



MEMORY OF FIMI'S 25 Anniversary



Lima, Peru,

JUNE 19-21, 2025

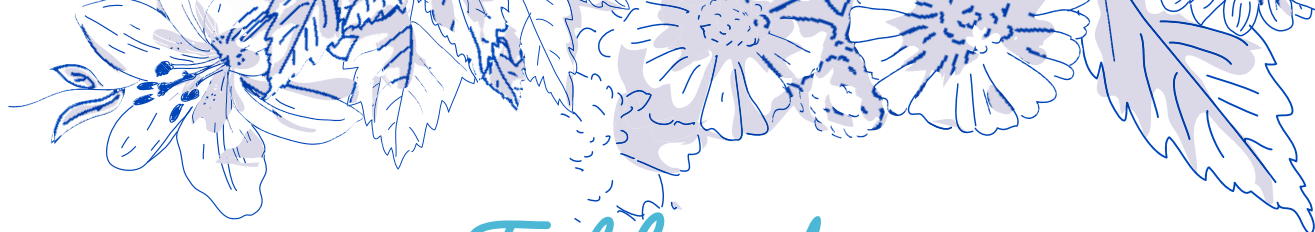
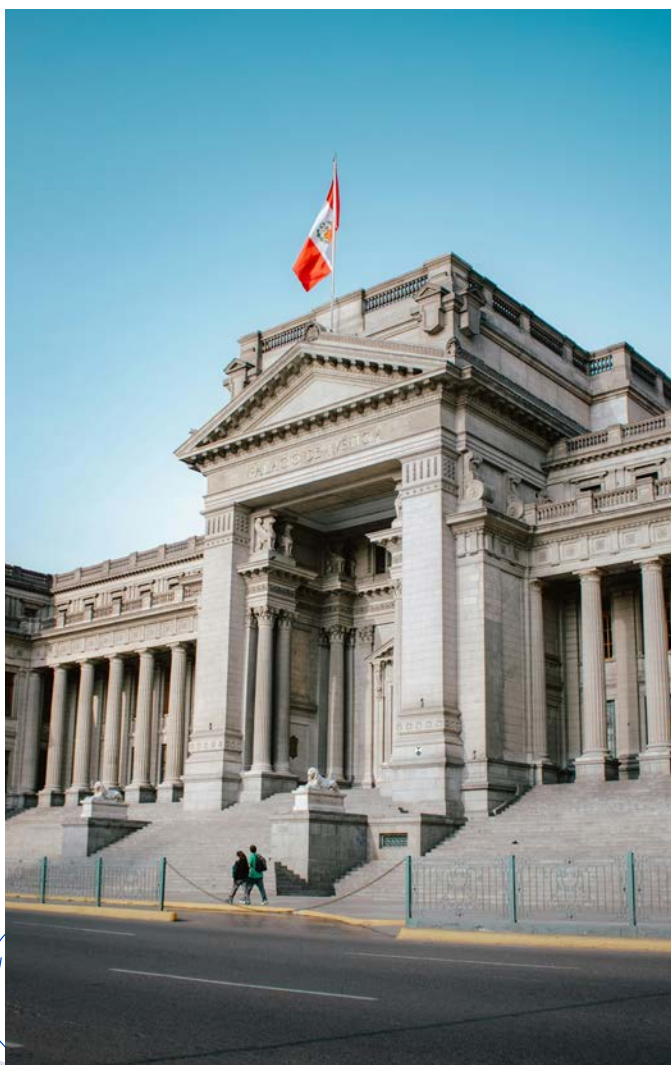


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the 25th Anniversary of the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI), celebrating our collective leadership, advocacy for our rights, and the building of transformative alliances.

For three days we wove our reflections, ceremonies, living words, lessons, proposals, and dreams. More than a celebration, the Anniversary was an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to a future where the voices of Indigenous Women are heard and considered in every decision-making space.

We celebrated 25 years of the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI)—a quarter-century of efforts and achievements in defending and promoting the rights of Indigenous Women globally. Since its inception in 1995, FIMI has been actively engaged in the Global Movement of Indigenous Women, contributing to the struggle for gender equality and the recognition of Indigenous rights.

