

**Report on the Latin America Indigenous Funders
Conference Buen Vivir: Supporting the Role of Indigenous
Peoples in Bio-Cultural Diversity, Human Rights, and
Sustainable Economic Models**

October 24-27, 2016

LATIN AMERICA INDIGENOUS
FUNDERS
CONFERENCE • 2016



IFIP

International Funders for Indigenous Peoples

INTRODUCTION

IFIP's Regional Conference, held in Lima, Peru, from October 25-27, 2016, was attended by a diverse array of leaders from the donor, Indigenous, and ngo communities—in all close to 240 participants. After one of the most successful Call for Session Proposals in IFIP's history, five series of sessions were organized under four Tracks:

1 Investing in Indigenous Models of Sustainable Development

2 Protecting Ancestral Territories and Indigenous Rights

3 Walking in Two Worlds: Why Indigenous Wisdom Will Be Vital to Our Future

4 The How To: Strategies for Support

This report gathers key insights that resulted from these lively exchanges among funders and communities who collaborate to achieve shared goals in Latin America and North America, Africa, and New Zealand.

We hope that these findings serve to guide future partnerships and donor policies in these regions and inform the pioneering model we call Indigenous philanthropy.

Realities of Ancestral Land Battles: Shipibo Community Visits

Prior to the opening of the conference, from October 19 to 23, IFIP and the Rainforest Foundation US organized a site visit to several Shipibo communities along the border of the Sierra del Divisor National Park, the Aguaydia and the Ucuyali river near Pucallpa, Peru. The visit allowed a rare opportunity to see first-hand the daily realities of ancestral land battles.

Each day participants (a group consisting of donors, Indigenous leaders, and environmentalists) learned about the decades-long struggles of these communities to protect their land from such invasions as illegal loggers and palm oil industries. In each community, the group was warmly welcomed by Shipibo families with traditional songs.



Shawi Indigenous woman reflecting on the artwork featured at the conference.

"The beautiful songs, dance, crafts and delicious food where shared with love—their culture is their power."

—Barbara Savage, Founder, Tribal Trust Fund

Both communities gave presentations about their strategies, traditional food production methods, customs and beliefs. Overall, the strategies made clear a refusal to sacrifice cultural heritage and identity to commercial interests.

In Patria Nueva and Saposo, residents showcased a control post they built to scout for loggers who enter the rainforest illegally by boat. Youth are also trained in cell phone-based deforestation mapping coordinated with the Ministry of Environment's satellite monitoring systems. This isolated village is one of the first Indigenous communities in Peru to verify real-time satellite deforestation data on the ground.

In Santa Clara de Uchunya, the visitors were introduced to the community's struggle against a multinational palm oil conglomerate, the Melka family.



Shipibo community mapping.

The group also learned of the projects facilitated by Alianza Arkana. In Santa Clara de Yarina, an intercultural education and permaculture project collaborates with the local school, led by Marcos Urquia, Director of Permaculture. The organization also works in the urban communities of John Hawkins and Benajema (where the Shipibo now live after dire deforestation) on economic projects with Indigenous youth.

By the end of these visits, both Indigenous and organizational visitors were left with a new-found sense of solidarity and hope about Indigenous solutions to some of the most pressing problems on Earth today.



Barbara Savage from the Tribal Trust Foundation with Washington Bolivar from the Native Community Mariscal Cáceres.

"It was an unforgettable experience because I felt at home. In each community the people welcomed me like a member of the family, and this made me feel that we are not alone, even though we live in different countries, a thousand miles away. We are so much alike in so much—we have the same problems and there is a lot of work to do, to make alliances among communities, to share experiences, defense strategies for our territories."

—Juan Rios Vega, Tehepuan leader from Mexico

Quechua Indigenous Communities

Following the conference, a second site visit offered the opportunity to directly observe three projects on traditional wisdom, culturally appropriate education and food security in Cusco and the Sacred Valley of the Inca.

On the first day, the group was welcomed by the founders and teachers of the Kusi Kawsay school of Pisac. Quechua descendent Roman Vizcarro, who leads the school, presented its rich curriculum: bilingual education, traditional knowledge and practices, and combined programs of ancient geometry and mathematics.

As a result of this visit, New England Biolabs Foundation decided to make a discretionary grant to help the school build a community center for a ceremony in June.

