality, which distinguishes it from other academic areas, since its objective is not only to train intercultural researchers, but also to seek, awaken, revalue, and renew ancestral know-hows and wisdom from women, in order to strengthen the lives of Indigenous Peoples and learn from them. It is, therefore, a training for life, for the rights of communities, the defense of Mother Earth and its goods.

Indigenous women live at the intersection point between two paradigms. On the one hand, the capitalist one, where natural resources and Indigenous Peoples are seen as objects and subjects of exploitation, power, and control with restrictive


rights. On the other, the cosmogonic, political, social, cultural, and economic one of the original peoples, which seeks defense and care for life, but it is not exempt from the influence of patriarchy, individualism, and machismo. Therefore, the central dilemma is to answer how indigenous women, immersed in all of this, will bring forth light where everyone sees darkness, how will they express the wisdom, knowledge and strength of their peoples in their research work that, in spite of neoliberal and predatory capitalism, are still alive.

To deepen the spiritual focus, some supporting pillars were reviewed, particularly their collective nature. They all belong to a network, and if the people's spirit becomes ill, that of the person becomes ill and vice versa – that is why strength and health are important in every sense for its members. So, it is important to recognize that everything has its spirit, everything has life, rights, and therefore everything must be protected.

The spirituality reflected in the studies of the participants lies in the fact that the history of their peoples support them, seeking to impart collective knowledge for life, to regain the ancestral wisdom and their own ways that contribute to autonomy, to women and to peoples; and in the proposal that a way to identify and find possible strategies in the face of obstacles is to turn to the wisdom and forces within each person and culture, as well as in the environment.

The tool selected by IIFW for this process has been intercultural research in order to monitor the effort initiated in 2013, with the “Dialogue of Knowledge about Violence against Indigenous Women - Methodological approaches to intercultural research”. (16)

16 “Intercultural research course on violence against indigenous women” in Bilwi-Puerto Cabezas, North Atlantic Autonomous Region, from August 20 to 25, 2012. Convened by the International Indigenous Women Forum (IIFW), together with the Network of Indigenous Women of Mesoamerica through the Partnership-PATH Alliance; the Center for Studies and Information of Multiethnic Women of the University of the Autonomous Regions of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast (CEIMM-URACCAN); the Wangki Tangni Center, the



During that process they prepared a document in an event that brought together indigenous women who had systematized experiences of violence in several countries of the Mesoamerican region. They pointed out that it was necessary to continue training intercultural researchers, because “not even the research carried out by the Western academy, nor official studies and public policies, developed from governments and multilateral organizations, take the view of indigenous women into consideration for the analysis of violence against women, reducing their approaches to a single dominant cultural perspective, making their own perspective of things go unnoticed.” They added that “today, thanks to the fact that the women’s movement has increased their voice, there is a greater openness to listen to their point of view, so it seems necessary that the activists of the women’s organizations enhance their research abilities in order to better substantiate their contributions and claims.”(17)

II.2. INTERCULTURAL RESEARCH: A HEALING TOOL

INTERCULTURAL researchers extensively discussed the concept and process of intercultural research, concluding with the following assessments:

Life, from the perspective of indigenous communities, is considered as a fabric, a network in which each element is linked to the whole, and vice versa. Therefore, each problem is related to different areas and crosses different areas of knowledge. For example, the identity and traditional knowledge

Nidia White Organization; the Center for the Autonomy and Development of Indigenous Peoples (CADPI) and the Alliance of Indigenous Women of Central America and Mexico. Multiétnica de la Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense (CEIMM-URACCAN); el Centro Wangki Tangni, la Organización Nidia White; el Centro para la Autonomía y Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (CADPI) y la Alianza de Mujeres Indígenas de Centroamérica y México.

17 Idem

passed on by women are key to achieving not only economic autonomy, but also environmental justice, and the latter two, in turn, are interdependent.

Considering life as a fabric, in which there is no core and each stitch has the same importance as the rest, reveals a conception of horizontal human relationships, and other horizontal manifestations of life. The richness of this horizontality lies in respect, value, and openness to differences, that is, it is recognized that each people has different visions of the world and their own knowledge rooted in their territory, culture, and people, which can help solve common problems in diverse regions. There isn’t anything or anyone better or worse in the world, only differences, and everything has the same value. The multiple identities, cultures, languages, and beings are important as enclosed in their own universe. Each part of them occupies the same place in the world, which we should acknowledge and for which we should be thankful.

There is no life project that does not rely on identity, but it is also essential to look for answers in other cultures and lifestyles. Interculturality is to recognize what is offered in other places and, if necessary, adapt it to what you already know. It is not about choosing one way or another to do things, but about seeking a dialogue of knowledge, a way to incorporate two or more perspectives for the best solution to a problem.

They defined that the intercultural research for the Diploma Course reflects on people’s experiences and perspectives. It ranks first its experiences, feelings, knowledge and words, instead of seeking the monopoly of knowledge. It assumes its subjectivity to turn it into a value in the increase of ancestral know-how. Some of the participants in the investigative process are the local sages —or from other peoples—, women, men, grandmothers, and the community.

They also identified the main opportunities offered by this research modality, including the following:

- ✦ *To be used to achieve advocacy for public policies that materialize social change and offer better living conditions to indigenous women,*
- ✦ *PTo try to recover the perspective of indigenous peoples and women,*
- ✦ *To generate reference information for promoting public policies based on their female and male participants,*
- ✦ *To diagnose based on the local community's point of view*
- ✦ *To signify a resource for women's empowerment*

They also talked about the values promoted by the research from the aforementioned point of view, including the following: respect, consent, advice, dialogue, seeking out and finding truth, listening, confidentiality and collective participation. They also explored in greater detail their ethical principles, conditions, approaches, implications, fruits, and techniques.

On this basis, they considered that the research methodology used in the Western system and specifically its academic field, sometimes tends to hierarchize knowledge —that is, to promote vertical relationships where the upper and lower come into tension in order to be valued —to produce a slightly objective distance between the female and male experts and the subject of study —even when the study is about human beings— and to use language that's too technical in order to explain problems and propose solutions. In contrast, the methodology proposed in the framework of the Diploma Course moves away from the academic circle, venturing into the territory of life itself, where the authority for sharing and validating information is in the people themselves, their life experiences and ancestral

wisdom. Nature, traditions and customs are able to say more than a book, and language and knowledge are accessible to everyone. Instead of research whose content is trapped in a niche —and sooner or later dies out— those of the participants are generous, open, and constitutes one of the multiple gestures to revive and revalue the know-hows of Indigenous Peoples.

They consider that through intercultural research the community proposals really become known and are experienced; and they value that in these processes it is essential that, as women, the participants accept themselves not as informants, but as active intercultural researchers who recognize that indigenous collective authorship exists and has great value.



III. The methodological route

III. THE METHODOLOGICAL ROUTE. THE PATH TRAVELED.

The methodology for conducting the studies was articulated in three phases, with the support of the IWF research team throughout the process. The general objective was to “contribute to the development of abilities, skills, and the potential of indigenous women from three socio-cultural regions to move towards economic autonomy, based on environmental justice with a focus on

interculturality, responsibility, reciprocity and sustainability.” It was based on the assumption that access to environmental justice for indigenous women is possible when the development of their abilities is adequately interconnected with their political participation and with actions that promote their economic autonomy.

THE OBJECTIVES PROPOSED THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS WERE:

- 1 That the participants become familiar with conceptual elements in order to facilitate reflective and critical inter-learning processes with a participatory approach that enhances the dialogue of knowledge, the collective increase of knowledge and the appropriation of the teaching - learning process.
- 2 To create theoretical knowledge and exchange practical experiences on human rights that allow the participating indigenous women to promote their right to economic autonomy and environmental justice, using the mechanisms of protection and enforceability of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 3 To increase knowledge, from a gender and generational perspective, for the protection and defense of the Indigenous Women’s rights.
- 4 To identify and promote leadership characteristics of indigenous women that contribute to the promotion of economic autonomy in the context of the struggle for environmental justice for the individual and collective, political, economic, social, cultural, and spiritual empowerment of indigenous women.
- 5 To understand the philosophical and theoretical foundations of Self-Development or Good Living, based on the critical analysis of development models based on rationality that pits human beings against nature, and the Indigenous Peoples’ alternative of harmonization between humanity and Mother Earth, as complementary living beings.
- 6 To provide space for exchange of knowledge and expertise on business management with a focus on interculturality, responsibility, reciprocity and sustainability.
- 7 To know and analyze factors and barriers that impede environmental justice, as well as successful strategies that have been applied by indigenous women to achieve environmental justice, which contribute to their overall individual and collective empowerment.

It has been necessary to train the intercultural researchers in order to provide evidence to indigenous women in their empowerment process. It is based on the growing and inescapable role of indigenous women since they “care, feed, and heal their people and Mother Earth,” and play a decisive role in “the comprehensive reproduction of their peoples.”(18)

The first stage consisted of the identification

of indigenous researchers in the three socio-cultural regions: Asia, Africa and Latin America. Participants were selected by the regional networks of indigenous women and IIWF. Using virtual technological tools, they agreed on the objectives and the specific methodologies, and over 12 weeks they distributed materials related to the topics and the methodological steps for conducting the studies in Guatemala, Mexico, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Kenya, and India.

18 ídem.

RESEARCHER'S NAME	INDIGENOUS PEOPLE	COUNTRY	STUDY CASE
Belén Itahí Bautista Quiroz	Mixteca	Oaxaca, México	The strategic value of Mixtec weavers in Santa María Cuquila
Elvi Kaptoyo	Masaii	West Pokot, Kenya	Evaluation of the implications of the climate change impacts on economic autonomy and environmental justice in the Maasai community in the Kiteto District, Tanzania
Namayani Rapey Edward	Pokot	Kiteto, Tanzania	From Senetwo, an inquiry into the autonomy of Pokot women
Anabella Pilar Perén Curruchiche	Maya Mam	Quetzaltenango, Guatemala	Reestablish know-hows, key for the Maya-Mam women in Toj Coman and Las Nubes
Shapla Swarna Ruram	Garo	Netrikona, Dhaka, Bangladesh	Climate change and gender in the Garo de Netrikona community
Salome Suchiang		Meghalaya, North East India	Lifestyles of indigenous women in the Umtrykhang community

Table N° 1: Researchers per Indigenous People, country and subject.

III.1. ABOUT THE INTERCULTURAL RESEARCHERS



NAMAYANI RAPEY EDWARD, FROM THE MANYARA REGION, KITETO DISTRICT, TANZANIA

EIs the author of the study “Evaluation of the implications of the climate change impacts on the economic autonomy and environmental justice of the Maasai community in the Kiteto district, Tanzania,” which aimed to contribute to the strategies of the Maasai women in Partimbo and Ilera in the face of

climate change. (19) She has a degree in Population Planning and Development, with a master’s degree in Climate Change and Sustainable Development.

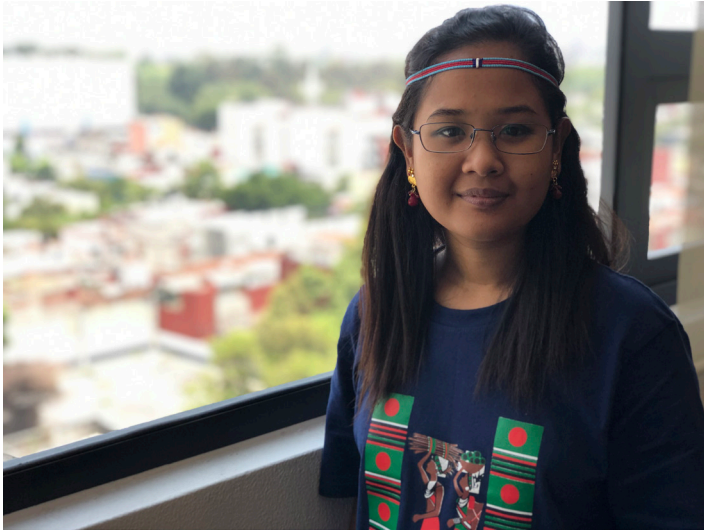
Because of her experience and education, she was an ideal person to do this field work, because as she stated “I come from and grew up in that community, I know their difficulties well. My wish is to see it understand itself, where it comes from, where it is and where it is going. It gave me the gift of being able to go to school ... something that many girls cannot do ... and my mind was opened and I understood many things. When I left, I was in debt and had to return to give them something back. I know that I cannot solve everything, that I cannot provide them with everything, but, for me, providing them with the knowledge to understand their situation, to guide and advise them is enough.”

She conducted the study with the support of the KINNAPA Development Program community organization, founded in the early 1990s to deal with the dispossession of lands suffered by shepherds and peasants in the Tanzanian region of Manyara. It is a civil organization that works with shepherds, ranchers, hunters, and gatherers in Tanzania, particularly in the district of Kiteto, collecting funds and implementing development, nutritional and educational projects related to the development of abilities among Maasai women towards their economic autonomy.

The Maasái Indigenous People, in the communities of Partimbo and Ilera, have a shepherding vocation and nomadic origin, and their members, as shepherds “suffer the effects of colonization, the invasion of their traditional pastures, lack of infrastructure, hostile mechanisms of the market and the difficulties of commercializing their products” (p. 6), “in addition

¹⁹ The information for this intercultural research comes, in general, from the original unpublished document in Word, in English, presented by Namayani Rapey Edward, entitled “Assessment of implications of climate change impacts on the economic self-reliance and environmental justice of the Maasai community in the Kiteto District, Tanzania,” July 2019, 26 pp.

to drought, overgrazing, and animal mortality due to climate change.”(20)



SHAPLA SWARNA RURAM, FROM THE GARO COMMUNITY, IN THE DISTRICT OF NETRIKONA, DHAKA, BANGLADESH, (21)

Studied Political Science at the University of Dhaka, majoring, through various courses, in climate change and food security. She is currently a national advocacy officer in the Bangladesh Center for Human Rights and Development - which, with the IIWF’s support, allowed her to take the Diploma Course.

The origin of her activism comes from her days as a student when she joined that civil organization as a volunteer. “I always knew that I wanted to work with nonprofit organizations, and do the kind of work

that can help humanity and my native community, the Garo women and men. So, it was my passion in the first place.” Her vital experience and education have provided her with extensive knowledge of the Bangladeshi sociopolitical current issues, and clearly, of her Indigenous Peoples, although she likes to remember the drive of her first impulse: “I can work with women who are really going through vulnerable circumstances and need to get better. There are so many problems! Land grabbing, assaults, discrimination, which do not help them, especially as women. So, this was the most obvious option. I can grow and dedicate myself to my passion”.