This Anniversary was also the moment to return to the origin of our rallying words: **"Weaving Together for Our Rights."** This phrase encapsulates our collective history: we have woven alliances, bridges, and hopes; we have woven across generations so that the memory of our ancestors lives alongside the dreams of the youngest; we have woven networks so that our local struggles resonate in regional and global arenas. Every thread has been imbued with resistance, every stitch with life, and every tapestry reminds us that our rights stand and gain strength because we build them together.

Introduction

From June 19 to 21, 2025, Lima embraced us as a territory of gathering, memory, and projection. Indigenous leaders from the seven sociocultural regions of the world—Africa; the Arctic; Asia; Central and South America and the Caribbean; Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia; North America; and the Pacific—together with strategic allies, gathered to commemorate

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June 19

Gathering WITH DONORS

"We believe in the power of Indigenous Women to transform their communities and the world. This path is not walked alone, but in alliance."

(Quote attributed to a donors' representative at the Gathering, Lima 2025)



Encuentro

We began our 25th Anniversary with a symbolic and spiritual gathering alongside the donor community that believes in us and has supported our journey. It was not a conventional meeting: we chose to open this cycle in a space of healing and gratitude, recognizing that our alliances are grounded in trust, respect, and mutual commitment.

An altar for life

The hall became a ceremonial territory, a living space where memory and spirituality intertwined. At the center, an altar with flowers and multicolored candles harmonized energies and were offered in gratitude. Around it, fruits, medicinal plants, and rattles evoked the inexhaustible abundance of Mother Earth.

We wanted each person to carry not only memories, but seeds of life. We prepared meaningful gifts: Mayan cloth bags with aromatic water, a cloth, seeds for sowing, and two flowers—purple and white—symbols of ongoing blossoming and renewal. Each object spoke without words: it recalled that the alliance with Indigenous Women is not only a one-way commitment; it is a path of reciprocity, hope, and a shared life.



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Opening ceremony

Guided by Lorena López, a Maya K'iche' spiritual leader, we entered an energetic circle of connection. Lorena reminded us that in the Mayan worldview, imbalances are part of our history, and that the four elements—water, earth, fire, and wind—are teachers of equilibrium. She invited each person to ask: "If I were not human, what energy in nature would I be?"

The answers arose spontaneously: water, earth, fire, wind. In each word resonated a recognition of our connection with the universe and a renewed commitment to life. Shared stories of change



The gathering moved into a circle of stories of change, with regional tables where leaders and donors dialogued on 25 years of transformation.

- From the **Americas**, Wayuu women from Colombia shared how weaving and water stewardship intertwine in the defense of Mother Earth, and how the Ayni Fund has enabled the revitalization of ancestral practices.
- From **Chile**, Mapuche women recounted how agroecological production with native seeds strengthened their families' food security.
- From **Asia**, we heard about energy transition experiences in Indonesia and child-protection processes in India.
- From **Africa**, participants shared struggles against female genital mutilation and the challenges of marketing their handicrafts.

Each story reminded us that financial support does not only reach projects—it reaches communities that transform their realities.

The ritual of the seeds of commitment

In closing, each person took a handful of seeds: some to carry what was learned from this gathering, others to sow commitments toward the future. This collective gesture symbolized the continuity of a weave that extends beyond ourselves.

**Donor voices resonated
strongly:**

"I've been with FIMI since 2013; I think of weaving, and how we have been weaving with other Indigenous Women—we are all part of this great weave. FIMI continues to do so; I hope we can celebrate another 25 years the same way."

Winnie Kodi, International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP)

"I take with me inspiration and a deep understanding of what FIMI does with its partners. I am planting new relationships and friendships—new alliances for the future."

Auro Fraser, Open Society Foundation

"FIMI is vibrant, strong, powerful. It has changed the direction of many organizations to empower them. I'm convinced we will overcome every obstacle."

Nicky McIntyre, Global Fund for Women (FJS)

"I take with me much inspiration and learning. I want to keep planting and weaving bridges to build strong relationships that support movements."

María Eugenia Olmos, PROSPERA

"I carry in my heart the joy of seeing old friends and the inspiration of learning about so many processes that are blooming today. The most important thing is to sow a good future—and that is what we will do together."