On the second day, the leaders of the Federation of Rural Women Anta recounted how a small grant from the Center for Indigenous Cultures of Peru (CHIRAPAQ) empowered them to create a micro-credit system for small businesses, such as the cultivation of guinea pigs, potatoes and native corn for traditional dishes sold at local fairs. They also showcased their radio show, which broadcasted a conversation with one of the site visitors, Sebastiana Vazquez, an Indigenous leader from Chiapas, Mexico. This



Sebastiana Gomez Vazquez speaking on the Federation of Rural Women Anta radio show.

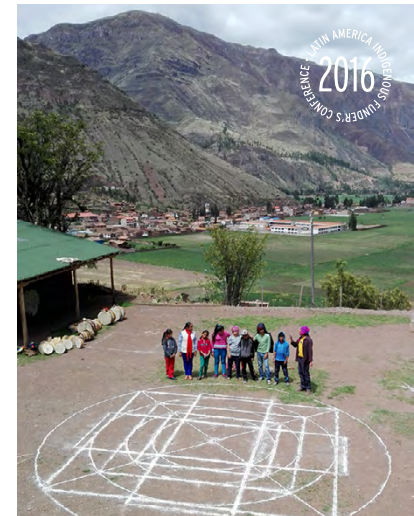
exchange highlighted the common need of Indigenous women to be included at all levels of decision-making.

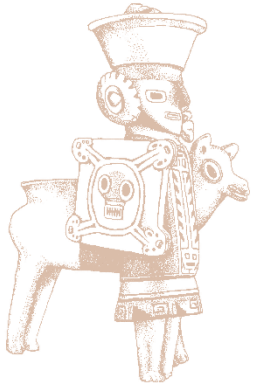
Day three's visit showcased the work of Asociación ANDES to support local Quechua communities to conserve native seeds, create endogenous development, and promote their inclusion in local, national and international policy development.

The organization has also built the capacity of these communities to research the effects of climate change on their native crops, using both Indigenous knowledge and western scientific methods. Site visitors were inspired by the collective governance of these communities, which is firmly grounded in traditional (ethical, spiritual, social, and environmental) principles, and enables residents to practice lifestyles based on the ancient principle of 'Buen Vivir.'

Key Insights from the Site Visits

- Group site visits serve as a powerful tool to start meaningful relationships between donors and communities.
- As a global community, philanthropy can create international collaborations to connect isolated communities facing similar negative impact in a region or different countries.





The Sharing Spirit of IFIP Conferences

To open the conference, a sharing spirit was welcomed by a Sunrise Ceremony held on the ancient pre-Inca site of Huaca Pucllana, a sacred site of the Lima culture. Organized by local conference coordinator, The Center for Indigenous Cultures of Peru (CHIRAPAQ), the ceremony united different ancient traditions. Spiritual leaders from the Andes, the Amazon, and Central America led a circle of participants in thanksgiving for the bounty of resources, good will and ideas in the coming days. A ceremony like this has never been allowed by the local authorities: This was the first time a sacred ceremony was held since its designation as an archeological site.



LtoR: Erna Ortiz from Yanessa Art & Culture, Jennifer Astone from the Swift Foundation and Sofia Arroyo with Sacred Fire Foundation at the Sunrise Ceremony.

Indigenous Leaders' Safe, Security, and Well Being

In response to the assassination of Honduran Lenca activist Berta Cáceres in March, 2016 the IFIP Board dedicated this conference to celebrate and honor her enduring legacy. The goal was also to raise the visibility of Indigenous leaders who tirelessly fight to protect their territories from degradation, rights for self-determination and free, prior and informed consent.

IFIP members first organized a pre-conference workshop on Indigenous Security and Well Being. Tatiana Cordero, Executive Director of Urgent Action Fund Latin America, and Angela Martinez, former Senior Program Officer for Latin America at American Jewish World Service, facilitated discussion circles that identified key concerns and possible actions. The workshop included a panel discussion with three Indigenous leaders (including Berta's daughter, Honduran youth activist Laura Zuñiga) who shared experiences of assassination of family members, death threats, and harassment for defending their land and territory.

This session gave an equal representation of donors and Indigenous participants the opportunity to highlight, reflect, and analyze the increasing threats Indigenous people face to protect their collective rights. It also delineated the safety and security priorities of Indigenous communities for donor support. For their part, donors learned from peer experiences in funding security measures for peoples at risk.