The Bangladeshi Indigenous People known as Garo—their members prefer to be identified as a.chik or mande—live on the plains, predominantly in the district of Netrikona, in the city of Dhaka, adjacent to India, in modest bamboo, straw, and mud houses that are part of usually tidy and clean villages. It is an agricultural town, and has a unique traditional



20 Namayani Rapey Edward

21 The information for this intercultural research advance comes, in general, from the original unpublished document in Word, in English, presented by Shapla Swarna Ruram, with the provisional heading “Research on contemporary economic situation and environmental condition in the perspective of Garo Indigenous women in Bangladesh.”

culture that stands out for its know-hows in land management—in a country, by the way, marked with rivers and canals, and agricultural economy— its idiomatic variants, working spirit, and remarkable adaptive capacity.



BELÉN ITAHÍ BAUTISTA QUIROZ, FROM SAN ESTEBAN ATLATLAHUCA, OAXACA, MEXICO, (22)

Studied the technical degree program in Computer Science and works as a volunteer promoter in the villages of her region, Mixteca Alta in Oaxaca. Since

22 The information for this intercultural research advance comes, in general, from the presentation “Santa María Cuquila,” by Belén Itahí Bautista Quiroz, an original unpublished in Spanish, in Power Point format, undated.

the forest harvesting in her community at the age of fifteen, she joined other young people to participate in community life through the production of mushrooms, joining with those who managed the sawmill and with the mushroom women (“hongueras”) who collect mushrooms to sell them in the big market of Tlaxiaco.

“There I saw an opportunity to advocate and support the group of ‘hongueras’ ... for them to sell but without having to go to Tlaxiaco, which is very remote, and since it is a mountain the travel fare is expensive, so it is not worthwhile ... We started doing activities with mushrooms and collections, until in 2016 we had our first mushroom fair where we were trying to call “micro tourism,” which is tourism with mushrooms... so that others might go and visit the community, its cuisine and the mushroom-based forest use ... a local know-how for over 600 years.”

The following year, organized as the Mixteca Ethnomicological Group, they went to the municipal authorities in San Esteban Atlatlahuca to take specialists to talk with the community and participate in the fair, so that “they can teach the people to be aware of the use, that, if at any time they have the chance to have a piece of land, they begin to mycotize the trees so that the ecosystems are reinforced and their restoration is much faster ... Afterwards people from other municipalities of the Upper and Lower Mixteca joined in, from the area of Huajuapán de León, and communal authorities, civilians, ‘hongueras’ and cooks ... we were forming allies ... so that by the time the fair took place, we could make a local ‘Guelaguetza.’” They have thus reached a large regional area of advocacy, with a wide diversity of producers that include textile producers in Santa María Cuquila.

The participation of Belén Itahí and her intercultural research are framed in the steps taken

for almost a decade to take on such challenges by the women who form the Yuke Titeku group (Cerro del Tenate) and the Kimi Ndi Artisan Textile House (Morning Star).“ I live in a very beautiful place, where more than 70 percent of what is on the market is produced in my town ... and there is a lot of respect ... but there are also conflicts that have damaged us a lot as communities, although we understand that it is for community agricultural issues that are discussed and it is the way to solve them in our own culture.”

WITH UGANDA WHERE THE POKOT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE LIVE.

She has a degree in Community Development, plans to study a master’s degree and works as a volunteer instructor in the Pastoral Communities Empowerment Program, working mainly with women on issues related to food security, culture, education and reproductive health, as well as economic autonomy. She says: “Our society is patriarchal and our women learn that their place is in the kitchen, that they cannot get involved in profitable businesses or go against cultural norms, because we are told, ‘Your place is in the kitchen, ‘You are a mother,’ you are supposed to take care of your husband and your family, or ‘big business is for men’; in other words, the main problem is machismo, as well as the level of illiteracy: women do not study beyond high school; they do not know about business.”

The impetus of her motivations as an activist is condensed in this phrase:

“I love the community and I really want to change their lives.” But not from Redemptorism: “The world is changing; I really want women to have better education and better lives ... I go to my community, to different regions and I speak about why they are repressed and stressed out; many of them go out to drink beer and it is devastating because families disintegrate, children leave school, because there is no one who can talk to them or guide them; their mothers get involved in shady business and they follow down the same path.”

Although the challenges seem disproportionate, her priority is to contribute to “changing the vision of the community. Several adults believe that what I do is a feminist act, as if I wanted to tell their women to act differently, to be rebellious to their husbands,



ELVI KAPTOYO LIVES IN WEST POKOT, KENYA, (23) A COUNTY THAT BORDERS

23 The information for this intercultural research advance comes, in general, from the original and unpublished document in Word presented by Elvi Kaptoyo, in English, without title and without date, 21 pp.

but that is not the case. I would like to change their perspective of life and show them that if there are other people who are doing it, they can also do it and improve.”

ANABELLA PILAR PERÉN CURRUCHICHE, MAYA MAM FROM QUETZALTENANGO, GUATEMALA, (24)

Studied Social Work. Up until not long ago she held a public position in the Ministry of Agriculture and she currently works for the Moloj Association.

“I am Maya Kaqchikel, from the Political Association of Mayan Moloj Women, whose task is to strengthen the abilities of women in citizen participation in order to influence their communities or get involved in political parties. In order to make changes you have to take action in these areas, even if it is not our way of thinking; those tools allow us to make our needs visible and to fight for our rights.”

of the role of women, ancestral food and productive systems and their impact on malnutrition of Maya Mam children in the cold land of the Municipality of San Martín, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala,” was carried out as noted, with the Political Association of Mayan Moloj Women, an organization to which the author belongs, created two decades ago “as a space of thought and wisdom of the Mayan woman, with the participation of leaders with extensive experience at the national and international level,” to “work for the building up and strengthening of a Mayan women’s movement”, encouraging them to

24 The sources on this intercultural research progress entitled “Revaluation of the role of women, ancestral food and productive systems and their impact on the malnutrition of Maya Mam children in the cold land of the Municipality of San Martín, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala” are, in general, the unpublished original documents in Word and Power Point presented by Anabella Pilar Perén Curruchiche, the second one dated July 13, 2019, and both without page numbers.

“fully exercise their civil and political rights through their participation in decision-making spaces in positions of popular election and by appointment, responding to the needs and demands of indigenous peoples and women with a multicultural vision.” The study provides a brief national, regional, geographical, historical, cultural and economic geographical scene, as well as the situation of women and Indigenous Peoples, to frame their social, economic, cultural, political and environmental role in the micro context.

San Martín Sacatepéquez suffers from high levels of unemployment, so “there is a lot of internal migration, because they look for a job in other municipalities of the departmental capital of Quetzaltenango; they move to farms to be employed, or to the capital or other departments; and even abroad to the United States.”

This causes indigenous women to take full responsibility for their children, which “is quite sad. Men leave with the hope that they will return or send financial aid in order to survive with their children. Some have done it, because there one sees very formal households ... but they don’t come back, so it possible that the family has a place to live, but there is family disintegration because there is no father or there are cases where women also migrate, leaving children with grandparents, aunts, or older siblings. It has had an impact on young people right now because they lack parental affection.”

Or, “women are left alone and they leave them living with their mothers-in-law, where they are psychologically violated because the mother-in-law is the one who controls all her activities, which has provoked machismo. However, I have seen that at some point when they are in crisis there are women who manage to leave by themselves, because they know how to make ‘huipiles,’ they are weavers, or they are employed as farmers in some seasons, and in any case they use their skills.”

SALOME SUCHIANG, (25) DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN GRASSROOT,



From the Grassroot Organization, works with communities and governmental and non-governmental agencies for the economic and social empowerment and strengthening of rights in oppressed sectors. She defines her mission as the promotion of responsibility and power in people and communities. The objective of the organization is to spread responsibility through social empowerment. The activities carried out to achieve this objective are studies, education and training, creation of self-help groups, and gathering information about traditional medicine practitioners.

La organización también realiza actividades viThe organization also carries out activities related to culture and tradition aimed at the protection of biodiversity, the promotion of traditional skills, culture, and knowledge, and the sustainable use of natural resources. As for activities with young people, they promote self-employment, so that they assume responsibility in the development of their

25 Suchiang, Salome; Lifestyle of indigenous women from the community of Umtyrkhang, Meghalaya, North East India. Grasroot. July, 2019.

community and so that they are interested in the culture and history of their community.

The organization provides appropriate technical and legal information to the communities, provides legal assistance to prevent the violation of economic, social, and cultural rights in order to deal with changes and problems.

The Umtyrkhang community is under the Umsning block of Meghalaya in Northeast India, 63km away from Umsning. It has 56 houses. It has a public school and has no healthcare infrastructure. Its access is through a road that is not in good shape. It is an agricultural community with a lot of potential. The study was carried out in this community because of its agricultural production and because it has an important market exchange potential. On April 3 and 4, 2019, a survey was conducted to:

- ✦ *Know the Agricultural System and the production of indigenous women.*
- ✦ *Identify challenges and problems faced by women dedicated to agriculture.*
- ✦ *Understand the level of sustainability of women through agricultural activities*
- ✦ *Find out about the exchange in the Market of agricultural products.*

The results of the study confirm that agricultural production is the only livelihood for the community members. Therefore, they are at risk from any calamity. They require, therefore, the development of other alternative and innovative productive practices, as well as a flexible market with direct access in order to impede intermediaries and maintain the prices of their products.

III.2. CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY OF THE DIPLOMA COURSE

Over 12 weeks, between April and June 2019, IIFW shared material from bilingual studies (English, Spanish) documented in a pedagogical format and organized into seven modules, through the virtual platform of the Global Leadership School of IIFW. In addition to the modules, the Intercultural Research Manual⁽²⁶⁾ and a guide for developing political advocacy plans were shared with the intercultural researchers. This material served as input for defining research topics and agreeing on specific methodologies. (Look for table N° 2)

The intercultural research approach sought to go beyond the recognition of the cultural diversity of the participants. It was oriented towards the analysis of the existing political, economic, spiritual, environmental, and social processes and conflicts, through which the cultures that live in a certain space (institutional, territory, country, community) adopt rules, public policies, and new organizational models. Obviously, throughout the process it was recognized that biocultural diversity is a right, a resource, and also a space for conflict of powers.

The methodology reestablishes the fundamental and guiding role that grandparents, ancestors, and wise men play with young people, and seeks to overcome the stigmatization that women face.

The second methodological stage consisted of a seven-day face-to-face meeting, in which, through the dialogue of knowledge, intercultural and interdisciplinary approaches were applied regarding responsibility, reciprocity, and sustainability. The coordination was led by the Research and Impact Issues in the Life of Indigenous Women

²⁶ IIFW. Exchanges PATH. Dialogue of know-hows about violence against indigenous women. Methodological approaches to intercultural research. 2013.

Program of IIFW, and accredited by the Carlos III Universities of Madrid (Spain), a member of the Intercultural Indigenous University (UII), which is an Emblematic Education and Training Program of the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC), which created an Academic Coordination Committee in conjunction with IIFW.

The first two methodological phases lasted 210 hours –most of them taken through the virtual platform of the Global Leadership School of IIFW (EGL) (140 hours) and with a face-to-face phase. (27)

The Diploma Course⁽²⁸⁾ is much more than a professionalizing option aimed at indigenous community leaders: it is an immersive experience in cosmogony, know-hows, cultures, mentalities, original practices, and challenges generously shared by women from the socio-cultural regions of Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

The pedagogical process sought the collective construction of knowledge that started from the experiences, anecdotes, symbols, interpretations, and different levels of conceptualization that occur around the social and personal relationships of each participant, covering such topics as worldview, history, territory, land and nature, and work, family and community socialization spaces.

Another pedagogical principle applied was pedagogical mediation, promoting, through different activities, the recreation and reconstruction of knowledge, motivating the development of greater abilities for research, questioning, criticism, and reflection. The objective was to facilitate a space of socially and

²⁷ Entitled “Face-to-Face Week,” which took place from July 7 to 13, 2019, in Mexico City.

²⁸ Methodological basis, curriculum and content can be found in “Diploma Course of Indigenous Women: Economic Autonomy and Environmental Justice. Description of the Diploma Course,” original in Word, unpublished; hereinafter, unless otherwise noted, the methodological quotes of said diploma course come from this document.



MODULE	CONTENT
Preparatory course	<p>Objectives, Introduction to the diploma course, Pedagogical principles</p> <p>Unit 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous worldview and indigenous spirituality <p>Unit 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why with indigenous women?• Gender conceptions in indigenous peoples <p>Unit 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concepts: economic autonomy, environmental justice, intercultural research <p>Unit 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Let's learn how to research
Rights of women and Indigenous Peoples	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Unit 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rights of Indigenous Peoples: validity, practices <p>Unit 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations' system of human rights. <p>Unit 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rights of indigenous women: Analysis of collective rights from a gender perspective. <p>Unit 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forum on Experiences, achievements and limitations for access and properties of economic assets for indigenous women
Indigenous Women's Leadership	<p>Unit 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Characteristics of indigenous female leadership• Strategies for strengthening indigenous women's leadership <p>Unit 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying and analyzing the dimension of the economic autonomy process: personal, family, and community implications. <p>Unit 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participation and main demands of indigenous women. Advances and challenges, advocacy spaces.• Intersectionality of gender and intercultural approaches.



MODULE	CONTENT
--------	---------

Indigenous Peoples' Self-development	Unit 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cosmogonic Foundations and Economic Systems of Indigenous Peoples Unit 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approaches to self-development Unit 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National and International Context of Current.• Development Models and the impact on indigenous women.
--------------------------------------	---

Environmental justice and empowerment of indigenous women	Unit 1 <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Definition of environmental justice2) Contribution of indigenous women to the debate on environmental justice at different levels. Unit 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact of the lack of environmental justice on indigenous women. Unit 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main strategies used by indigenous women to achieve environmental justice. Unit 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual and collective healing in the fight for environmental justice.
---	--

Economic autonomy with an intercultural approach.	Introduction Unit 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• From the productive chain to the value chain Unit 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doing the SWOT analysis Unit 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The importance of brands Unit 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing out our Plan of Action.
---	---



MODULE	CONTENT
Guide to develop business plans	Topic 1 • Sharing our dreams Topic 2 • Making our business plans

Table Nº 2: Modules and contents of the Diploma Course on Indigenous Women, Economic Autonomy, and Environmental Justice

culturally contextualized interaction.

The human rights approach allowed addressing the common principles that define applicable indigenous legal systems and regulations, and the connection of the contents developed with international and national instruments related to the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

During the development of the Diploma Course, priority was given to the spaces for dialogue of knowledge, the re-connection among the participants as bearers of traditional knowledge, and entrepreneurial experiences with the development of knowledge and skills typical of the current context, and leading actors in the struggles for the environmental justice of their peoples. It is complemented by doing practical activities, preparing a business model and plan, and institutional and community visits. The intercultural research was the product of such process.

After seven days of intensive work, marked by joy, openness, growth, dialogue and reflection, the Face-to-Face Week of the Diploma Course culminated in the presentation of intercultural research drafts by each participant.⁽²⁹⁾ In this way they came to understand the contexts more accurately, the way in which different problems are intertwined in the

framework of economic autonomy, environmental justice, and the empowerment of women, the possible solutions to various obstacles identified, as well as the difficulties and aspects that led to their work.

