

## Module 6

### Amazon women and their role in the defense of territory

Escuela de Formación Política para los  
Pueblos Indígenas de la Amazonía Colombiana

## Territory and Biodiversity



## Module 6

### Amazon women and their role in the defense of territory

*"From the beginning of time We Amazon Women are the daughters of the jungle, of the brave land and the water flow, mothers in the mountains, there, in the multicolored jungle. There walks and returns Our word in knowledge and wisdom, as a sweet word and melody of life": Philosophy of the Amazon Women Decree Workshop 092 OPIAC.*

*Without the presence of indigenous women, there would be no indigenous peoples, they are always laying knowledge in the memory of indigenous peoples. Chela Román. Uitoto Woman*

*"It is the very indigenous woman, strengthened, who must speak for herself." Piaroa Woman, Binational Meeting of Indigenous Women of Colombia and Venezuela (2007).*

### Introduction

Management and use of the territory by the indigenous peoples of the Amazon traditionally responds to the principle of complementarity. It is there where men and women partake responsibilities as well as differences of knowledge and specialization. This means that everyone one has its function with regard to balance necessary for continued existence, and for the maintenance of its particularities; in such a scenario for life, and interaction with the symbolic, with the spiritual, and the material: the territory.

Now, Amazon men and women interact, construct and reinterpret forms of knowledge, and they struggle between adjustment or "forced" adaptation otherwise to other dissertations and practices and even transformations of these relationships. This reflection arises permanently in the different internal debates of the peoples, in mambaderos, malocas, communal houses, healing houses where arises the question regarding integration or resistance also carries within itself individual reflections to which one is mostly not used to.

Elements of one's Own cultural knowledge, mother tongue, and cultural referents began to weakened; this situation exacerbates when interacting with external dynamics such as educational, productive and development models; but also the armed conflict, resources extraction, colonization, evangelization, drug trafficking as intercultural dynamics with the national society entail

inequalities within the relationships between men and women affecting the internal relations of indigenous peoples, altogether with transformations that have also entailed different forms of being a woman and a man.

What is currently gathered is the presence of imbalances with practices and dissertations that limit the recognition of the role and Own recognition of men and women; especially that of the indigenous woman with respect to her mission in the defense of the territory. In the words of an indigenous Wiseman who recognizes that something is not working as expected. "We know that the basket has been disrupted, and it has not been possible to fix it."

This module is an invitation to the urgent need of considering the role of indigenous women as guarantors of the existence of peoples, and their continuance in the territory; not only as a woman-mother, or as a provider of food, but also as a driving factor in preparing for life with those beings of the territory, as well as the very defense of the territory as the place where multiple relationships with the whole are constructed.

The indigenous Amazon woman means and represents the domain over knowledge for food, for life. Such spiritual, cultural, productive knowledge makes of her word valuable and valued in its own, a value that needs re-significations, on the part of young people, men and women, indigenous peoples, but also of a society that simply settled in the mere recognition of multiculturalism without overcoming the speeches given the need to respond to the particular needs of indigenous women.

### Let's begin by asking:

- What role do indigenous women play in the Amazon culture?
- Are Amazon indigenous women recognized in debates about gender equity?
- Why is it said that the indigenous Amazon woman takes care of life?
- Does the indigenous Amazon woman participate in decisions making processes in her community? Her town? Her organization?

### What do we want?

As Amazon indigenous youth we deepen by means of the word itself about the ways in which the Amazon peoples and society currently address the realities, and the role of the very knowledge of the indigenous Amazon women in the defense of the Amazon territory.

### Let's look inside: The Own

- What are the "Own" roles of women within the Amazon peoples?
- What role does the young indigenous Amazon woman play in their culture?
- What is the relationship of the indigenous Amazon woman with the Own knowledge?

### The indigenous Amazon woman takes care of life

The indigenous Amazon woman is a defender of the territory through her wisdom, control and management of complex systems of Own knowledge. Their participation from the traditional side resides in that woman who lives in her territory, diets, takes care of her children, her family, her community, her people, knows nature and its specificities.