David Kaimowitz, Tenure Facility

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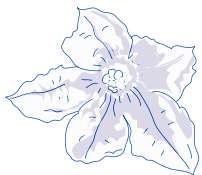
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These voices confirmed that FIMI transforms not only territories and communities, but also those who choose to walk alongside us.

A closing full of collective strength

The circle concluded as it began: with spirituality, gratitude, and shared commitment. We played instruments to awaken joy, intertwined our hands as a symbol of unity, and named our ancestors, remembering that their guidance sustains each step. We asked for patience for the journey, resilience to face challenges, and clarity to keep building together.

The 25th Anniversary began with an act of trust and reciprocity. This gathering with donors was the first seed of three days of celebration, memory, and projection toward the future.



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25
YEARS
ANNIVERSARY



June 20

Fraternal Gathering: **SISTERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

"Each step was a negotiation, but also an affirmation of our existence and our rights."

(Bernice See and Fay Blaney, Lima 2025)

June 20, 2025 dawned full of emotion. Lima welcomed us as a territory of reunion and hope. After years of collective work, embracing one another from so many latitudes became an affirmation of life and continuity in a convulsed world. On this day we commemorated FIMI's 25th Anniversary together, strengthening the ties woven over the years and opening new paths for generations to come.



*Tarcila Rivera
& Teresa Zapeta*

Welcome and opening ritual

The day began with words of welcome from **Tarcila Rivera Zea, Quechua woman from Ayacucho**, Peru, President of FIMI's Board, who greeted in Quechua, English, and French those sisters that traveled from far away to join the celebrations.

She was followed by **Teresa Zapeta, Maya K'iche' woman from Guatemala**, FIMI's Executive Director, who emphasized the importance of meeting not only as organizations but as an extended family: "This path does not belong to one of us, but to all of us."

Each participant adorned the sister beside her with a necklace of huayruro seeds—a symbol of protection and reciprocity—crafted by the women of the Federación de Mujeres

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Kakataibo (FEMUKA) of the Peruvian Amazon. This gesture opened the circle of trust and sisterhood that guided the entire day.

In the hall, an altar with flowers, candles, and images of our ancestors accompanied us as a spiritual guardian. There was also an artistic space to create collectively a traveling cloth and a global weaving map, embroidered and painted by all hands present.



Harmonization, self-care and healing

Guided by wise women from different regions, we held a ceremony of harmonization and self-care.

Lorena López, Maya K'iche' woman from Guatemala,

opened the circle, reminding us how in the Mayan worldview sadness transforms into joy when we recognize one another as part of the same universe.

Rodah Rotino, Pokot woman from Kenya,

invited us to chant songs from her people, filling the room with movement and strength.

Siobhon Rumurang, Chamoru woman from Guam,

shared an ancestral song passed down by her grandmothers, bringing the memory of her ancestors into the healing space.

Chning Lamu, Sherpa woman from Nepal,

Each guided the Asia table, asking for harmony with the elements and nature through sacred colors.

Eva Gamboa, Wichi woman from Argentina,

reminded us that spirituality is also expressed through joy, devotion, and self-care, inviting us to scent ourselves with Florida water so we can blossom together.

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gesture, song, and word reminded us that collective healing is an act of resistance and political care.



Sanación colectiva

Panel: The path we have walked together
The inaugural panel carried the force of shared memory, moderated by **Tania Pariona, Quechua woman from Peru**, who opened the space just as Andean paths are opened: with respect and clarity of words.

Founders and leaders sat before the audience—women who have put body and voice into the history of a movement—speaking from facts but also from lived memories and convictions that carried the strength of experience.

Lucy Mulenkei, Masai from Kenya, returned on Beijing+5 and the birth of FIMI, reminding us how solidarity among sisters became the seed of a global movement.

Berenice See, from the Philippines, spoke of the efforts to articulate the Asian network and of the importance of alliances in those early years marked by uncertainty and great hope.

Lea Nicholas-Mackenzie, Wolastoqey woman from Canada, shared how the defense of Indigenous rights in her country led her to join this collective dream.

From the Arctic, Jorun Eikjok, Sámi woman from Norway, emphasized the need to build bridges between Peoples from remote regions that nevertheless share similar wounds and struggles.

Marion Hansen, Aboriginal from Australia, highlighted the power of community healing, affirming that resistance is also bred in our intimate circles.