Following the nature of the Diploma Course, which, as stated, is not based primarily on master presentations by facilitators and guests, but instead opted for giving a practical, dynamic and active approach to the presentation and discussion of the issues. On this occasion, it started from the intercultural research of the participants and their conceptions.

Each participant spoke of the way she incorporated the aspect of environmental justice into her work. They were invited to share their definition of each idea, to tell how they are addressing it, their approach, and we reminded them that economic autonomy –one of the main themes– is interrelated with environmental justice.

Likewise, in the case of the study in Tanzania, the sociocultural inquiry was about two questions:

✂ “What is the impact of climate change variability on economic self-sufficiency and environmental justice in the district of Kiteto, Tanzania?”

✂ And “What are the possible strategies that

29 See section “2. The Diploma Course of Indigenous Women: Economic Autonomy and Environmental Justice.”

Maasai women are using in the area of study in order to adopt and mitigate the impact of climate change on economic self-sufficiency and the environment?” (p. 8).

The methodology of this study provides an interesting geographical, sociodemographic, regional and local economic context, while its research techniques are based on the personal experience of the author —who belongs to this Indigenous People— the observation and the collection of testimonies among women Maasai.

Regarding the Garo People in Bangladesh, as the author suggests —she herself belongs to this Indigenous People— it is about “an ethnographic field investigation,” as she offered that fascinating sociocultural scene. She “provides a historical description of local environmental struggles for raising people’s awareness on the interconnections among gender, environmental justice, and sustainable resource development.” With this basis, this research aims to identify the obstacles that women have to deal with in the search for their economic autonomy and the situation of environmental justice, and provide consistent information regarding the definition of public policies and projects in order to reduce the effects of climate change among the Garo people, under the leadership of women.

The study carried out with the Mixteco People provides, from the methodological perspective, official and journalistic reports, national legislation, government policies, and reports on human rights and religious minority organizations, as well as interviews with activists and community members, labeled as migrants “with a good balance among genders.”

Methodologically, the author conducts her research with the collective participation of the Community Assembly, group and individual testimonies, and tours in the museum and the local


archaeological zone, as well as home visits to Santa María Cuquila’s indigenous women weavers.

In the case of the Pokot People in Kenya, the main objective of the research is “to empower indigenous women to be financially stable, improve their well-being, and have sustainable livelihoods.” With a sociodemographic, cultural, and spiritual perspective from the cosmogony of the Pokot people and their region, with a solid theoretical-conceptual and legal framework and a series of interviews, this research assesses the situation in order to obtain empirical evidence on “the profile of women in the economic processes,” which may lead “the interventions to be implemented in order to empower them” (pp. 3-4), both in public policies and in projects of non-governmental entities.

The primary sources of the study with indigenous women in Guatemala are from interview testimonies from Mayan Mam women, medical staff, a spiritual guide, and a midwife in Toj Coman and Las Nubes, which has allowed for identifying, for example, the monopoly of men in land ownership, and, in turn, that women must participate in economic sustainability, for which they use ancestral knowledge, something that defines the language, the education of children, food, handicraft textiles, poultry breeding and social reproduction, all of this in extreme poverty and with enormous pressure on their natural resources, such as water and land that’s been devastated by agrochemicals.

Regarding the study in India,³⁰ a survey was made in the community on April 3 and 4, 2019, using qualitative methodology and obtaining a response from 20 households. The respondents have an average age over 37, with children between 26 and 35 years of age; 80% were women, 20% men and

30 Suchiang, Salome; Formas de vida de mujeres indígenas de la comunidad de Umtrykhang, Meghalaya, North [Lifestyles of indigenous women from the community of Umtrykhang, Meghalaya, North] East India. Grassroot. July 2019.



there was no other gender; 85% were married and only 15% were single.

70% had more than 5 family members and the rest (30%) had only 3 to 5 members; 65% were unemployed and 35% had jobs; 60% had a monthly income of less than 5,000, while 40% had a monthly income between Rs. 5000-10,000.(31)

In addition to the educational aspect in the face-to-face phase, it was noted how essential the interaction among the participants was on a personal and an academic level, as well as the being able to share and reflect together on exciting and pressing topics.

They also expressed that the time constraint, the great distances that some of them had to travel, the availability of tools for documenting, and linguistic barriers also influenced the way of approaching the research and its results.

Despite the foregoing, the participants stated that the face-to-face experience and feedback motivated them to reaffirm their commitment to the community with which they work, to continue on with their work, and to recognize how important it is to believe and trust in themselves, “return to the sources, learn by living.”

From sunrise to sunset during the face-to-face phase, there was not a single moment without life lessons, without learning, not a moment in which each one was not a student and teacher at the same time.

Before exploring the concept of “entrepreneurship” and the resources to carry it out, we reflected on the interdependence between culture/identity, environmental justice, economic autonomy, and entrepreneurship. We talked about how the indigenous economy also consists of learning to value what is done as a community, and that it is

not based on transferring a capitalist vision to an indigenous context, but on giving an indigenous approach to the context itself, which entails a process of recovery and regeneration of the network of life.

The third methodological phase was the documentation of the process, the analysis of the studies carried out by the intercultural researchers, and the preparation of this document. The studies carried out by the intercultural researchers in the countries, the conceptual and curricular materials of the Diploma Course, and the text produced during the face-to-face phase were reviewed.

31 1 Rupia Hindu equivale a 0. 013950 US dolares americanos.



IV. The Indigenous women's vision of environmental justice



IV. THE INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S VISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In order to explore the concept of environmental justice, some questions raised by the researchers were: how can people freely interact with the environment, while protecting and preserving it? What natural assets do they possess? How are they being conceived? And how do they take care of them? How come, from the worldview of Indigenous Peoples, Mother Earth is considered a provider of life?

Two main aspects in this study include the relationship between environmental justice with the indigenous worldview and the right to food due to the impact on their livelihoods.

IV.1. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEW


The link between environmental justice and the worldview of Indigenous Peoples arises as a central issue, due to the sacred value of natural assets, land and territory, generations of people; animals, plants, minerals, all living beings in interrelation and interdependence. This aspect gives it a spiritual value, in which traditional knowledge passed on from generation to generation plays a fundamental role in their preservation, enjoying all that they inherited from their ancestors, and preventing the

collective territory from being affected or invaded by companies that extract and expropriate natural assets and expel peoples and women from their territories.

Environmental justice consists in respecting, safeguarding, and acknowledging the rights over natural assets and Indigenous Peoples as communities; in promoting the coexistence, protection, and rational use of the earth's assets, always thinking about protecting the life of current and future generations; in addition to the right to health, traditional medicine, territory, forests, land, water, and minerals.

In that context, they argue that environmental justice constitutes a collective need, since as they live in the same space —Mother Earth— the activities of the members of a community have consequences on their neighbors: what one does affects the others. This concept entails responsibilities and measures not only for the care and protection, but also for the restitution of the historical debt to Mother Earth, natural assets and territories that must be assumed and shared by the Governments, national and transnational companies, as well as other external actors.

The fact that many of these organizations are primarily responsible for promoting policies, legal frameworks and powerful structures that



promote and facilitate abuse in the extraction of resources, obligates them even more to assume those responsibilities as they generate pollution and intervene in indigenous territories, in the lives of their inhabitants, and in the world. Therefore, exploitative countries and companies must acknowledge their environmental obligations in favor of the countries that they have impoverished, through:

- ☞ *Respect and recognition of the collective rights of Peoples, particularly of indigenous women.*
- ☞ *Respect and recognition of the rights of life of natural assets, Mother Earth, and the territories.*
- ☞ *Restore and make up for the impacts and death inflicted on the natural assets, land, territories, and Indigenous Peoples and women with dignity and justice.*

This concept interrelates the vision of spirituality, traditional knowledge and the very structure of indigenous cultures. Although indigenous women are essential for protecting the environment and passing on values and practices to the next generations through the teachings and application of their traditional knowledge, there has been much predation and violence over the years—in all areas and levels—that have affected their spirits, which makes it urgent that the indigenous women rescue and restore their identities, dignity, and self-confidence through love.

The essence of environmental justice—especially from a life perspective—requires creating certain words and concepts, since it is not only important to name things, but also the way in which they are enunciated. For example, it is suggested that we replace the use of the word “resource,” based on the usefulness of things, that is, discard it once its function is fulfilled, and change it to “natural assets,” which is something that is taken care of, is protected, and has life.

In this way life is presented from two approaches: that of the culture of death, where there is exploitation, despair, predation, ecocides, the avoidance of responsibilities; and the culture of life, which seeks to care for and respect all expressions of life, and assumes and deals with the consequences of catastrophes and diseases of nature and people. The question is, then, “what is the vision of the Indigenous Peoples?” since the way in which things are seen is an indicator of the way in which they are going to live, and therefore, of how the environmental relations will be.

Indigenous women, therefore, consider that the analysis of environmental justice requires a vision from the worldview and culture of each people and in the case of Indigenous Peoples, it is done from a “cultural view of life,” through which Mother Earth, water, forests, animals, plants, seeds, and every living being are seen as natural assets with life and rights, with feelings and a soul. From that perspective, the person is part of the network of life, of a larger system, where nobody is greater, nobody is less. Therefore, life, energy, and service of Mother Earth, water, forests, animals, seas, rivers, seeds are taken care of, defended, and are given thanks based on the people’s spirituality.

From the culture of life, in the face of diseases caused to Mother Nature, humanity, and the universe, there will be ways to recover and protect it, opportunities can be found because everyone takes responsibility for it. Pests and diseases of people, plants, animals, forests are studied and healed with the very force of Mother Nature, so as not to break the life cycle.

“...We learned that the territory is organized and arranged in spaces intended for forests, spaces for crops, and spaces for housing”.

When Mother Earth, water, forests, animals, plants, seeds, and every living being are seen as resources to exploit, to have the life extracted out of them, killed and converted into money, profit, and power, then the culture of death prevails, the illnesses of Mother Earth ... everything is seen in despair, with terror, as an unfortunate event, which will end the life that remains. Irresponsibility prevails.

Based on that culture, the individual, humanity, and mainly the human being with economic and political power and its Governments are constituted in the Center, in the owners, in the dominators and exploiters of what they call natural resources. The natural order of Mother Nature and its life cycles are not recognized, nor are they respected, but these cycles are destroyed in the name of progress, growth, and capital. Pests and diseases of individuals, plants, animals, and forests have been caused, and attempts are made to cure them with antibiotics, insecticides, herbicides, pesticides, which cause life to die slowly.

The life of Mother Earth is exploited, manipulated, polluted, and destroyed, including the water, forests, animals, seas, rivers, and seeds, to the point of leaving them sick, polluted, and lifeless..

Therefore, it is important to learn about Mother Earth from observation and experiences, since in order to preserve life the natural cycles have to be identified –times of scarcity and abundance– and recognize which territories can be arranged and that there are spaces for all: some intended for forests, others for crops, for housing, and others as sacred sites. Similarly, environmental justice promotes the value of all individuals and Peoples, and that everyone should be treated fairly.

IV.2. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, LIVELIHOODS, AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD

Having their own productive and food systems ensure the right to food and food sovereignty of indigenous women, Indigenous Peoples, and humanity in the world, but also contribute to the care, protection, and defense of nature, Mother Earth, natural assets, biodiversity, and ecosystems. For Indigenous Peoples' women, environmental justice is linked to planting, protection of traditional seeds, and ancestral know-hows and knowledge that are passed on intergenerationally in order to guarantee food sovereignty.

The main foods consumed in families and communities according to the studies are:

- ✓ *Basic grains, legumes, dairy, fruits, animals of each region. They are foods mainly consumed by the elderly and adults.*
- ✓ *Preparation and consumption of traditional and typical foods of each town and region, according to family events –birth, presentation, marriage, birthdays, harvest, and death.*
- ✓ *Processed food: sausages, soups, carbonated drinks, fried foods, candy, fast food. It is mainly for children and young people, especially in semi-urban or urban areas.*

In the case of India,⁽³²⁾ the results of the study in the Umtrykhang community show that 80% of families produce and sell rice, ginger, turmeric, Scotch broom, and chili. The area used for agriculture depends on the abilities of the families. The measurement system for their area is their own

32 Suchiang, Salome; Formas de vida de mujeres indígenas de la comunidad de Umtrykhang, Meghalaya, North [Lifestyles of indigenous women from the community of Umtrykhang, Meghalaya, North] East India. Grassroot. July, 2019.

community system known as “dang,” so that 45% use more than 30 dang, 35% have between 20-30 dang, and 20% have an average of 10-20 dang.

All families use the terracing pattern once and the slash and burn technique twice a year, and apply the same pattern of organic agricultural production with no fertilizers. The findings allow the researcher to assume that they can support their families through agricultural production, provided there are no natural disasters or insect pests. Only 20% of families have received some level of support from the Government, such as Swacch Bharat Abhiyan (SBA)(33) although most of them do not have information about government programs.

It is noted, however, that women deal with additional challenges through sexist practices that impede their access to land. Although they are guardians of the worldview, they are carriers of ancestral knowledge to preserve the environment and maintain traditions. In many cases, they have no control over the land, nor do they participate in decisions about the products that are grown and how to do it. In many cases, men have more interest in generating faster and greater production than in respecting traditional production systems.

As can be seen, studies conclude that food consumption varies in families and communities according to the place where they live, whether rural, semi-urban, or urban communities.

Participants who live in rural communities have land for planting with forestland, nearby rivers, their strength and advantage are that they produce at least 75% of food they consume. In other words, the largest amount of food they consume depends on their own and local production. In these cases, diversification and complementation between agricultural, forestry, poultry, organic livestock

systems are observed. They use and manage Mother Earth, the forest, water, respectfully and rationally, ensuring healthy food free from pollutants and agrochemicals.

They also use and benefit in an optimal way from

- ☒ *Agricultural, forestry, poultry, contaminated livestock, genetically manipulated systems, dependent on agrochemicals and pesticides.*
- ☒ *Abuse, exploitation and irrational use of Mother Earth, the forest, water, plants, seeds, animals, as well as the cheap labor of women and Indigenous Peoples.*
- ☒ *Polluted, transgenic foods, with agrochemicals, preservatives, and pollutants.*
- ☒ *Contaminated air, soil, sources of water, deteriorated and at risk of disappearing, putting the lives of present and future generations, animals, plants, minerals, and humanity at risk.*
- ☒ *Abuse, exploitation and increasing pollution of natural assets, based on the culture of consumerism and accumulation.*
- ☒ *Plunder and pollution of forests, water sources, native seeds and ancestral know-hows.*
- ☒ *Food insecurity for animals, plants, forests, and humanity.*
- ☒ *Dependent production and food systems, based on monopolies –agrochemicals, pesticides, transgenic seeds, genetically manipulated animals, grains, legumes, fruits– weakening of the community and indigenous economy.*

Table N° 3: Production practices that impede environmental justice

33 Swacch Bharat Abhiyan is a national cleaning campaign promoted by the Government of India. https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/major_initiatives/swacch-bharat-abhiyan/

natural assets, overcoming the culture of waste, throwing things away, and hoarding. They preserve and conserve forests, water sources, native seeds, and ancestral know-hows. These autonomous productive and local exchange and food systems promote the local, community and indigenous economy and contribute to the economic autonomy of the women and the peoples.