This workshop served to sensitize conference members for



"Lawyers need to understand that we have our own systems. In Honduras there are so few lawyers who defend us, how do we keep them alive?"

—Laura Zuñiga Cáceres, daughter of Berta Cáceres and COPINH activist

"This a wake-up call for all of us. It is fundamental to take into account how we as engaged funders accompany these processes and that our reactions don't cause more harm."

—Tatiana Cordero, Urgent Action Fund

"I have a hard time getting support for international advocacy and yet US funding is the absolute critical piece to reducing the threats against COPINH."

—Beverly Bell, Executive Director of Another Worlds

the next day's plenary session "How Many More?." The Plenary provided details of the daily threats and challenges faced by the Indigenous activists, Laura Zuñiga and Gloria Ushigua, Coordinator of the Sapara women's organization Ashinwaka in Ecuador. They were supported by Beverly Bell, Coordinator of the ngo, Other Worlds, who is currently based in Cáceres' headquarters in Honduras. Together they provided sobering testament that would echo throughout the conference of the growing risks Indigenous communities often face as they defend their territories and rights.

By the end of the conference, participants developed a statement of support for Indigenous Security, which IFIP shared with its members and allies to join.

We invite you to join us in protecting Indigenous defenders and activists. Read more about our [Call to Action](#).



Key Insights on Indigenous Security and Well Being

- Flexible vehicles are needed for both long-term and rapid-response funding.
- Urgent funding needs include: data security, legal support, communications (social and grassroots, as well as international advocacy), travel, and collective security.
- Support is needed to prevent arbitrary detention, harassment, assassinations and violence; both flexible and preventive grants to address the needs of Indigenous at high-risk are crucial.
- There is an increasing need for legal defense grants/support since legal defense is often cost prohibitive and extends over years. Indigenous leaders noted that there are few donors who support legal defense for Indigenous leaders and activists.
- Fund a diversity of leaders/spokespeople so that a single person leading a movement is not targeted. Analyze collective strategies versus those for individual leaders.
- Learn from collective safe and security strategies that other Indigenous social movements and groups have developed to protect their collectives and communities.
- Funders need to see the link between investors in infrastructure projects (often from a funder's home country) and local assassins. Funders can support alternative, Indigenous visions of development to counter current narratives of national development that form the basis of conflicts.
- It is important to not only support the design and development of security and well-being protocols, but also to fund their implementation.

TRACK ONE

"One of our challenges as funders is that we take on short-term strategies—we need to get in with them 'for real.' CS Mott, for instance, supports for 25 years. Don't think that funding a one- or three-year strategy will result in any real change."

—Traci Romine of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

Investing in Indigenous Models of Sustainable Development

The word 'alternative' encompasses recurring messages in Track One sessions. Indigenous cultures, governance, and wisdom have developed alternative visions of development that can differ dramatically from models offered by industrialized societies. At the same time, even those solutions promoted as 'alternative' by dominant cultures still can result in oppression on Indigenous lands.

Lucila Bettina Cruz Velazquez describes how wind farms are resulting in a land grab of Zapotec territory in Mexico, "It's hard to talk about territorial fights versus 'green energy,' and yet that is the trend of the future."

This session, facilitated by Jennifer Astone, Executive Director of Swift Foundation, also skyped in Abdikadir Kurewa of the Sarima Indigenous Peoples' Land Forum who recounted how his people's lands were given in a 20-year concession to a hydraulic project in Africa.

In another session, Randall Gingrich and Juan Rios Vega of the ngo Tierra Nativa described strategies of the Tarahumara of northern Mexico to sustainably develop their lands with community-led tourism instead of the massive golf course and 'adventure park' currently planned.

The session on the Indigenous defense of rivers noted that in Brazil there are more than 60 lawsuits filed against companies for environmental damages on Indigenous lands. While some cases have been successful in international venues, such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, often the companies simply re-group under a different name and continue the destruction.

A common thread throughout all the sessions was the threat of large infrastructure and private commercial projects that are planned without the consent of local communities. While the term 'free, prior and informed consent' is commonly used, it seems rarely practiced. In more than one case, after communities committed resources to legal battles to have their voices heard, the response was to impose a superficial 'consultation' on them. In response, some funders are supporting regional workshops among Indigenous groups to form alliances and share strategies and tactics. Funding solutions to common problems faced by Indigenous communities across the world is an emerging trend.