And **Fay Blaney, from the Indigenous Women's Network of Canada**, resonated with a steadfast commitment to justice for missing and murdered Indigenous Women in her country.

Each intervention was a thread that, when interwoven, affirmed how FIMI did not arise as a mere institution but as an urgent act of political and spiritual struggle.

Festival of Good Practices and Lessons Learned

Under the banner Weaving Paths to the Future, we divided into seven working



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groups to reflect on achievements, lessons, and challenges:



The discussions led to creative expressions—songs, weavings, theatrical pieces—that symbolized the cultural and spiritual richness of our proposals. The day's resonances underscored that identity strengthening, climate justice, and intergenerational inclusion remain central pillars of our movement.

International Indigenous Peoples' Film and Communication Festival

To close the day, we joined the 15th International Indigenous Peoples' Film and Communication Festival, organized by CLACPI, CHIRAPAQ, AIDSEP and the Amazon Film School. We shared screenings of short films and documentaries that foreground the visual narratives of our communities. Cinema became an extension of the living word and a reminder that stories are also resistance.



Echoes of the day

June 20 was the longest—and most fruitful—day. It left us with deep lessons and renewed commitments. As one donor expressed:

"I take with me inspiration and a deep understanding of what FIMI does with its partners. I am planting new relationships, new alliances and friendships to strengthen this path."

(Auro Fraser, Open Society Foundation)

In every circle of dialogue, in every embrace, and in every word, our motto resounded: Weaving Together for Our Rights. We affirmed that FIMI's 25 years are a starting point toward a shared future in which we continue walking together, leaving no one behind.



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June 21

United as a SINGLE VOICE

"Nothing about us, without us, leaving no one behind."

(Resonances from the circles of word, Lima 2025)

June 21, the last day of our Anniversary, was one of profound reflection and collective commitments. We gathered to close this cycle with strength, taking up everything we had lived, shared, and learned in the previous days. Community organization, the common word, and gratitude were the threads weaving this day of closure.

Presentation of the Implementation Plan for CEDAW's General Recommendation No. 39

One of the most significant moments was the presentation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of CEDAW's General Recommendation No. 39, led by Teresa Zapeta, FIMI's Executive Director.

The plan reflects a long path that began more than two decades ago and culminated in the adoption of the Recommendation in 2022. As Teresa explained, "just as we do in our communities, the soil was prepared and the best seeds were planted so that this document could come to be."

The plan gathers contributions from all



Teresa Zapeta,
DIRECTORA EJECUTIVA DE FIMI.

regions, systematizes good practices, and establishes clear objectives:



Generate and strengthen capacities of Indigenous Women



Contribute to the effective empowerment of women and organizations



Design policies and programs to implement Recommendation No. 39



Communicate and disseminate actions to amplify impact



Promote the mobilization of technical, financial, and organizational resources

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With 6 outcomes and 37 key activities projected over five years, the plan is a political tool that will guide our global and regional work—always from the voices and priorities of Indigenous Women.



Recognize our worldviews and ancestral knowledge as central to climate justice and intergenerational well-being

Political Declaration of the International Indigenous Women's Forum

That same day we presented our Political Declaration, reaffirming how, for 25 years, we have woven a global platform for demanding the recognition and protection of our collective and individual rights. We renewed our vision for the future:



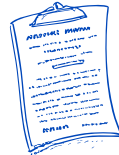
Eradicate all forms of violence



Participate fully in public and political life



Defend our territories, waters, and natural resources



Demand the full implementation, by States and international bodies, of UNDRIP, CEDAW's Recommendation No. 39, and other relevant human rights instruments

With this Declaration, we call on donors, UN agencies, governments, and civil society to align efforts with our priorities and to decolonize philanthropy, promoting flexible and direct financing for Indigenous Women's organizations.



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Regional voices

At the close, voices from regional networks interwove a single tapestry: defense of cultural and intellectual sovereignty, the drive to continue decolonizing, unity born from diversity, the demand for inclusion and memory, and alliances that affirm Indigenous Women as the strategists of their own movements. Diverse realities, united through shared dreams and struggles.