On the contrary, participants who live in urban communities, or who do not have access to land for cultivation and forest, depend 100% on external production, resulting in the fact that their right to food sovereignty is not fulfilled.

IV.3. ASSESSMENT OF THE STRATEGIES USED BY INDIGENOUS WOMEN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

One of the first obstacles that people engaged in activism have to deal with, and specifically women who work in the defense of the community or claiming the right to environmental justice, is that many times there are people inside and outside the community who seek to undermine their credibility, stigmatizing them as defenders. They are intimidated, criminalized, and there are even provocative actions within communities that lead to violence, polarization, repression, disorganization, and the weakening of their struggles.

In order to promote strategies, it is important to clearly identify the negative impacts of environmental injustice on the personal, family, collective life of the Indigenous Peoples' women, which mainly include:

- ◆ Ecological or environmental violence, and its impact on the quality of life and health of indigenous women, families, peoples, natural assets, and biodiversity.
- ◆ The creation of protected areas, which restrict and violate the right and access of the Peoples to their ancestral territories.
- ◆ Weakening of the collective identity and sense of

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ <i>Deforestation and its impact on obtaining medicinal plants, which leads to the loss of traditions and knowledge</i> ☒ <i>The use of agrochemicals and toxic fertilizers, which affect the life of the land and the health of community members.</i> ☒ <i>The continuous exploitation of the land and its relation to water scarcity</i> ☒ <i>Climate change and its impact on the mutation and intensity of natural phenomena</i> ☒ <i>Waste accumulation and no waste treatment.</i> ☒ <i>The market, competition, and unfair prices promoting agricultural practices harmful to the environment that contribute to the dismantling of ancestral productive practices.</i>

Table Nº 4: Factors impeding the achievement of environmental justice
 Source: My own elaboration based on studies and discussion with researchers.

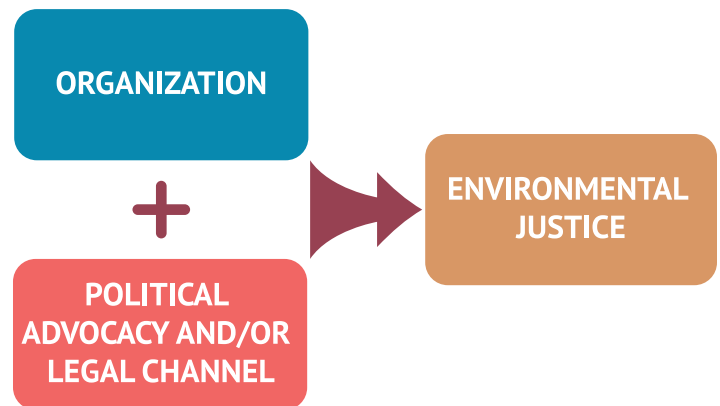
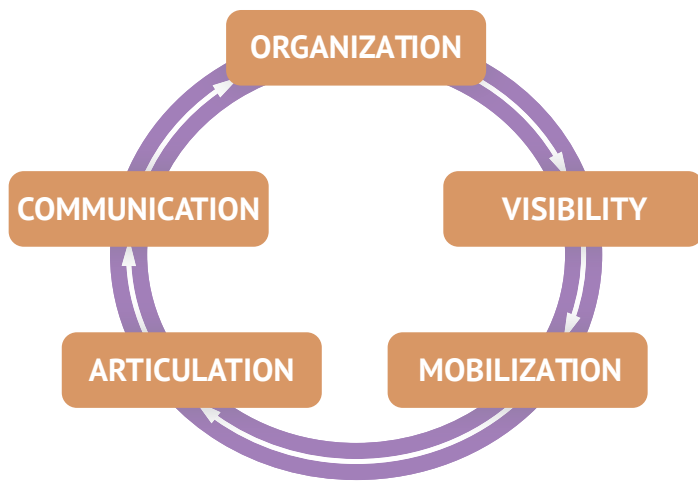
ownership, by the dispossession of the land and the invasion of indigenous territories.

- ◆ The right to water, land, native seeds, ancestral medicine, food and food sovereignty is violated.
- ◆ Criminalization of women, men, communities, and peoples who assume the collective struggle for the defense, protection and defense of territories, natural assets, and environmental justice.

In light of foregoing, indigenous women have implemented strategies, which have their origin in **organization**, which leads to the articulation, mobilization, visibility, communication that complement one another and result in their empowerment as persons with individual and collective rights, and that make political advocacy possible, and, in extreme cases, the use of legal channels in order to promote structural transformations necessary to achieve environmental justice.

with families and communities, extending to the movements of women and peoples, from their own know-hows, systems, rules and abilities, returning to the ancestral know-hows and practices of defense and collective struggle. Organizational processes must be sustained, must reaffirm and strengthen their own ways of organization and self-government as Indigenous Peoples, with the dignified, equitable, and real participation of indigenous women. In order to achieve satisfactory results, it is important to be clear about the objectives and route to follow.

As a result of the organization, indigenous women **analyzed** some strategies that aim to achieve their overall empowerment in order to progress towards environmental justice. Two processes they have used for this are political advocacy and the use of legal channels.




Some strategies used in organizations to achieve the objectives of Environmental Justice are mobilization, articulation, communication. The results of the study on their assessment are set forth below:

A) ORGANIZATION

Indigenous women say that integrating and actively participating in an organization is the first and most important step in the fight for environmental justice. The organization starts

B) MOBILIZATION

This is the collective political action in order to make oneself heard, to denounce and express disagreement or positioning in the face of events that are an assault on life and the collective rights



of indigenous women and Indigenous Peoples: mobilization at the family and community, regional, national, and international levels get better results when expressed through a single voice and a single articulated and agreed-upon word. The mobilization is, therefore, the result of the organizational capacity of the people to defend a right, which arises from a demand and has a clear objective. Mobilization favors visibility at the interpersonal or family, regional, national and international levels of the community, organization, or People.

Generally, greater impact in mobilization is achieved by creating alliances with institutions and sectors, going out to the streets to make demands, being clear about what is going to be requested, why the mobilization is taking place, and defining who will be the main players, for which it is important to reach a general consensus of ideas and positions.

C) ARTICULATION

This consists of creating a fabric or a network through the confluence of various forces that unite in the face of a common demand. It can be territorial, generational, gender-related, people-related, or a combination of those. It constitutes the possibility of meeting, having dialogue and the complementarity of common know-hows, skills, strengths, resources, and routes, based on objectives around common demands, on the perspective of rights and your own strengths as women and Peoples.

For effective articulation it is essential to respect the diversity and differences articulated in each organization, as well as good leadership and the real, dignified and equitable participation of the indigenous women, grandmothers, youth; ancestral, territorial organizations and the strength of other similar movements that are sensitive to the demands of the women of the Indigenous Peoples, based on the culture of life and good living.

To achieve a good degree of articulation, it is important to consider training, awareness, and dialogue with women so that they understand their rights and what they are fighting for. It is necessary to speak and involve various organizations in order to become stronger- and have their help in planning actions. For the articulations that respond to the demands of the indigenous women, the organizations of the Indigenous Peoples that fight for the indigenous rights must be considered suitable allies; therefore, it will be important to obtain their support and involvement.

D) COMMUNICATION

One of the objectives of intercultural research is to communicate the knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and women and let it be known, since it is useless if stays tucked away in a drawer, a library, or a computer. Therefore, it is pertinent to ask how to communicate the results.

In the indigenous languages of the researchers, the term “communication” is coincidentally related to the transfer or transference of words. A consensus was reached then that for communication to exist there must be at least two people and they must interact; that is, if there is a message there must be a response or some reciprocity. Likewise, communicating involves interest in the Other, in what they have to say and in the expression of their feelings. Understanding and empathy are important here because they help people feel empathy and solidarity.

Regarding communication in the communities of the countries and Peoples of the study, it was found that although in some areas the Internet allows contact by email and cell phone, there are areas where traditional ways of communication are still prevailing; for example, through whistles, flares or chimes, beating the drum; using a blowing

horn, or by word of mouth. Evidence was also found on the loss of face-to-face communication and direct contact with people, and the importance of recovering them in order to preserve knowledge and identity was discussed.

In all cases, however, it was found that communication is constituted of the intentional, planned, and continuous political action for the free expression of women and Peoples, which transcends time, spaces and is massive, in order to have an impact and influence the domestic and power structures. Communication sensitizes, empowers, condemns, and informs. Therefore, it should be oriented to:

- ✓ Awareness and training
- ✓ Identity, empowerment, and articulation
- ✓ Political hierarchy and raising awareness of the forces, advances, and contributions of the indigenous women and peoples.

To file a complaint about facts that violate and make an assault on the rights of indigenous women, generations, the collective rights of Indigenous Peoples and Mother Nature.

The main channels identified in the study to disseminate information in the communities were::

- ❖ Public meetings, churches, and among local leaders
- ❖ Through songs
- ❖ Informational campaigns
- ❖ The different trainings offered by indigenous groups
- ❖ Digital social networks
- ❖ Brochures
- ❖ Community radio and local television

❖ Contributions in print media

Finalmente, cabe destacar que la creatividad eFinally, it should be noted that creativity is key to communication and there is no single formula for sharing a message, so it is best to find new ways to communicate from the codes of Indigenous Peoples and information technologies. Communication strategies among Indigenous Peoples should allow the use of alternative means and their own means, such as shells, community radio, music, and theater.


In any case, it is best to establish a monitoring body and give voice to those who need it most.

E) POLITICAL ADVOCACY

This is the ability to influence individuals or organizations that have decision-making power by means of a planned strategy. Political advocacy is, therefore, collective, intentional, and sustained political action in order to influence structures of power and domination, enforcing collective rights as Indigenous Peoples and women achieve change and transformations in favor of the lives of their Peoples. It is promoted among different areas, including the family and community, municipal, regional, national, and international levels.

In order to carry out the political advocacy actions, it is necessary to have an Advocacy Plan, which is translated into the set of activities that are established to be carried out at a specific time and whose specific objective is to achieve some kind of change. Therefore, it seeks to have an impact on public, governmental, and decision-making spaces in local contexts.

In the countries pertinent to this study, a vast experience was found in processes of political advocacy, from the family, to the community, local, and external organizations in relation to community demands which include cases of access to basic services for families and that reduce the burden and



working hours of women; defense of territory against threats from extractive companies; the right to a life free of violence, with the right to organization and political participation, and demand for economic projects and enterprises from and for women.

There are also experiences of political advocacy promoted by organizations and spaces of articulation of indigenous women before international organizations such as the UN, the OAS, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples before the UN, among others.

F) USE OF NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND GLOBAL LEGAL CHANNELS

Another strategy used by indigenous women, from which experiences were found in the countries and Peoples of this study, is the use of legal channels. The lessons learned include the need to not only to be familiar with the indigenous justice system, but also to be familiar the Western system and its codes, since it is predominant and can be very useful for defending a right or exposing a violation of the law. Other lessons learned were:

- ❖ It is important to keep in mind, throughout the legal process, that you are dealing with human beings and the actions that can be derived from a sentence have consequences on the lives of people, land, territory, and natural resources;
- ❖ The timing for exposing or defending a person, a community, a People, or a cause is crucial, so you have to be very concise;
- ❖ It isn't easy for a judge to make a decision;
- ❖ The way in which a case is presented has a great influence on how a situation is perceived or the past is reconstructed. It is essential to gather evidence and prepare good arguments.

The legal route, not being the first strategy used

for the advocacy, may be best, although it requires more preparation, knowledge, and financing. It is worth fighting and seeking the support of other peoples, since this kind of pressure can help for obtaining a favorable ruling.



V. The indigenous women's vision of economic autonomy



V. THE INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S VISION OF ECONOMIC AUTONOMY

Indigenous women have always stated that they care, feed, and heal their people and Mother Earth; and, in addition, they contribute to the comprehensive reproduction of their peoples. Their approaches to economic autonomy are based on the indigenous and community economy for the fullness of life, for the Good Living of their original Peoples and of humanity, which is oriented to the protection of:

- 🌿 Mother Earth, natural assets, and territory
- 🌿 Families and generations: people, animals, plants, and every living thing.
- 🌿 The community and the peoples.

The main values supporting their economic autonomy are *“community, joy, service, collective work, and in mutual help, honesty and honor, the collective distribution of benefits, collective responsibility, and justice”*.⁽³⁴⁾ *For indigenous women, economic autonomy is linked to the struggle for land, territory, and natural resources, as a demand to achieve environmental justice. In that process of struggle, they have used various strategies, ranging from strengthening their ancestral indigenous knowledge, expanding and strengthening alliances, to sharing experiences and information, all to restore their collective dignity and identity, and confidence in their own strength*⁽³⁵⁾

For them, the indigenous economy also consists in learning to put value on what is done as a community, and that is not based on passing on a capitalist vision to an indigenous context, but on giving an indigenous approach to their own context, which entails a process of recovery and regeneration of the web of life. The indigenous community economy is a collective and cooperative system based on care and protection, and that takes advantage of nature's assets for the common good, and seeks to guarantee the future of the next generations. Additionally, it promotes the collective values of reciprocity, solidarity, justice, honesty, inclusion and sustainability, it responds to the collective interest and orientations of the community, and it recognizes and applies indigenous traditional knowledge and strengthens social ties.

They consider that this economic system differs from the capitalist economy, because the latter is based on the accumulation of wealth without limits, taking ownership of the assets of the great majority. It has a multinational, predatory, and individualistic nature. Everything in it is based on supply and demand, the use of technology to optimize production and it promotes the extraction of money regardless of the means or ways in which it is obtained and tends towards exploitation. In that economic system, indigenous women are stripped of their rights. A woman is considered as cheap labor. She is intimidated and, in certain cases, forced to emigrate. She also works individually and deals with

34 Intercultural Researchers' Joint Analysis. Diploma Course. July 2019.

35 III International Symposium of indigenous women on ecological violence and reproductive health. April 2018.

high competence and is forced to fight against the patriarchy.

In contrast, in the indigenous community economic system, women are transmitters of language, knowledge and traditions, guardians of Mother Earth, caregivers, healers and protectors. They work collectively. The only overlap is that, in both systems they have to fight against the patriarchy.

An interesting reflection, therefore, is about the perception of the qualities and tools available to them to achieve their economic autonomy, whether from the capitalist or indigenous economic model. An important aspect is the need to deconstruct the ideas according to which, in order to achieve autonomy and economic improvement, it is essential to have a neo-liberal education or perspective. The parameters imposed by capitalism do not work in the same way in the context of indigenous communities. For example, illiteracy is not synonymous with ignorance —and consequently, neither is it not being capable— wealth is not necessarily equal to the accumulation of money, since in the indigenous territories there are other types of wealth, such as that based on ancestral knowledge, spirituality, or contact with Mother Earth.