The Amazon woman has her leadership in the skills she develops over the course of her lifetime with those knowledges that make of her to be acknowledged within her community or peoples. We talk about the woman who in her communities stands out as the one with the best chagra, the one who prepares the best cassava, the one who is a midwife, the one who knows about traditional medicine. Such activities represent schemes of knowledge

which is conceived as fundamental for the survival of each people which in turn is envisaged as a collective collection with particular knowledge expertise that are transmitted in the dynamics of woman to woman, grandmother to granddaughter, and mother to daughter.



Among the systems of Own Knowledge managed by Amazon women, we shall highlight:

#### 1. She brings life, she is a traditional midwife

The woman is the one who awakens the world with a smile to her family.  
Chela Roman, Uitoto indigenous People.

"The woman is life, that is her main function. She is support, she is wise and she is an authority  
"indigenous wisdom.

#### 2. She guarantees food. She is the chagra maker

The Woman is the owner of the seeds, the life-giving elements.  
Indigenous Amazon wiseman.

"Everyone in the indigenous people is necessary, a man must feed and think, so he needs to eat, if he does not do it with the help of the woman he is not oriented to work in minga, she is important because she is the one who recognizes and knows our food, and our culture."  
Indigenous Amazon wiseman

### 3. She counsels, she gives advice, she is an authority...

The indigenous Amazon woman also owns the advices, She sweetens the heart and the word. Indigenous woman

The man makes many mistakes and the woman advises him, they both must go hand in hand: They must agree that when there is disagreement there is nothing.  
José Peña Pueblo Tucano Guaviare.

We indigenous women must be able to always search the roots, "that has to be up to the last leaf of a tree, if we lose our roots, if we don't know what our mission is, personally, or collectively that is unfortunate". Misak indigenous woman.

The woman fulfills the role of survival and multiplication of her clan as well as its knowledge. She is not only support, she is the one who plans and knows how to act. If you take a look at the internal structure of organizations, it reduces the issue to a decree, and the true role of women is not being considered. In the end they (women) end up meeting only among themselves; the role of women is orientation. It should be seen as knowledge, which is authority as a man himself.  
Albert Pérez Pueblo Murui Amazonas.

### 4. She manages spirituality, she is the Owner of spiritual sites

Life is sustained materially and spiritually, if the couple has no base nor spiritual architecture, they would be sluggish.  
Lizardo López Village Murui Putumayo.

Why is there the Jirijirimo ? We are here thanks to a woman, in Vaupés the woman was the three sacred cuyas and she invited men to taste the sacred cuyas and the ones who tasted the cuyas were the cockroaches, snakes and, if men had eaten they would have died (trunk of water place). Men waged war and at last they took away the power. Marcelo Muñoz Pueblo Tatuyo Vaupés.

The origin of the woman from the Curripaco Town, is born from the mother earth, first the man is born and it is located on the right side and the woman on the left side and three holes appear. Inarru is called the woman, that is the origin of humanity for the Curripacos, they are blown by the left hand and the left foot belongs to the woman.

the woman is the one who plans and sows, the man goes into the jungle to lie down, he fishes because it is natural, but she is authority, and gives warmth to the home.  
Divine Dasilva. Curripaco Town Guainía.

The man was born to be a leader, the voice of the young man did not have much substance to dominate, and when noticing his weakness then the woman is born to sweeten her word, her voice, and so they are a single body and the unification of man and woman generate equality for mutual understanding and performance of functions; thus in the work and the duties the woman plays a relevant role in all the functions, for the Murui Muina a woman is worth a lot.  
Luis Alberto Fiagama Murui Village. Caquetá.

In spiritual management when the child and the girl are born there is a balance. ... the lizard asked about what was born. If it's a girl, she it says it's okay because the woman shall till the land where we live, she gives life, without her we cannot have life, those are the values of a woman.  
Narration Murui Muina. Lizardo López

### 5. She takes care of others' lives. She is a traditional practitioner

The indigenous woman will always have in her chagra or in her medicinal orchard everything essential in order to attend to the needs of her children and her family, with plants of her own use for prevention, healing and curing those physical and spiritual illnesses.