TRACK ONE

Key Insights from Track One

- It is important to start with a personal connection and then continue to the collective goal. In question-and-answer sessions in these workshops, both donors and Indigenous leaders recognized the value of getting to know leaders, communities, and their common concerns and goals.
- Harmony and balance should be the foundation of any economic enterprise. While all Indigenous participants in these workshops reinforced this idea; Indigenous women were particularly adamant on this point.
- Funders need to find profitable ways to develop forest diversity. Indigenous speakers clarified that the trees they use for community forestry are not on their sacred lands, so they regard these trees as a sustainable asset that can bring income to the whole community.
- Indigenous cultures promise an abundance of possibility for economic enterprise. There was a variety of examples, from private investment in large scale resin production to innovative markets in traditional foods and art.
- Funding common tactics, such as the use of ILO Convention 169 and other legal tools, can create precedents that can be replicated across the globe.

"It is hard to find funders for legal strategies; in our case it was more difficult to fund Indigenous women than it was to fund corn."

—Katherine Zavala, Regional Director of Latin America, IDEX



LtoR: Conference participant speaking with Traci Romine from the Charles Mott Foundation, Bel Juruna from the Juruna Muratu Village in the Paquicamba Indigenous Territory, and Diana Rios from the Amazon community of Alto Tamaya Saweto.

TRACK TWO

"We also need to do spiritual work, after talking about sexual violence day after day. We started a healing program so we can be well as we do this work."

—Guadalupe Martinez, Indigenous Women's Alliance of Central America and Mexico

"In the 90s there was funder flight from Brazil. As a result, civil society started to crumble, and as wealth started to concentrate, Indigenous peoples were the most impacted."

—Maria Amalia Souza, Executive Director of the Socio-Environmental Fund CASA

Protecting Ancestral Territories and Indigenous Rights

Every IFIP conference reinforces the central importance of land and territory to Indigenous self-determination and human rights. The sessions in this track demonstrated the challenges and solutions found in communities fighting to keep their lands and manage them according to customary governance and traditions. It was recognized, particularly in the last session on criminalization of Indigenous activists, that these struggles carry imminent personal and collective risks. Successful strategies, such as the creation of regional initiatives that can compile data, track human rights abuses and quickly organize in-country safes houses and spaces for at-risk activists, are crucial to both national and global alliance-building.



Alessandra Munduruku from the Paygo Muybu School, contributing to a session discussion.

Key messages coming out of Track Two sessions concern the core issues of Indigenous philanthropy: to practice the Four Rs – Responsibility, Respect, Reciprocity and Responsibility.

"Funders have put so much into Brazil, there is time to finish what we started, if there is the will to do what needs to be done."

—Ana Valeria, Executive Director, Brazil Human Rights Fund

Key Insights from Track Two

- A common belief among Indigenous communities is that they are the current administrators of their ancestral lands, which they can share with the State as part of an agreement to protect them.
- Indigenous leaders reported higher influence and impact when they formed alliances with those with similar struggles and/or joined larger movements. For funders, funding similar strategies in different countries can reap wider benefits, for instance supporting similar legal battles.
- Some funders are designing their structures 'backwards:' they respond to a need instead of fitting the need to an established program area. In other words, those on the frontlines inform the type and focus of funding.
- It is important to give multi-year flexible, general funding in the understanding that grassroots organizing is a long-term process.

TRACK THREE

“Funders with restricted portfolios can collaborate with other donors working through other lenses to support more holistic and inclusive agendas of Indigenous people to advance social justice for all. An intersectional approach, as a grantmaking tool, has the potential to build bridges among different struggles and movements. Collaborations need to be more intersectional as a whole.”

**—Angela Martinez,
American Jewish
World Service**

Walking in Two Worlds: Why Indigenous Wisdom Will Be Vital to Our Future

The term “intersectionality,” or “cosmo-vision,” as known by Indigenous communities, encapsulates a path forward when funding Indigenous peoples. Both words suggest a holistic, multi-dimensional view of problems and solutions that defies compartments, and, in some cases, narrow program portfolios. Track Three sessions underscored how for those who have worked with Indigenous communities for years – and, more recently, those who strive for impact in complex issues such as health, education or climate change – cross-program, discretionary, and flexible funding are the trends of the future.