Contemporary indigenous women move between the two economic systems, and in order to find the best strategies they must know, distinguish and question both of them. Another of the challenges identified is to discover how to awaken the economy of indigenous women in the midst of a colonizing system prevailing everywhere and at all levels. They pointed out that these situations have to be observed from the indigenous view and not from the capitalist one, and there must be a rethinking of the way how economic activities are conducted in the communities, as well as their true value.

V.1. ECONOMIC AUTONOMY, RECOVERING PRODUCTIVE ANCESTRAL PRACTICES

The research in Oaxaca's Mixteca Alta region in Mexico was carried out from the experience women had in the production of mushrooms in order to sell them in the large market of Tlaxiaco. The experiences of women organized as the Ethnomycological Group of the Mixteca promoted micro tourism, which is a local know-how of more than 600 years. They have promoted the strengthening and restoration of ecosystems. They have managed to add other municipalities of Mixteca Alta and Baja, the area of Huajuapán de León, and communal and civil authorities, as well as mushroom women and cooks to the process. They have more allies, reaching a good regional area of advocacy, with a wide diversity of producers that include textile manufacturers in Santa María Cuquila.

As they have pointed out, one motivation has been to see and suffer the situation of exclusion in which the women live, because:

“in the communities, in jobs, men have a role and can have a longer-term economic income, and women have to see daily how we are going to live, what to do” ... and in the end, “we learn many things based on more ancestral knowledge. For example, in the community there is an electrician. The electrician had to go out to learn, because it is not our business ... the woman, on the other hand, knows how to weave, make loom, so she did not have to leave to learn it, as this knowledge allows her and takes advantage of it to create some kind of asset, in this case money, and she does it without

damaging the ecosystem.”

“[...] from dyes, wool, thread, the care of the sheep and with the sheep, the use of the waste to create fertilizer to nourish the plants, a conservation network ... that in the field of environmental justice ... they are very responsible, very reasonable, but unconsciously ... from spirituality, from knowledge, that is, I already know and apply it, and economic autonomy, because resources are used, although it has diminished ... before there was no need to come to the Diploma Course, we were so self-reliant people who did not leave town. There was a time when there was already a need to get a child to go to school and from there it was everything, because in the community we don't need money to live, clothes are produced, food is made, but when the need to give money started, that's when our economic and environmental structure begins to be destroyed”.(36)

On the dilemma between adopting the capitalist model or being isolated, they think that:

“we are already integrated! It was little by little and you don't even feel it anymore, and you don't fall into an argument, you don't say anymore: 'It's good, it's bad,' you just say: 'We have to do this.' We, the communities, have always adapted ourselves. There must be a balance: if I become defensive, I will end up in conflict. For example, there are cases of mining companies. They arrive in the community of Santa María Cuquila, there are mines and they have already carried out a survey and there were years where people did not even know how to read, a company arrived and told them to sign this concession for what you possess and we are going to give you some money. Then, they signed a concession, but now that the municipal agent says: 'No, I studied and this is bad and they will take away our houses where the line is, the exploitation

of the mining company.” And you say, When the mining company comes, maybe in 2020, how are we going to react? On the defensive? Are we going to fight? And say, 'No, you're not coming in here?'"

“I live in a very beautiful place, where more than 70 percent of what is on the market is produced in my town ... and there is a lot of respect ... but there are also conflicts that have damaged us a lot as communities, although we understand that there are discussions about community agricultural issues and this is the way to solve them in our own culture.”

Belén Itahí Bautista

The dilemma generates conflicts and polarization within communities, as indicated in this case:

“What do you generate? Violence. What should be done? Resort to institutions, perhaps, such as UNESCO. We have wealth even greater than mining, we produce textiles, we continue to use them, why do we not reinforce our textiles? All the people produce, use, and all the people know about our textile making and what it represents, and how to release it to the market, sell it, train ourselves as entrepreneurs and position it, and sets up a company in Cuquila, as a parent company of our products. Then, at some point, UNESCO may turn to see us as a heritage and when the mining company comes, it would not be so easy for them to arrive and get in. [...] But [acting] intelligently, organized and not like that, like fighting and saying: 'Don't come'; that is, to do what we have always done, but, now, giving it a defensive approach.” (37)

The study shows the validity of textiles in the mountain town, produced with a backstrap loom, and offers a strategy in favor of its revaluation,

36 The strategic value of Mixtec weavers in Santa María Cuquila. Belén Itahí Bautista Quiroz (San Esteban Atlatlahuca, Oaxaca, Mexico)

37 The information for this intercultural research advance comes, in general, from the presentation “Santa María Cuquila,” by Belén Itahí Bautista Quiroz, an original document unpublished in Spanish, in Power Point format, undated.

promotion, sustainability and protection. The conviction is that it will allow indigenous women and their families to progress in their economic autonomy, taking advantage of ancestral know-hows –of which one of the best results, and with the greatest potential, is the production of textiles.

The precarious market for handicrafts, the devaluation of traditionally crafted art, and the lack of productive opportunities for single mothers, in particular, are relevant to the issue. This is due, in turn, to the devaluation among young people of their own clothing, and to the discriminatory context prevailing in Mixteca Alta, an extensive Oaxaca region where Santa María Cuquila is located.

The challenges are to make the gradual loss of textiles noticed by the community, raise people's awareness about their cultural and economic value, recognize the social importance of artisans, and involve young people in the preservation of clothing, having an impact abroad that revitalizes the community textile industry.

With respect to the study conducted in the Umtrykhang community in India,(38) it was found that :

- ☒ 50% of families sell their agricultural products in the Mawhati village Community Market;
- ☒ in addition, 45% not only sell in Mawhati but also sell in Assam,
- ☒ while only 5% of them sell elsewhere
- ☒ 50% pay inter-state taxes and no family estimates their investments and income resulting from the sale of their products.

38 Suchiang, Salome; Formas de vida de mujeres indígenas de la comunidad de Umtrykhang, Meghalaya, North [Lifestyles of indigenous women from the community of Umtrykhang, Meghalaya, North] East India. Grasroot. July 2019.

V.2. DISCRIMINATION AND EXCLUSION OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN IMPEDE ECONOMIC AUTONOMY

One of the objectives of the intercultural research in Senetwo, (39) la town of 3,000 inhabitants located in the Kenyan county of West Pokot, conducted with the Pastoral Communities Empowerment Program, is to transfer personal, technical, and business skills to the producers for their application in indigenous pastoral agriculture, and it precisely addresses the discrimination suffered by women for economic autonomy. They identify that, from the perspective of gender, the structural problem in the region is that:

“Indigenous Pokot women suffer great discrimination by men. They are oppressed. Their rights are violated and their problems are never addressed. The Pokot culture is very rich because it still values its tradition,” however, “It is very difficult for a Pokot woman to participate in income-generating activities because she is not recognized as someone valuable, her place is in the kitchen and not in serious activities”.

As a result, the main objective of the research is “to empower indigenous women so that they can be financially stable, improve their well-being, and have sustainable livelihoods.”

The foregoing is a precondition for reducing gender gaps, for the harmony and social well-being not only of Senetwo, but rather:

39 La información para este avance de investigación intercultural proviene, en general, del original inédito en Word presentado por Elvi Kaptoyo, en inglés, sin título y sin fecha, 21 pp. Desde Senetwo, una indagación hacia la autonomía de las mujeres Pokot. Elvi Kaptoyo (West Pokot, Kenya)

“It implies political dimensions in all areas, including education, poverty, work, financial markets, political, and economic empowerment, institutions and economic development in general. Although women make up 51% of the population in Kenya, gender disparities persist in most sectors.”

Providing a sociodemographic, cultural, and spiritual perspective based on the cosmogony of the Pokot people, and their region, with a solid theoretical-conceptual and legal framework, and a series of interviews, this work assesses the situation to obtain empirical evidence on “the profile of women in economic processes,” which leads “the interventions to be implemented to empower them” (pp. 3-4), both in public policies and in projects of non-governmental entities.

As the researcher points out:

“In my community, economic empowerment is something new, because we are a community of shepherds – we raise cattle, sheep, goats – and we rely on doing that, but we are trying to change the way women are considered. We tell them: ‘Look, you can do this job,’ or ‘Yes, you can change your life if you get involved in economic activities.’”

She adds:

“Our society is patriarchal and our women learn that their place is in the kitchen, that they cannot engage in profitable businesses or go against cultural norms, because we are told: ‘Your place is in the kitchen,’ ‘You are a mother,’ ‘You are supposed to take care of your husband and your family,’ or ‘Big business is for men’; that is, the main problem is machismo, as well as the level of illiteracy: since women do not study beyond high school, they do not know about business.”

The impetus of her motivations as an activist is condensed in this phrase: “I love the community and I really want to change their lives.” But not from

Redemptorism:

“The world is changing. I really want women to have better education and better lives ... I go to my community, to different regions and I speak about why they are repressed and stressed out; many go out to drink beer and it is devastating, because families disintegrate, children leave school, because there is no one to talk to them, who guides them; their mothers get involved in shady business and they follow down the same path.”

Although the challenges seem disproportionate, their priority is to contribute to:

“Changing the vision of the community. Various adults believe that what I do is a feminist act, as if I wanted to tell their women to act differently, to be rebellious to their husbands, but that is not the case. I would like to change their perspective of life and show them that if there are other people who are doing it, they can also do it and improve.”

The economic autonomy of women is imperative in this process for the way in which they may gain access to land and other community assets that are now forbidden.

“We could produce and the issue of economic empowerment would be resolved ... because today you have no right when it comes to land. You can’t say: ‘This is my land.’ No, because it belongs to the husband.”

“We could produce and the issue of economic empowerment would be resolved ... because today you have no right when it comes to land. You can’t say: ‘This is my land.’ No, because it belongs to the husband.”

Elvi

V.3. SPIRITUAL HEALING, A STEP TOWARDS REACHING ECONOMIC AUTONOMY

The issue of discrimination against women, as a restrictive factor for achieving economic autonomy, is also addressed in Guatemala. Disempowerment, low self-esteem, and weak decision making of Mayan Mam women;⁽⁴⁰⁾ devaluation of ancestral productive and food systems, and malnutrition of boys and girls of that original group are the main consequences of social exclusion identified in Toj Coman and Las Nubes –villages of the highlands of San Martín Sacatepequez, municipality located in the Department of Quetzaltenango, 221 kilometers from the capital of Guatemala.

Both communities are the focus of advocacy for the intercultural research, whose title “Revaluation of the role of women, ancestral productive systems and food and its impact on Maya Mam’s cold land children’s malnutrition in the Municipality of San Martín, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala,” also defines the objective.

It is developed as part of the Political Association

⁴⁰ The sources for this intercultural research progress entitled “Revaluation of the role of women, productive and ancestral food systems and their impact on Maya Mam’s cold land children’s malnutrition in the Municipality of San Martín, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala,” are, in general, the unpublished original document in Word and Power Point presented by Anabella Pilar Perén Curruchiche, the second one dated July 13, 2019, and both without number of pages. Reestablishing know-hows, key for the Maya Mam women of Toj Coman and Las Nubes. Anabella Pilar Perén Curruchiche (Maya Mam of Quetzaltenango, Guatemala)



Foto por: CONAMI

of Mayan Moloj Women, an organization of which the author is part, emerged two decades ago “as a space of thought and wisdom for the Mayan woman, with the participation of leaders with wide experience at the national and international level,” to “work for the building and strengthening of a movement of Mayan women,” encouraging them to “fully exercise their civil and political rights through their participation in decision-making spaces in positions of popular election and by appointment, responding to needs and demands of indigenous peoples and women with a multicultural vision.” And it provides a brief national and regional geographical, historical, cultural, and economic perspective, as well as regarding the situation of women and indigenous populations

in order to frame their social, economic, cultural, political, and environmental role in that micro context.

This research recommends “healing,” as a step in a Plan in order to achieve the economic autonomy of Mam Mayan women, through the reconstruction of know-how; in the same way as with the education of children, related to food and agriculture, without which environmental justice and real gender equality is considered unfeasible.

San Martín Sacatepéquez suffers high levels of unemployment, so:

“there is a lot of internal migration, because they look for a job in other municipalities of the departmental capital of Quetzaltenango; they move to farms to be employed, or to the capital or other departments; and even abroad to the United States.”

This causes indigenous women to take on the full responsibility for their children, which

“is very sad.” “Men leave with the hope that they will return or send financial aid in order to survive with their children. Some have done it, because there one sees very formal households ... but they don’t come back, so it possible that the family has a place to live, but there is family disintegration because there is no father or there are cases where women also migrate, leaving children with grandparents, aunts, or older siblings. It has had an impact on young people right now because they lack parental affection.”

Or,

“women are left alone and they leave them living with their mothers-in-law, where they are psychologically violated because the mother-in-law is the one who controls all her activities, which has provoked machismo. However, I have seen that at some point when they are in crisis there

are women who manage to leave by themselves, because they know how to make ‘huipiles,’ they are weavers, or they are employed as farmers in some seasons, and in any case they use their skills.”

It is this wealth of know-hows that Moloj and Anabella Pilar herself consider the factor to revalue, since it will allow women to have economic autonomy, which is also related to the conservation of territory. This is when they turn to what they have learned from grandparents: growing crops.

The vital role of women is evident, since they are responsible for family, health, continuity of ancestral knowledge, economic sustainability, and care of the ecosystem. But one problem is that, although they are trying to organize themselves, “municipal governments and policies that promote paternalism are not good. They have abilities, but currently they think that “They are going to vote for me, let’s give them away things, and not just in the year they have to vote.”

Her ceaseless work, in short, is to promote the economic autonomy of women, who:

“sare really autonomous... they are experiencing it... there are women, yes, they depend on men or the policies of the institutions, and that is what causes the loss of the previous ways of working... but the ladies say: we have to work, we have to work.”

V.4. ECONOMIC AUTONOMY AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY ECONOMY

For life, work, production, exchange, trade, and what is obtained, the economy is considered a means in order to live. We enjoy it. We live and love what it is done with it. We do not live to accumulate. We produce to live, not just to live to produce; you live to care for and love life.

In order to avoid conflicts, disadvantages, and privileges among peoples, currency is not used in the indigenous and community economy, since the value rather than the price of the products is seen, so that they exchange what they produce and what other peoples or families need. They price of goods is not sought, but rather the value of those goods for the lives of peoples, families, and their animals.

The indigenous and community economy is oriented to:

Procurar el respeto, resguardo y uso racional de la madre naturaleza, para garantizar la vida de las actuales y futuras generaciones.