Hema Wihongi, Māori woman from the Pacific Islands, stressed the urgency of safeguarding cultural and intellectual property and decentralizing information so communities may exercise sovereignty over their knowledge.

From the Pacific Indigenous Women's Network, Alicia Lintiaco gathered the love, support, solidarity, strength, and courage of her sisters to sustain the path of decolonization on their islands.

Florina López, Guna woman from Panama, spoke of a weave that holds firm amid diversity—an interlacing that reminds us unity blossoms from diversity and protects Mother Earth's knowledge.

From Nepal, Ganga Rai, of the Indigenous Women with Disabilities Network, insisted that nothing can be done without the presence of Indigenous Women, in addition to the inclusion of their voices and stories at the heart of FIMI's networks.

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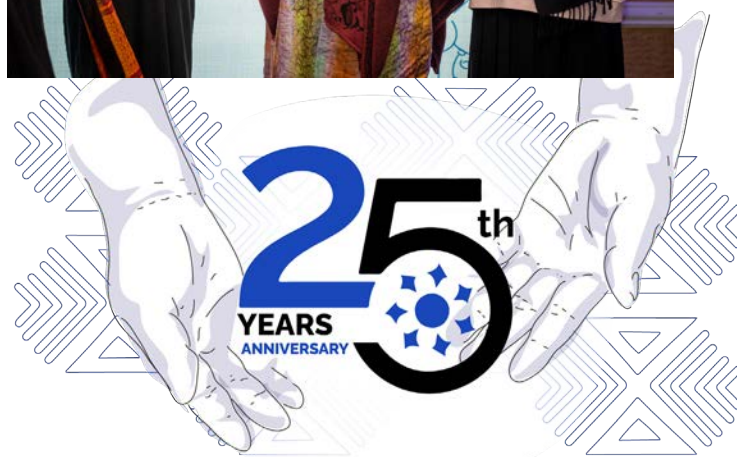
Each word wove the same horizon: though our realities are multiple, our dreams and struggles beat as one.

Acknowledgment and closing

The closing was marked by gratitude. We honored our ancestors, whose energy we felt in every word, every song, and every embrace. We recognized the founders who opened this path—Tarcila Rivera Zea, Lucy Mulenkei, Berenice See, Lea Nicholas-Mackenzie, and Fay Blaney—as well as other sisters who could not be physically present, but whose imprint remains alive in FIMI's history.

A recognition with FIMI's logo, crafted by Mexican artisans, was presented to our founders as a gesture of thanks. The act was accompanied by words from Elsa Stamatopoulou, Chandra Roy, and Mariam Wallet Aboubakrine, who joined this tribute as guests of honor.

We closed this 25th Anniversary by reaffirming our commitment to Weaving Together for Our Rights. We thank the networks, donors, and allies who have sustained this path and carry to each territory our lessons learned, alliances, and a clear roadmap: drive the implementation of General Recommendation No. 39, strengthen the Global Leadership School and the Ayni Fund, and expand the effective participation of Indigenous Women in all decision-making spaces.



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Conclusion

FIMI's 25th Anniversary in Lima was not only a celebration; it was a profound act of memory, resistance, and projection toward the future. In every ceremony, every word, every song, and every reflection, we reaffirmed that our strength lies in the collective, in intergenerational continuity, and in the conviction that our rights stand when we defend them together.

Over three days we shared lessons, challenges, and visions, reaffirming progress once thought impossible: from the international recognition of our rights to the creation of spaces for training, advocacy, and leadership that now inspire new generations of Indigenous Women on every continent.

We also acknowledged persistent challenges: the climate crisis, violence, territorial dispossession, and multiple forms of discrimination.

In the face of these, we reaffirm our political and spiritual commitment to life, justice, and the strengthening of our communities.

This Anniversary reminded us that we do not walk alone. We walk with our ancestors, with those present and those to come, in a weave of shared resistances and dreams. Because every alliance, every gathering, and every action is part of a great tapestry we have built over 25 years—and that we will continue to strengthen for generations ahead.

Thus we close this cycle, reaffirming our conviction: we will continue Weaving Together for Our Rights, sustaining hope, dignity, and the life of our peoples in every corner of the world.



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We invite you to learn more about **FIMI's history** on the commemorative microsite:

<https://25years.fimi-iiwf.org/>

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