Sessions in this track explored the multi-faceted dimensions of Indigenous reciprocity: the often intangible, under-valued efforts communities bring to partnerships. From ancient traditions in environmental management to the untapped potential of those with different abilities, viewpoints and genders, the central message was how Indigenous philanthropy needs to be flexible, bold and adaptive.

In one session on excluded and discriminated people within Indigenous communities, such as those with disabilities, or those who identify as both Indigenous and LGBTQ, hope was seen in their political awakening and engagement as agents of change. As they became more politically engaged, their voices grew – and they inevitably joined wider social movements.

As Olga Montufar, an Indigenous activist in the disability rights movement, recounted, “In 1993, our first allies were those with HIV, now there are so many we need to reach and ally with.”

The natural alliances among outsiders was a common theme.



LtoR: Olga Montufar from Paso O Paso with Bettina Cruz Velázquez from Asamblea de Pueblos Indígenas del Istmo de Tehuantepec en Defensa del Territorio (APIITDT).

Indigenous peoples share concerns with those marginalized from mainstream society. Likewise, Indigenous people who are differently abled or identify as different genders are helping their own communities analyze their cultural norms.

The session on intersectionality sparked a great deal of debate among participants, who were able to reflect on the need of more inclusive Indigenous communities that respect the rights of people with disabilities and those with different sexual orientation and gender identities. Amaranta Gómez Regalado, a Zapotec Indigenous transgender woman activist, pointed out that it is crucial to research and learn how Indigenous people have ancestrally engaged with transgender people, since some communities accept them, while others have been quite oppressive and violent against them. Angela Martinez, former Senior Program Officer for Latin America at American Jewish

TRACK THREE

"From a funder's perspective, we can't think that multiple forms of discrimination can be resolved with specific, compartmentalized projects. We have a responsibility to give mixed funding."

—Claudia Samcam, Development Coordinator, Central American Women's Fund

"In Mexico there is a story about a fish that doesn't have bones, so when you try to capture it, it escapes. It is the same with intersectionality—it escapes people's understanding. We are trying to put some bones on this fish."

—Amaranta Gómez Regalado, a Zapotec Indigenous transgender woman and activist

World Service, (AJWS) spoke of the importance of grantmaking strategies that promote holistic, intersectional approaches to understanding the diversity among Indigenous movements and communities, as well as the multiple oppression and discrimination people with multiple identities can face. She provided some examples of AJWS's intersectional approach supporting the work of young, indigenous LGBTI led- movements and Indigenous women with disabilities-lead collectives. Other stories of hope included an Indigenous youth group in Ecuador that started working on migration issues and is now organizing native seed banks and sustainable agriculture. In another, the Guatemalan women's collective the Qachuu Aloom Association began its work around post-war recovery, which evolved into community nutrition programs using native plants.



Key Insights from Track Three

- Funders can change applications to be more inclusive to Indigenous peoples, such as those with disabilities, and provide extra support to those whose first, or even second, language is not English.
- Multi-faceted problems, such as discrimination and cross-program areas, require flexible approaches or at least need to be considered under different program areas. For example, discrimination against transgender women in assembly factories can be addressed either through a general women's fund or under different programs, including labor and social justice.
- Indigenous grassroots and movements face the challenge to recognize diversity within their organizations and to create more inclusive Indigenous communities.
- Indigenous LGBTI and Indigenous women with disabilities face multi-leveled discrimination inside both Indigenous and grassroots movements.
- Stigma and discrimination are interrelated, reinforcing and legitimizing each other. Funders can reflect on the Indigenous cosmo-vision that 'All is Related,' in their funding strategies.
- Funding participatory, Indigenous-led research will yield effective results; academic, top-down academic research by outsiders will never provide a full picture of the problems or solutions.

TRACK FOUR

The How To: Strategies for Support

The conference opened with two powerful Indigenous leaders speaking about the promising growth of philanthropy based on Indigenous values and practices, which are encapsulated in the Four Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy (Reciprocity, Respect, Relationships and Respect.) Such themes resonated in all the tracks, but saw their specific practical application in these “How to” sessions.