- ❖ Seeking respect, protection and the rational use of Mother Nature in order to sustain the lives of current and future generations.
- ❖ Production and exchange processes based on an order and organization of fishermen, farmers, “cayuqueros” (those who steer canoes), weavers, grazing, among others.
- ❖ Knowing and respecting the seasons: fishing, grazing, sowing, and cutting down or harvesting, each with their own paces. This allows for an abundance of products, as well as providing work and opportunities for everyone;

- ❖ Means of transportation (by land, by sea, and on the lake) are not polluted, as it is on foot, with the support of animals, carts, and cayucos (small canoes); rather, it contributes to the people’s health.
- ❖ Organizing to thank, celebrate, clean seas, rivers, lakes, forests, roads, in partnership and voluntarily, without the need to pay for a day’s work or obligating people; it was considered a voluntary service, of respect and care for what has been used.

The entire pastoral system as well as agriculture is based on the relationship, dialogue, and understanding with respect to the signs of nature and the agricultural calendar as a foundation. The following identified elements are the basis of the agricultural system:

- ☞ Acknowledging being part of mother nature.
- ☞ The observation and reading of the signs of nature.
- ☞ The sacred meaning of the life of each element of nature.
- ☞ Respect and a deep, direct, and ongoing relationship with the elements of nature and the cosmos, with their movements and moments.
- ☞ Responsibility in the regeneration and life of the different elements of mother nature.
- ☞ Living, cleaning, sowing, and cultivating at the pace set by Mother Nature.
- ☞ Coexisting, learning, and walking over time.
- ☞ Collective work with mutual help.
- ☞ Natural fertilizer, which nature itself provides; what is consumed is returned, because everything is used again.

Regarding this last part, their determining factors include, among others:

- ◆ In order reach it, women must tap into their strengths, energies, know-hows, and powers; they must recognize that they have the ability to be, to defend themselves, and to take care of their life and other vital expressions
- ◆ Making visible and positioning the contributions, practices, and strengths that women give to the lives of families, territory, animals, natural assets, wisdom, the science of Indigenous Peoples, and the web of life. It's time to reassess their work and stop disqualifying them
- ◆ Not depending on external resources or institutions, but rather on their own strengths, because there lies the true autonomy.

Likewise, the researchers reviewed more specific aspects that connect economic autonomy with the indigenous community economy which include, among others:

- ★ Promoting traditional knowledge, respect for the cycles of life and for Mother Nature. For example, every moment and activity has its place in time, so it is important to know how to read the signs of nature and always seek the preservation of the environment
- ★ Exchanging production processes based on order and organization according to the need
- ★ Work is always collective and seeks mutual help
- ★ There is a diversity of products, so as not to generate competition, as well as solidarity, which means one thinks first of the local consumption and of guaranteeing that the members of the community have access to the products and can exchange know-hows
- ★ The economy must be proactive, ensuring current interests without forgetting to take care of the viability of the next generations
- ★ It is important to share and distribute, so that

goods are multiplied, and not forget to give thanks and celebrate in adherence to traditions

- ★ Many answers to the needs and concerns are in the past, in the ancestral knowledge.

V.5. ECONOMIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Entrepreneurship is one of the supporting pillars of economic autonomy and arises from collective processes in order to achieve a common good that can lead to improving space, the economy or services, among many other needs. However, it was emphasized that entrepreneurship requires money, otherwise the exercise of rights may remain only as a palliative.

The characteristics of entrepreneurship among indigenous women are as follows:

- ▣ They are collective in nature, based on integration and mutual help
- ▣ They usually arise from a crisis derived from an economic, emotional, or cognitive need, or from growth or exercising a right
- ▣ They are based on community values, such as care for the environment, flora and fauna, interculturality, communal work, or reciprocity
- ▣ They promote emotional growth, healing, women's leadership, and the defense of their rights

Intercultural researchers —after reflecting on the characteristics of indigenous women's enterprises— considered a primary question for any indigenous person interested in entrepreneurship: is the purpose of indigenous women's enterprises to generate wealth? They agree that, from the capitalist point of view, yes, because one of the values promoted

by this system is the accumulation without limit of wealth. Given this, it was then inquired about what their goals would be under the indigenous and community perspective, responding that they were of a collective nature, such as sharing, exchanging, living together, healing, and fostering culture, apart from emphasizing that entrepreneurship is a means, not an end.

This dialogue allowed for addressing the different perspectives about goods: how, in the

capitalist system, they are seen from utilitarianism perspective, while in the indigenous system there are goods of exchange; that is, they will not always be exchanged for a currency, because when it happens, the product is given another value.

Following this line of thought, a comparative table on certain characteristics of the traditional and neoliberal economy were grouped into separate columns.

TRADITIONAL	NEOLIBERAL
Based on self-production	Based on mass production, and managed by second and third parties
Crop diversity	Prevalence of processed food
Self-consumption	Massive consumption
Traditional collection	Mechanized agriculture
Use of own seeds	Use of transgenic seeds
Use of natural fertilizers	Use of agrochemicals
Culturally appropriate products	Products based on what the market dictates
Use of local materials for construction	Purchase of homes built by companies
Consultation of traditional specialists for medical matters	Consultation of private medicine in hospitals that require payment in money
Payment in kind	Payment in credits or in advance
Herbal medicine	Patented medicines

Source: Intercultural researchers. Diploma Course. July 2019.

In the analysis, the discussion about the concept of “poverty” and the indicators to measure it arises. One of the consensuses showed that the problem relies, first, on what is understood by wealth, a very relative concept because it depends on the angle which one looks at; for example, in the capitalist system, it is measured, in general, by the amount of money that is possessed, while for indigenous communities it is different.

They suggest that the concept of poverty was based on the neoliberal perspective of wealth; that is, it was understood as the absence of wealth (monetary), so they concluded that the use of the concept of “poverty” –frequently used in surveys– is wrong. Rather than exhibiting a reality, it has worked as a discursive resource to make people believe –or convince them– that they have nothing, when in fact they have a lot. Finally, it was mentioned that the concept of “poverty” built from a neoliberal context and applied to indigenous communities seeks to take away their dignity.

A) CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERCULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Knowledge and respect for the life cycles of Mother Nature, that is why every moment and every activity have their place and time.
- Care for the life of mother nature, including people.
- Collective work with mutual help.
- The complementarity among products and jobs.
- The exchange of goods and services.
- Backup, precautions, and reserve, beyond accumulation.
- Share, distribute, so that it multiplies

To strengthen the economic autonomy of indigenous women, the following actions are suggested:

- 👉 Tapping into their strengths, their energies, their know-hows, and their powers
- 👉 Self-recognition of their contributions, practices, and strength in their lives,
- 👉 Making visible and positioning their contributions, practices, and strength in the life of the families, territory, animals, natural assets, wisdom, and science of native peoples and the life network
- 👉 Recognition and respect for the existence and contributions of women.
- 👉 Ability and strength to be, defend, take care of their lives and other expressions of life
- 👉 Not depending on external resources or forces, but from our own forces. -seeds, raw material, intermediaries, land, know-hows-

B) SOME CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT TOOLS FOR INTERCULTURAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

1) SWOT FODA

The exchange between intercultural researchers about entrepreneurship allowed them to use some tools for intercultural business management. The SWOT analysis, an acronym for Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats, which helps to create an efficient strategy to undertake any project, provided examples of entrepreneurial projects conducive to a SWOT analysis, which included the following:

INTERNAL SITUATIONS

STRENGTHS

- ✓ Belong to alliances and coalitions
- ✓ Offer quality products and work with materials from the region
- ✓ Have knowledge
- ✓ Know how to organize and arrive to agreements
- ✓ Be legally incorporated
- ✓ Have assistance
- ✓ and supportive networks
- ✓ Work collectively
- ✓ Have volunteer human resources
- ✓ Train young people
- ✓ Speak different languages

OPPORTUNITIES

- ☹ Products are made cheaper for lack of a market
- ☹ Money on hand to invest, but the product is not sustainable
- ☹ There are communities that reject products that are sold or may be sold by women
- ☹ Not everyone has technical or administrative knowledge
- ☹ Forms of external and internal communication
- ☹ Willingness and aptitude to be trained
- ☹ Lack of money
- ☹ Time spent
- ☹ Opacity
- ☹ Fear
- ☹ Insufficient human resources

EXTERNAL SITUATIONS

WEAKNESSES

- ✓ Market expansion
- ✓ Increase credibility and trust

THREATS

- ☹ Political aspects
- ☹ Weather phenomena and climate change
- ☹ External financing that puts economic independence at risk

II) VALUE CHAIN

Another tool for entrepreneurship is to learn to value a project from intercultural indicators; that is, from the worldview of each community,

People, or group. A company is valued from the set of intangible and material aspects as well as the human capital it possesses. In this framework the value chain is set up, which describes the development of activities; that is, the time it takes

to get the material or to do something, and allows for seeing the competitive window, considering the profitability and sustainability of a business, and that the customer and the producers know the real value of the product.

The researchers concluded that it is essential to take into account the value chain because many times what is really invested in carrying out an activity is not visible. Based on that another question was asked: "How many of us do work for free?" They replied that the lifetime and care invested should be considered within the chain, since many things are usually sacrificed and are not quantified, but they are essential for a good quality of life. It is essential to learn to put value on what is sold.

Paradoxically, one of the most interesting reflections is centered on how getting used to putting a price on everything perhaps implies the acceptance of the predominance of the capitalist vision, and, if so, one can make the same mistake about what one is criticizing. One of the consequences of the abovementioned is the loss of indigenous values, such as reciprocity and even part of the identity.

Consequently, a new question emerged that remained unanswered: to what extent should a price be placed on what is being done?

To facilitate understanding of the topic, an activity was carried out in which the participants provided their own definition of the value chain, applied it to a product, and explored the notion of tangible or intangible added value.

Thus, for example, the aggregate values in textile manufacturing would be:

- ★ The worldview of the community, since a textile is a finished piece that speaks of the history and identity of a people
- ★ The skill that went into each detail of the piece in

order to create the finished product

- ★ The hospitable and friendly service of the people who work in sales
- ★ The diversity of products
- ★ The history of the elaboration and the time required
- ★ The appearance; making it visually pleasant so that it will better appreciated

III) PRODUCT REGISTRATION

Product registration can be a great resource for protecting the creations of indigenous communities. Therefore, since rules and certifications for each country are different, participants were invited to review the requirements of their country. To get a closer idea about how the registration is done, the website of the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property was visited, where the process includes four steps:

1. Make sure the brand is free
2. Fill out a form
3. Make the corresponding payment
4. Do the proceedings

Likewise, the registration of individual and collective products was discussed, and the differences for companies were briefly mentioned, including:

- ❖ SRB (Socially Responsible Business)
- ❖ ERC (Environmentally Responsible Company)
- ❖ Fair Trade

One of the doubts resulting from this presentation was about what can be done to solve the cost of the proceedings, since many times the lack of money can hinder the use of tools like the abovementioned. It was suggested that it is possible to compete for external resources or government support for this purpose, or to make alliances with other

communities and cooperate among everyone..

IV) BUSINESS PLAN

In order to make a business plan, a diagnosis is necessary to plan and evaluate the situation, including its social, economic, political, and cultural action factors. It must also be a community exercise, because as not everyone has the same needs, they must listen everybody's voices; being participatory and public, since when the community is informed, it made aware, and this helps to identify the male and female stakeholders that will join the project. This diagnosis is important because it provides the lines of action that can then be converted into projects resulting, in turn, in programs.

It was emphasized that a business plan can be done not only by a company, but also by social, community, and solidarity organizations. In addition, its general objectives are to present the business idea and help the project to be successful, while the specific objectives are to:

- ◆ Specify the business characteristics
- ◆ Indicate the potential market
- ◆ Describe the financial plan (budget, investments, and potential income)
- ◆ Build an organizational chart
- ◆ Describe how the implementation will be carried out (what will work to achieve it?)
- ◆ Develop a marketing, advertising, and sales plan (price, product, promotion, and place)
- ◆ Describe risks and chances for success
- ◆ Point out the advantages (differentiators) of the business for customers

As a result of the above, the participants noted that a great weakness of the Indigenous Peoples is that when one thinks about selling something, no diagnosis is made, only the product is diversified

believing that it will be enough for sale. Given this, they emphasized on the importance of knowing the system tools in order to take advantage of them for the benefit of the community.

The structure of the business plan explained in detail was as follows:

- I. Executive summary (general business data, participants, background, history)*
 - I. 1. Drawing up the business idea*
 - I. 2. Opportunity analysis*
 - I. 3. Presentation of the business model*
- II. Description of the company, enterprise, or business*
- III. Analysis of the environment (available services, means that can favor business, factors that could be weaknesses and threats)*
 - III. 1. Industry or market analysis*
 - III. 2. Demand estimate*
- IV. Survey of the market*
- V. Analysis of the industry (line of business: agricultural, textile, or dairy production, for example, which industry it focuses on and who are the competitors)*
- VI. Company's Strategic plan*
 - VI. 1. SWOT Analysis*
 - VI. 2. Vision*
 - VI. 3. Mission*
 - VI. 4. Strategic objectives*
 - VI. 5. Genetic strategy*
 - VI. 6. Sources of competitive advantages*
 - VI. 7. Strategic alliances*
- VII. Marketing plan*

VIII. Operations plan

VIII. 1. Design and structure

IX. Human resources plan

X. Financial plan

With respect to this last point, two main aspects were mentioned: on the one hand, the idea that a social enterprise should not earn money simply because it is not a business and does not even have to be profitable has to be avoided: in fact, the difference between a social and a traditional company is specifically the use of money. On the other hand, the business plan of an indigenous community will reflect its cosmogonic worldview and a different life approach. It is essential to assume that traditional knowledge is hugely valuable and turning it into an economic power is not reprehensible at all. Unfortunately, it was mentioned that the least convinced of this idea are the members of the communities and to reverse it it may be necessary to carry out processes of healing, empowerment, and decolonization.

V) FINANCING AND CREDIT

One of the recurring discussions throughout the debate on entrepreneurship was about fundraising and the obstacles to obtaining them. Some participants mentioned that one of the difficulties lies in the fact that sometimes, and for regional administration reasons, international cooperation agencies end up granting funds only to large organizations; although, sometimes, they do not connect directly with communities; and, on the other hand, resorting to intermediaries can be problematic. Another difficulty is the requirements for requesting support. For example, sometimes it is difficult for community members to access certifications or educational degrees, or to have

organizational structures similar to those of Western culture.

AGiven the foregoing, it was suggested to consider using private initiative, where there is a great diversity of projects and agencies. To help illustrate this idea, multiple organizations listed on the Global Innovation Exchange website from the Americas, Asia, and Africa that can provide funds were shown. Requirements and the way to obtain them were promptly reviewed.


Finally, the importance of diversifying the way in which those funds are obtained was emphasized and of turning to the health and university sectors, for example, in order to establish alliances and networks.

VI) MARKETING

The marketing plan –which is part of the business plan– aims to demonstrate qualitatively and quantitatively that there are real possibilities of selling the products or services in favorable conditions, and its strength depends on answering the following questions:

- ? Who are the potential clients?
- ? How can a product or service be distinguished from that of the competition?
- ? What is the value proposition to the market?
- ? Which clients are especially financially interesting?
- ? What sales volume can be expected from them?