As Tarcila Rivera Zea, Executive Director of the Center for Indigenous Cultures of Peru (CHIRAPAQ), noted in a session on Building and Stewarding Dynamic Relationships: “In our culture (Quechua), we have a belief that every 500 years there is a change in the world – a return to balance. There are so many

shared values among us who realize that we Indigenous peoples are conserving the resources, values and perspectives that will save the entire world.”

In her Keynote speech earlier in the conference, Mirna Cunningham, a Miskito leader from Nicaragua and Vice-President of the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, noted, “Our struggles are varied and interconnected. Intercultural philanthropy takes these multiple dimensions into account.”

The term ‘intercultural philanthropy’ was a term that recurred through all these sessions. The common refrain is that philanthropy should not simply impose an industrialized world mode of operating but should enter into truly reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities, which include a true give-and-take in both effort and beliefs. For example, Indigenous participants across these sessions shared their reflections on how ancestral knowledge of the environment should be key to climate change policies. Millennia of ‘best practices’ on climate change can be shared with modern society.



Susan Balbas with Na'ah Illahee Fund speaking with Tarcila Rivera of CHIRAPAQ and Julieta Mendez of Foundation Center.

“The fact that we don’t have an administrative structure has limited the funding and support we need but can’t access.”

–Lucila Bettina Cruz Velazquez, co-founder of the Assembly of Indigenous Peoples of Tehuantepec Isthmus in Defense of Land and Territory

TRACK FOUR

Key Insights from Track Four

- There are eight forms of capital; money is just one of them. The challenge for funders is to how to give value to Indigenous community work in dollar terms and how to incorporate holistic Indigenous values into their work practices.
- There were suggestions that donors learn more about Indigenous goal-setting, such as 'life plans,' and adopt these concepts in their grantmaking.
- Funders and communities need to agree on common ground about the cultural understanding of transactions, commitment, accountability and trust.

- Cross-regional funding of similar groups strengthens territorial rights and Indigenous solutions on a global level. Country-level funding can limit the scope of impact.
- Environmental, not just human rights, funds can provide quick response support for Indigenous peoples on the front-lines of conflict.

"Indigenous philanthropy is like a good marriage: One partner brings home the bacon while the other takes care of the home front. Both are valuable contributions to the family."

—Froyla Tzalam, Executive Director, Sarstoon Temash Institute of Indigenous Management



"If we strengthen governance at the territorial level, we'll have people administrating by our Indigenous laws, respecting women. We call it 'shelter without walls,'"

—Rose Cunningham Kain, Miskito leader and Founder/ Director of Flower of the River women's group in Nicaragua

"We are all in the same path: When we used to talk about violence and sexual rights, Indigenous women used to say, 'that doesn't involve me—that doesn't happen here,' and now we are recognizing it, working together."

—Tarcila Rivera Zea, Executive Director, Center for Indigenous Cultures of Peru

Investing in Indigenous Women's Empowerment

Following the conference, the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI) organized a half-day session on philanthropy and Indigenous women. In an opening ceremony, Rosalina Tuyuc, a spiritual leader of the Kaqchiket Maya of Guatemala, called on the wisdom of the ancestors to guide the session to success. In small circles of discussion, donors and Indigenous leaders then shared best practices on how to promote women's leadership, economic autonomy, their rights, and intersectionality with other movements.

Suggestions included: Train Indigenous women on such issues as land rights and business strategy; support women's research in their communities; provide materials in their languages, and promote solidarity among Indigenous women at all levels, from the grassroots to international.



IFIP award being presented to the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI)

Donors such as Sonja Swift, Trustee of the Swift Foundation, shared her commitment to empowering communities so they can decide how to manage their own resources based on free, prior and informed consent.

In particular, the words of transgender Indigenous activist Amaranta Gómez Regalado summed up the overall sentiment felt by all by the end of the session: "My struggle is your struggle. We embrace the struggles of all of us. We love life. Yes, I accept!"



Myrna Cunningham, keynote speaker at the conference.

Key Insights from the Women's Empowerment Session

- Indigenous women need more access to donors, both in terms of direct dialogue with grantees, and at the institutional level (open calls for proposals, for instance.) Indigenous women's groups are usually voluntary and operate at the most grassroots level, and yet they are the most participatory, achieving high impact.
- Funders can help raise awareness of the work of Indigenous

Key Insights from the Women's Empowerment Session

women's groups, to help them network with women in other countries – and with other donors. There was a call for strategies of communication and solidarity networks with donors and Indigenous women's groups.