In order to obtain answers, a questionnaire used in a market study was presented, teaching participants how to analyze their results in order to identify trends. A valuable aspect they pointed out was that it is not always necessary to hire a large company to achieve such a timely analysis, but that they themselves could do the questionnaire, analyze



it, and even teach others how to do it. Knowing such a tool, they said, was very useful, because when companies arrive and want to negotiate, they can have a clearer idea of their intentions, and the viability and scope of their projects. Although they recognized that there is an unfair market, which exploits goods, and expropriates know-hows and knowledge. For example, when clothing is in a brand store it usually has a price and is considered fashionable, but when worn by an indigenous woman it is considered folksy.

V.6. MAIN DEMANDS LINKED TO THE ECONOMIC AUTONOMY OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN ACCORDING TO EACH REGION

After extensively reflecting on how indigenous women are trying to live between the two systems, on the point of intersection between the autonomous economy and the indigenous economic system, the dialogue reached –almost inevitably– the identification of needs and limitations, and the creation of solutions so that certain regions and communities can move towards an autonomous and sustainable economy. Demands, obstacles, and strategies of Asia, Africa, and Latin America were discussed, resulting in the following:

A) ASIA

DEMANDS	OBSTACLES	STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the information system that allows for knowing the markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of communication with experts who know about the market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information about credit options for indigenous people, and training on various skills Organize an inter-community exchange program about identification of problem and solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools for agricultural production (fruits and vegetables) are required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of financial skills, poverty and lack of monitoring of programs by organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different governmental, non-governmental organizations and experts can support producers
<p>Mix, traditional with scientist knowledge in order to produce. Many women do not know how to combine both, or how to link ancestral knowledge with information technology and scientific method.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producers are not interested in developing their abilities (entrepreneurs lack a high educational level or are not interested in bettering themselves) Sometimes producers are unaware that civil organizations offer programs Several programs of these organizations do not reach remote areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain native volunteers who can provide information to the producers or train the peoples Organize training sessions for producers

B) AFRICA

DEMANDS	OBSTACLES	STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply traditional knowledge to produce, store and preserve goods, since people do not seek out traditional knowledge in order to perform these activities. • Own land in a communal way, in order to sow in greater quantity. • Preserve the environment in order to take care of natural assets, especially watery assets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊖ Due to globalization, products manufactured in the Western way are given greater value, which causes the devaluation of the places of business, even though these are of very good quality. ⊖ There is some confusion regarding traditional knowledge, since people do not know very well what it is about. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Seek out traditional knowledge from someone who knows it very well. For example, people who know how to read the sky and tell if it is going to rain or not, can help production. ✓ Diversify the products offered. ✓ Sell a product for what it is really worth.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊖ There is a certain kind of inflation that is created by technology, as rich people use it to increase production more quickly to the detriment of those who have less resources, which will result in losses for them. ⊖ There is no access to a market itself. ⊖ Lack of production due to environmental pollution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Plant more trees in order to counteract air pollution. ✓ Get machines in order to produce.

C) LATIN AMERICA

DEMANDS	OBSTACLES	STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fair prices for indigenous communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of push for native fabrics in an unfair market; piracy and expropriation of know-hows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote autonomous markets in native communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid the use of seeds and genetically modified foods that pollute and impoverish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture depends on seeds and agrochemicals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create regulatory frameworks and internal agreements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid plagiarism of the elements of the culture itself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is acculturation and devaluation of ancestral know-hows and products, influenced by the media, education system, and migration 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End violence in communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Machismo and violence are very internalized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make acts of violence get noticed and promote their reporting. Raise men's awareness from the ancestral wisdom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower women more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discrimination and racism against indigenous women in the market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower women and decolonize them. Report facts of discrimination and racism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fair compensation for work done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disregard for women's economic contribution and the value of their work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish fixed, fair and collective prices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community organization and equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imposition of women's roles and economic exploitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish work groups in communities in a diverse and sustainable way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and accompaniment in human development processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internalization and justification of violence and economic exploitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping of healing groups and counseling to women who are victims of violence



As a result of the collective reflection, it was concluded that, although coming from different parts of the world, there are similar demands and varied strategies to face them, which strengthen the importance of creating a network –or alliance– and exchanging ideas, which would help for figuring out answers.

It was also noted that the mentioned obstacles are focused on women, which should be analyzed, as it is possible that it is the result of a kind of disempowerment of their identities, strengths, and know-hows.

The existence of an energy problem as native peoples and as women was also discussed. There is a burden of fear and distrust because of violence –such as political, economic, sexual and physical– as well as discrimination and the patriarchal and colonizing structure. These factors are having an impact on and restricting the process of empowerment in every way, so it is best for women to incorporate the spiritual, human, historical and integral aspects into the reflection.



VI. Intersection among indigenous women, environmental justice, and economic autonomy

VI. INTERSECTION AMONG INDIGENOUS WOMEN, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND ECONOMIC AUTONOMY

Indigenous women combine different identities, which, when crossed, expose them to different types of discrimination and disadvantages. The history of colonization, the ways adopted by the Governments to organize themselves, the policies and processes of globalization, the extractive economic model, human rights violations, impoverishment and inequality have perpetuated racism and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, but particularly against women. Even though all women suffer gender discrimination in one way or another, political, social, cultural factors combine and determine how the women of Indigenous Peoples experience oppression.

Therefore, one of the main conclusions of the study highlights the importance of considering intersectional analysis, which is a tool that seeks to address the ways in which racism, patriarchy, class oppression, and other discriminatory systems create inequalities, which structure the relative positions of indigenous women.⁽⁴¹⁾ Intersectionality is an analytical tool to study, understand, and respond to the ways in which gender intersects with other identities and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of oppression or privilege for women in certain groups, communities, or Peoples.⁽⁴²⁾

Throughout the study, intercultural researchers

⁴¹ AWID Women's rights and economic change No. 9, August 2004.
⁴² Idem.


bring up the ways indigenous women experience oppression in the search for environmental justice and economic autonomy. Regarding the study in the communities of the Garo People in Bangladesh, which focuses on the current economic situation and environmental conditions from the women's point of view, the author describes various structural problems linked to climate change, such as poverty and loss of traditional means of livelihood, migration and job insecurity, gradual environmental and cultural deterioration, especially to the detriment of girls, boys and women—all of this in an environment imbued by machismo.⁽⁴³⁾

With regards to this, Namayani Rapey Edward from Tanzania expresses,

"My vision is that environmental justice, whose problems are related to the use of land, its protection, and the preservation of the environment must go hand in hand with economic autonomy. We must preserve our environment knowing that its protection and preservation will help us to develop the activities that generate income because all of the resources come from there."

In the same case of Tanzania, the greatest concern is climate change and its associated impacts, which include the growing loss of livestock, whose upbringing and trade mainly depend on the

⁴³ Communities of the Garo People of Bangladesh



Maasai, the invasion of their lands by immigrants and the resulting mass migration, which requires commitment so that their community can mitigate such harmful effects and live on.

She adds that, at present, “Our youngest children and brothers are going to the city to look for a job, and what kind of work do they get? As watchmen! They are told that it is the only job they can get because they have no education. They stay there, adapt to another culture, to other ways of life, which is even related to diseases, such as HIV”, which “is reaching the Maasai community,” already constituting a public health challenge.

She suggests that the effect of that reality is even more severe for women, since “all the responsibility of caring for and ensuring that the family has what to eat ...” relies on them “...all men go to the city and leave women at home, and then as a woman you are now responsible for everything, for the children, for them to go to school, or for the elderly. So, they have more obstacles to get ahead and we need to help them with this, work with them and forge a good path that they can take.”

Here is the importance of achieving their economic autonomy:

“Historically, Maasai women have never been able to own land, not even the cows they have with their husbands are theirs. For example, in my case: “I am the firstborn, and when I got married, I expected my father to give me at least part of the land and maybe some cows or goats, but traditionally it is not allowed... I mention this because the land has so much to do with the environment and the economic autonomy is closely linked to land.”

The abovementioned has encouraged activism, although “in recent years some organizations have spoken with women to raise their voices and demand their right to land, it is not easy because even when you call a meeting in the Massái community, they

are not allowed to stand up and talk in front of men. Even so, we are trying to develop abilities so that they can identify and understand their problems and know where to stand up and raise their voices, ask for what they need” and “at least there are already some of them who stand up at the meetings and try to explain themselves.”

In the Maasai communities, then, family, health, and nutrition, domestic economy, production, use of goods, and passing on know-hows depend on women, whose collective function is vital, so they must be included in the defining of public policies.

“Economic autonomy and environmental justice,” Namayani insists, “are inseparable. It is better to work with our community and make them understand that their economic development and the activities they carry out will depend on what they do with the land. Everything is interrelated. Even traditional customs depend very much on the land, sacred rituals are made on it. If everything ends, our traditional customs and practices will also end. We will no longer have worship sites such as specific trees along the river.”

The empowerment of women is essential for achieving economic autonomy and environmental justice, because indigenous women have forgotten how to recognize the value of what they produce. It is time to value indigenous identity, since what is produced involves a worldview, a certain way of relating to the world.

In the same way, it was emphasized how the preservation of the environment is deeply linked to women, their economic autonomy and survival. For example, due to climate change, many water sources have dried up and in some regions women and children have to spend hours or days searching for water. This is also a problem because the availability of time is a determining factor for them to carry out activities that generate income and advance in their

autonomy.

You have to work with women who have ancestral wisdom, because if they die all that knowledge dies too. Today, the community members – illiterate or illiterate – are used to quick work, but they do not realize that by doing so we are burying our lives. I want to work on this because it is directly related to economic autonomy and environmental justice.

Shapla, mujer Garo

The author, Shapla Swarna Ruram, a Garo woman from Bangladesh, notes that,

“From the perspective of feminist political ecology, interaction with traditional culture, forest ecology, and changing processes of resource-centered governance, gender is still a prominent variable in environmental issues. Local contexts of gender dynamics help to configure the participation of the local community in environmental struggles, in addition to being the consequence of those struggles. A great deal is at stake for Garo women when they deal with a warming world: their livelihoods are threatened by labor markets that usually put men first, their family responsibilities increase rapidly in the face of droughts and floods, and politicians refuse to recognize those challenges. The story of those who live on the front lines of a harsher climate simply cannot be heard. Garo women commonly face greater risks and burdens from the impacts of climate change, combined with the fact that it has a greater effect on people who depend more on natural resources for their livelihoods. Women also have less capacity to respond to increasingly serious natural disasters ... Despite this, and often because of this, they are those who make adaptations to climate change.”

She concludes that they can achieve the above-mentioned by using their know-hows and leadership


in sustainable domestic and community practices, which turns them into an essential human factor of innovation and entrepreneurship, which is why “public policies and projects must strive not only to involve them in the decision-making and leadership processes for climate change mitigation, but to put them in the driver’s seat for making difficult decisions.”

The same author states that the market economy and climate change are their main concerns, especially because of the devastating effects on women, children and young people, thus demanding urgent action. “Communities are doing a lot of small jobs to survive, so they don’t have in mind the idea that they can strengthen, prosper, and get ahead with their own means.” It depends on encouraging them “to be entrepreneurs in their community, because only they understand and experience the problems, and therefore they can work to find solutions.” For example, “We can work with our textiles, our food system, our environment, and the conservation of biodiversity.”

This, which Indigenous Peoples experience in their lives day to day, without further conceptualizations, gives light, guides the action not only for the right of indigenous women to a life free from violence, including from discrimination, but also for the materialization. and exercise of their rights as a precondition for the true development of their communities: their “empowerment ... is a process that articulates individual and collective dimensions based on the recognition of the power that women themselves already possess, based on their traditional knowledge and practices.”(44)

Thus,

“For indigenous women, economic autonomy is linked to the struggle for land, territory, and natural resources, as a demand to achieve environmental



justice.(45) In that process of struggle, they have used various strategies, which include increasing their ancestral indigenous knowledge, expanding and strengthening alliances, sharing experiences and information, all to restore their collective dignity and identity and confidence in their own strength.”

All of the above reaffirms that environmental justice, economic autonomy, empowerment, food sovereignty, and ancestral wisdom are deeply interrelated, and if one is lost, the others are lost and, therefore, so is life. Since women are the ones who sustain the economy and food of the people, it is crucial to recognize that the strategies to solve the problems that they face in this area are to be found within themselves.

45 The highlight of this concept is not found in the original source document. See Note 8.



VII. Conclusions and Recommendations: Fertile Ground and Harvest

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

FERTILE GROUND AND HARVEST

The empowerment of indigenous women is a process that articulates individual and collective dimensions, and is based on the recognition of the power that women themselves already possess, based on their traditional knowledge and practices. Throughout the study indigenous women identified that they mainly face the following problems:

- ♦ Increasing cases and acts of dispossession and invasion of indigenous territories by mining, agro-export, and hydroelectric companies, which exacerbates the problems of increasing impoverishment of families, communities, and Indigenous Peoples, increasing food insecurity and consequently increasing cases of malnutrition of girls, boys, and women. Diversion and pollution of water sources by mining and agro-export companies of monocultures, which results in the lack of access to water and the violation of the right to water for communities and Indigenous Peoples; in addition to soil contamination and deterioration due to the excessive use of agrochemicals; deforestation, and increased forest fires.
- ♦ Negative impact of climate change — prolonged droughts, storms, hurricanes, and floods— which impacts mainly in regions with Indigenous and impoverished Peoples.

- ♦ Mono-cultural, racist Governments, without a perspective of rights, and based on a capitalist, neoliberal, and predatory economic model of Mother Earth and natural goods; promoting actions for the criminalization of human rights defenders, territories, and natural assets.
- ♦ Increasing the migration of men and women in inhumane and criminalized conditions, due to the impact of violence, unemployment, invasion of territories by extractive companies, drug trafficking, and organized crime.
- ♦ Indigenous women from the three regions maintain, sustain, and defend their languages, clothing, and life systems as Indigenous Peoples.

This historical, structural and current problem of Indigenous Peoples in the three regions, has a strong impact on the life and rights of indigenous women, promotes the ongoing violation of the rights of indigenous women and the Peoples to which they belong. Therefore, they identified the following common demands:

- ❖ Denounce the Government publicly in the three regions for non-compliance and historical and systematic violation of human rights, collective rights as peoples, and the specific rights of women and Mother Earth.