- Supporting the political participation of Indigenous women is key to amplify their voices in the decision-making spaces of Indigenous, and mixed movements and groups.
- Helping Indigenous women acquire land is a form of deep empowerment. While some Indigenous communities give priority to elderly women and widows, other groups, such as single mothers, often do not have the capital, or the social standing, to acquire land plots, which not only gives them homes for their children, but food and economic security.

In 2014 IFIP, FIMI, AWID came together to publicize the gap in funding women's organizing within Indigenous communities. The result was ["A Call to Action: Insights into the Status of Funding for Indigenous Women's Groups."](#)

Conference Feedback

After the conference, we asked participants to fill out a survey. Here are the highlights.

- Overall good content and good mix of perspectives from funders and Indigenous representatives.

- Participants expressed being able to "renew contacts and share current work with old partners; able to hold side meetings with new partners whose missions and goals are aligned."
- Participants want to see more concrete information on grantmaking tools – a better balance between highlighting Indigenous issues and information on grantmaking practices.
- Participants felt there was not enough time to get to know people one-on-one. It was suggested to have more room on the conference agenda for networking.



Conference donors with participants.

Looking Forward

In the past year, IFIP has undergone an intensive process of evaluation and analysis to create a new strategic framework for its future work. At the conference, we took the opportunity to organize a Strategy Session for direct feedback from our community. We asked participants to make recommendations on our next steps in three questions, which we share below.



These recommendations will inform the Strategic Framework for the coming years. IFIP is the only global donor affinity solely dedicated to Indigenous philanthropy, a community of people who share common values and beliefs, who advocate that Indigenous philanthropy offers a tremendous potential for the central challenges of our times.

IFIP will continue to promote philanthropy that is based on a new paradigm of giving based on our values: “The Four R’s of Indigenous Philanthropy” – Respect, Reciprocity, Responsibility and Relationships.

As we enter a new cycle we will further promote partnerships between donors and Indigenous peoples, share effective grantmaking tools and practices, expand funding for **Indigenous solutions** that respond to their issues, increase Indigenous peoples’ **influence** over philanthropic practice, and bring important issues affecting Indigenous peoples to the attention of funders.

Key Insights from the Strategic Session

<i>Effective ways to use networks strategically</i>	<i>Learning what works in supporting Indigenous issues</i>	<i>Expanding Indigenous leadership</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear definition of principles, strategies roles, methods of communication • Cut across boundaries – women, ethnicity, race, etc. • Set up nodes and mutually agree on means of coordination • Find the technical and social means of communication to a wider world of Indigenous peoples • Include means of building and maintaining confidence – face- to-face meetings, exchanges, delegations • Use different language for different audiences – general, technical • Identify various scales of action – local, regional, national, international • Principles of a Strong Network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Forward-looking – Strategic/intentional – Capacity building – Information sharing – Parity/Racial equality – Reinforce strength of Worldview – Shared vision – Focal point 	<p>Learning happens when we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness – understand each other. Donors bring resources and knowledge; Indigenous communities bring knowledge and life plans. • Collaborate: learning happens in doing the work together • Decolonize yourself spiritually <p>To learn and share lessons – Strengthen Indigenous peoples by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop intercultural tools b) Support social movements • Gender equality and direct participation • Access to legal information and action on public policy • Share knowledge and cross fertilize <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Share Indigenous research b) Knowledge of what each actor is doing and wants c) Studies of what works and what needs to be improved – include context d) Take mutual responsibility for participatory evaluation of projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building – build the capacity of Indigenous peoples organizations and ngo's to prepare and manage fundable initiatives • Structures and processes – build Indigenous leaders into funding decision-making – on boards, committees, and planning groups • Rethink funding – transform the Western idea of philanthropy as 'rich giving to the needy' to more Indigenous ideas of reciprocity and relationships. Build Indigenous cosmo-visions into funding practices that recognize the unity of humanity and nature • Build leadership, including youth – support the development of Indigenous leadership in working with the world of funders • Support IP initiatives and respect the structures of Indigenous organizations to direct funding. Fund both reliable intermediaries and fund Indigenous organizations directly



THANK YOU

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