- ❖ The articulation of women and Indigenous Peoples to ensure respect, defense, and preservation of the life of Mother Earth, natural assets, indigenous territories, and humanity.
- ❖ The right to land and natural assets for women and Indigenous Peoples, declaring territories free of mining, agro-exporters, other extractive, hydroelectric, agrochemical, transgenic seeds, processed and polluting food; plastics and disposables, deforestation, water pollution, deforests and diversions of rivers.
- ❖ The right to a life free of violence for women; the eradication of violence against women, domestic violence, sexual violence, trafficking, pregnancies in girls and adolescents, femicide, and political violence against women and against Indigenous Peoples.
- ❖ The right to lead the community economies and the economic autonomy of women and Peoples, based on the principles and values as Indigenous Peoples that promote: fair distribution, work for all; no pollution and no labor exploitation, no competition but rather solidarity; mutual help and exchange.
- ❖ The right to self-determination of Peoples for the recovery, strengthening, and respect for their own ways and life system, with the fair and equitable participation of women and youth.
- ❖ The right to political participation of women in local, regional, national, and international spaces, based on honesty, justice, the defense of life, and the rights of women and Peoples.
- ❖ The promotion of actions for environmental justice, from the values and organized force of women and Indigenous Peoples, in order to demand that Governments and transnational

corporations assume their responsibility for the deterioration and increasing pollution of Mother Earth and natural goods.

VII.1. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GARO PEOPLE'S STUDY

Intercultural researchers conclude that, although the Diploma Course's gender approach consists in the recovery of dignity as indigenous women, at the same time it recovers the dignity of men, that of other sexual preferences and that of generations, always from a treatment based on equality, respect, and justice, and never based on confrontation. Therefore, they stated the importance of promoting relations based on a common dialogue among men and women – not where men want to have power over women, nor vice versa— and in which everyone has the freedom to be, feel, and live. To this end, the following questions were asked: what is gender for indigenous peoples and how is it conceived? What does it mean to be a woman or a man? How are fairer and more humane relationships based on respect for oneself and also linked to dialogue with Mother Earth and natural goods?

One of the greatest strengths of the Diploma Course is precisely the indigenous women of the world. The Diploma Course is done for, with, and by them, for it is them who feed and heal their people and Nature, and possess strength and wisdom. They can be excellent leaders, inspire and be role models, not only in a community but for the world.

It was agreed that leadership is the ability of some people to influence others and at the community level. It is related to geography, intercultural relations, economic situation, migration, and

✂ When including a study of Indigenous Peoples with a small percentage of members of the country, there will be a standard database with information collected from homeless indigenous people who participate in different works [under construction] in Dhaka, through which “the Government will develop and implement a pilot project based on my findings,” says the author, adding that, if successful, it could be expanded nationwide.

✂ Her message to the world is that “it must be taken into account that we really are natural; we protect the climate and the environment, there is no pollution at the indigenous level, because we love our environment and nature, which we see as our Mother, and one does not hurt their Mother. We seek to consume natural foods, we plant many trees because we need fruits and we love our rivers and mountains, because we live there. My ancestors lived in the trees, there they built their houses and planted to survive, and ensured that there was food for the next generations. Developed countries try to use the underdeveloped ones to produce many things, make a lot of money, and don’t realize how we benefit the environment.”

✂ And to her community, “that going after money is not always the best or the fairest; Sometimes you have to stop and think about whether what you are doing really worked for the ancestors and what it will do for future generations. Money won’t solve anything. We have to balance modern life. If we are going to create something, let’s also try to reduce pollution. All people should make themselves responsible for their environmental impact, ask themselves if they have a safe place, and realize that they are not the only beings that inhabit the Earth. There are many people, many problems, and a lot of future; one must care for and protect life. Indigenous women can set an example of what needs to be done and how do to it, and at the same time learn from globalization.”

even the relationship that one has –or not– with the Government. According to each community, leadership can be considered a gift. For example, healers or teachers are leaders because they will influence the improvement and decisions of community spaces. It should be pointed out, however, that, although there may be many leaders, they will not always be elected as the authority. Leadership is also built according to people’s trajectory, prestige, and social recognition. A leader, in effect, will not necessarily be an authority, and vice versa.

A) RECOMMENDATIONS

[1] Create a Network of indigenous women entrepreneurs in the world in order to analyze obstacles, strengthen their organizations, share experiences, and exchange know-hows and healthy products for life and respect for life, free of agrochemicals, preservatives, labor exploitation, and injustices.

I) SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STUDY IN TANZANIA

- ✓ The study specifies the severe impact of climate variability, with its flow of disasters, on vital resources, personal know-hows, health, safety, and personal integrity, especially of children and women and all community life, making women's access to economic self-sufficiency and environmental justice impossible.
- ✓ In the recommendations, she points out that as responsible for guaranteeing women's rights, the Tanzanian Government "must implement sound and receptive policies and strategies to overcome the adverse effects of climate change, especially drought, desertification, and diseases. In order for these policies to be implemented effectively, indigenous peoples must be trained in terms of access to information," apart from "being free to make their own decisions related to their mode of production and their lifestyles."
- ✓ In turn, she adds, the government and the private sector must "support Indigenous Peoples so that they may better apply their indigenous knowledge by working to improve their livelihood, be able to access veterinary medicines [and] promote ethno-veterinary medicines to cure animals ... [which] will restore the traditional indigenous knowledge of the Maasai," as well as to access "insurance products for livestock, health and education services, water pipes and dams, market infrastructure and transportation systems."

[2] *Support the processes of economic empowerment of indigenous women, which respond to the following characteristics:*

- ★ Retake, raise awareness, and position the ancestral knowledge and contributions of indigenous women.

- ★ Retake the contributions of the cosmogony and conception of the world and the life embodied in production and business ventures
- ★ Reflect on the current context and the situation of indigenous women.
- ★ Develop the abilities, talents, and knowledge of women, their families, their communities, and their peoples.
- ★ The role and contribution of the family and collective work are valued, encouraged, and recognized with fairness and gratitude.
- ★ Part of the recognition of the diversity of strengths, know-hows, and practices that exist in women, families, communities, and peoples.
- ★ Seek support from each other and with other women, based on their own organization as well as on common and collective interests.
- ★ Personal and collective work is oriented to emotional, affective growth –healing and high self-esteem– and economic for good living.
- ★ Organization based on common needs, know-hows, and strengths and for collective actions.
- ★ Alliances with others: accompany and provide us with supplies and support us in marketing.
- ★ They are taken as supplies or raw material, mainly the know-how and resources available in the community, with natural and cultural assets.
- ★ In favor of the common good of the family – support and participation and family benefit.
- ★ They are made within the community, for their progress and improvement of life, not for outside of the community.
- ★ For the good living of the community and the family.
- ★ Integration, disposition, personal and collective voluntary commitment, with responsibility and

contributing their know-hows and knowledge.

- ★ In mutual help and the openness to learn, give feedback and improve without losing strength and the essence of know-how, talents, abilities and potentials that women, their families and their peoples have.

Recognize and position the different experiences, contributions, and knowledge of indigenous women in the economies of their families, communities, and peoples. Contributions and reflections of the participants:

- Means having the community united and organized together
- We work collectively, all women in the community work in a group
- Values and traditions of our community, we must not go against what
- the community teaches us.
- Promote environmental protection, our business does not depend on the destruction of the environment, but rather on preserving it.
- Share what we know, what we have, and what we are given.
- We do not want to maximize income, but rather to distribute and share what is generated.
- It does not compromise future generations –by managing and using natural assets in a responsible way – always thinking about the lives of future generations.
- Women and men must work together without discrimination, privileges, or
- exploitation.
- It is collective, based on an individual need. In the face of oppression and

- *discrimination, the organization is an opportunity, we have to eradicate discrimination and racism.*

- *Inclusive initiatives for family and generations.*

- *They are a means to empower women –in light of their personal and collective rights, and the rights of mother nature, based on environmental justice.*

- *Unity promotes social ties and promotes protection of all of the ecosystems and the environment.*

- *We promote traditions, rules, and community values.*


- *Promotes the recognition and value of our know-hows, science, and*

- *worldview that we communicate and express in textiles, as well as in artistic and handmade production.*

- *An economy for life that gives us joy and a sense of life.*

Regarding the collective perspective, the mentioned strategies that can be implemented in order to recover that strength and achieve environmental justice include the following:

- ✓ Seek, in various ways, the healing and empowerment of women, men, peoples, and generations. On one hand, healing consists in cleaning oneself from colonization, racism, and violence –since in order to help others one has to be well with oneself. On the other hand, empowerment starts from recovering and rebuilding a power that makes them more human, sensitive, honest, tender, and cheerful. None of this has to do with the amount of money in the bag.
- ✓ Wake up and strengthen ancestral knowledge

- 
- ✓ Create networks of women and indigenous peoples
 - ✓ Promote mobilization, visibility, organization, and communication as women and indigenous peoples, to speak with one voice and one spirit, regardless of the territory of origin
 - ✓ Promote political advocacy
 - ✓ Use the judicial route to defend yourself
 - ✓ Create our own food and production systems
 - ✓ Strengthen peasant economies and women's economic autonomy
 - ✓ Share various forms of medicinal plant conservation and knowledge
 - ✓ Consult environmental research centers for advice and dissemination of information obtained among Indigenous Peoples

Two main aspects are revealed in the fight for environmental justice: on one hand, indigenous peoples must demand actions from governments to safeguard the environment; and, on the other hand, ask those who pollute to take responsibility.

Regarding the Governments, the companies, and the external agents that have abusively extracted goods, polluted or contributed to affecting the climate, and have invaded territories, promoting the plunder, looting and exploitation, it is recommended that they:


- » Take responsibility for their actions and recognize that they have environmental obligations towards the countries that they have impoverished
- » Respect and recognize the collective and Mother Earth rights
- » Restore and compensate for the negative impacts and death caused to the natural assets, to peoples, and women.



VIII. Biographical Referenes

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

5. Lopez Mejia, Lorena. *Informe general de la ruta de trabajo implementada en el encuentro presencial del Diplomado de mujeres indígenas, Mexico del 7 al 13 de julio 2019 en el marco de la consultoria “coordinación y desarrollo del programa curricular de la fase presencial diplomado de mujeres indígenas: autonomía económica y justicia ambiental Mexico” IWF.* [General report of the work route implemented in the face-to-face meeting of the Diploma Course of Indigenous Women, Mexico from July 7 to 13, 2019 within the framework of the consultancy “Coordination and development of the curricular program of the face-to-face phase of Indian women: economic autonomy and environmental justice Mexico” IWF]
6. IWF. Intercambios. PATH. *Dialogo de saberes sobre la violencia contra las mujeres indígenas. Aproximaciones metodologicas a la investigacion intercultural.* [IWF. Exchanges PATH Dialogue of knowledge on violence against indigenous women. Methodological approaches to intercultural research] 2013.
7. Taller de Consulta Regional preparatorio de la tercera reunión global de Pueblos Indígenas en FIDA “Empoderamiento económico de pueblos indígenas con enfoque específico en mujeres y juventud “San Salvador, El Salvador, 22 al 27 de noviembre, 2016 [Preparatory Regional Consultation Workshop of the third global meeting of Indigenous Peoples in IFAD “Economic empowerment of indigenous peoples with specific focus on women and youth” San Salvador, El Salvador, November 22-27, 2016]
8. Asamblea General de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, “Estudio a fondo sobre todas las formas de violencia contra la mujer. Informe del Secretario General” [versión en español] [General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, “In-depth study on all forms of violence against women. Report of the Secretary General” [Spanish version], New York, July 2006, p. 17. available at <https://www.acnur.org/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2016/10742.pdf>
9. IWF, “Mairin Iwanka Raya: Mujeres Indígenas Confrontan la Violencia. Informe Complementario al Estudio sobre Violencia contra las Mujeres del secretario general de las Naciones Unidas”, 2006, [IWF, “Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous Women Confronting Violence. Supplementary Report to the Study on Violence against Women of the Secretary General of the United Nations”, 2006] available at <https://www.IWF-iiwf.org/archivos/8162f56478b843333dc95a1f5f381ab1.pdf>
10. FILAC. MILAC. *Empoderamiento y Mujeres Indígenas de la reflexión a la Acción. Documento de trabajo.* 2015. [FILAC. MILAC Empowerment and Indigenous Women from reflection to Action. Work document. 2015]
11. Summit of Indigenous Women in Oaxaca, Mexico, 2002
12. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz. Human Rights Council 30th session. August 6, 2015. A / HRC / 30/41

- 
13. Convention on all forms of discrimination against women. <https://www.ohchr.org/sp/professionalinterest/pages/cedaw.aspx>
 14. Namayani Rapey Edward, titled “Assessment of implications of climate change impacts on the economic self-reliance and environmental justice of the Maasai community in the Kiteto District, Tanzania”, July 2019
 15. Shapla Swarna Ruram, “Research on contemporary economic situation and environmental condition in the perspective of Garo Indigenous women in Bangladesh.”, July, 2019
 16. Belén Itahí Bautista Quiroz, “Santa María Cuquila”, July 2019.
 17. Elvi Kaptoyo.
 18. Anabella Pilar Perén Curruchiche, “Revalorización del papel de las mujeres, de los sistemas productivos y de la alimentación ancestrales y su impacto en la desnutrición de niñas y niños Maya Mam de tierra fría del Municipio de San Martín, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala” [“Revaluation of the role of women, ancestral productive systems and food and its impact on malnutrition of Maya Mam children of cold land of the Municipality of San Martín, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala”], July 2019,
 19. IIFW. Intercambios. PATH. Dialogo de saberes sobre la violencia contra las mujeres indigenas. Aproximaciones metodologicas a la investigacion intercultural. 2013. [IIFW. Exchanges PATH Dialogue of knowledge on violence against indigenous women. Methodological approaches to intercultural research. 2013]
 20. Methodological basis, curriculum and content can be found in “Diploma Course of Indigenous Women: Economic Autonomy and Environmental Justice. Description of the Diploma Course,” original in Word, unpublished.
 21. III International Symposium of indigenous women on ecological violence and reproductive health. April 2018.
 22. Suchiang, Salome; Formas de vida de mujeres indigenas de la comunidad de Umtrykhang, Meghalaya, NorthEast India. [Ways of life of indigenous women from the community of Umtrykhang, Meghalaya, Northeast India] Grasroot. July 2019

Strong, empowered, inspired, and cheerful women come together in the same place and time, sharing a part of their community —and, therefore, part of their heart — with others.

At the beat of the sound, their feet swing their bodies from side to side, forward and backwards.

They turn around and share their music and dance —their tradition and culture— with the rest of the women from different parts of the world that accompany them. Now, instead of one, they are two couples; soon there will be three and, in the future, more and more.

As the minutes pass, happiness, love, gratitude, rhythms, and their forms of interpretation multiply. Women imagine being in each community to which the shared cultural manifestation belongs.



M
O
T
H
E
R

E
A
R
T
H

They dance, jumping as high as possible, with all their strength and energy until they are out of breath. They dance, moving their necks and shoulders so that the piece they are imaginarily carrying on their necks follows a circular path and is in keeping with the rhythm. They rest and listen to songs in languages of remote communities. Life stories, worldviews, community customs are shared; dates, moments of the day, and celebrations are remembered.

A group of women form a circle around a floral arrangement. They bow and thank Mother Earth. They clear their path and the cycle ends, but in turn, a new stage begins: the return home and new developments for them and the other women of the Indigenous Peoples.



**ma
ma
cash**