### 6. She weaves life, she contributes to the material base of her people in every single knitted fabric and workpiece in ceramics.

The fabric, as human creation responds to a feeling, a spiritual reason and a basic need for survival, the woven objects are used to obtain food through a net or a nasa. Blankets, anacus and ruanas are woven in order to dress the people. Baskets and mochilas are used to store and transport; hammocks are woven to rest, to protect, to dream and to share with others. It is the construction of the maloca  
Cielo Quiñones Aguilar.

## What are the elements of a System of Own knowledge? Tabla 1

These are collective constructions

It has structure and social functions within the collective.

They comply an objective (Prepare for life).

They are based on a system of values

They imply technical knowledge

They have a teaching scheme that has short, medium and long term objectives.

They involve elements of representation of the original social structure

They structure forms of relationship with other peoples

They support other complementary and interdependent knowledge.

They are not either below or above Western science.

They have learning scaffolding.

They have their very pedagogical strategy

They have their very classification system

They are categorized and conceptualized in their own language.

### The Amazon women and Own Knowledge System

#### Activity:

With the support of the counselors and the technical team, we will carry out an exercise with six (6) Systems of Own Knowledge of the Amazon Women and identifying their relationship with each of the elements indicated in Table 1. Guide to questions.

The group of women as owners of Sacred Sites can be guided in the following text by the Counselor Marcelo Muñoz of the Tatuyo People, Department of Vaupés.

Text by Marcelo Muñoz, Indigenous Counselor, Vaupés

#### 1. The prayer of milk

When the baby is born, whether male or female, a prayer is made and a traditional name is assigned. Furthermore, to some of them at that very moment is offered a gift. Thereafter the teaching is in charge of parents by means of advice or preventions:

Training begins when wisemen pray to the babies with the purpose of point out the pathway in life. At that moment, it is defined and blessed the work that corresponds to them in the community, in such a way that they can learn and live according to such a function. During the prayer the traditional name is given in accor-

*dance to the names that were received from the very origin; and after the prayer, the family must be committed to some care and discipline, especially with food, so that everyone has good health and so that the baby can lead a good life.*

#### 2. Initiation

*In initiation, children – males and females - recognize the space of family and cultural life, they learn to take care of themselves according to the explanations of wisdoms and they also learn to behave under discipline guidelines. Initiation for men and women is different:*

- *First menstruation: initiation of girls*

*Menstruation is the blood flow which is different from the rest of the body. For the indigenous peoples of Vaupes it is something very harmful that comes directly from mother nature; however, menstruation is a change of body and life whereby the woman becomes stronger and is born again, that's why the prayer to the first menstruation is similar to the prayer performed by the Wiseman when a baby is born.*

*¿The menstruation is source of life for women, for this reason the one in charge of protection matters and maintenance of life of girls is the Wiseman with experience in maternity issues.*

Answers to the previous question.

(Case Vaupes): The girl's hair is cut with the purpose of throwing out the harmful effect of those consumed foods by that time. Cutting her hair is a way of body cleansing and purification.

During the days of the first menstruation, the young woman is separated from the rest of the people and she has to remain confined for five days in a room especially built for the occasion. No men nor children are allowed to enter this room. The girl's mom and godmother are the only ones she is allowed to have permanent contact with. Her godmother gives her advice about her new life and the girl limits herself just to listen, because she is not allowed to ask anything.

#### Special prayers

So that the invisible beings do not harm the girl, the Wiseman prays with the same carayurú – coloring powder made with leaves of a liana, which is widely used in the making of ritual artifacts – that was given to the mother when the girl was born, since the carayurú protects her from all dangers and makes her invisible to them.

The Wiseman must protect and take care of her with the purpose of giving her more life, strength and power; because men, food, procreation and future generations depend upon her.

#### Education in the feminine initiation cycle

The education of the girl only depends on her mother or her grandmother; that is why the advice given at that time redounds in seeking for the girl to be a good woman, that is to say, a good worker.

- A woman who keeps the chagra clean.
- A woman who supplies the needs of the house.
- A woman who produces good starch.
- A woman who prepares foods every day.
- A woman who serves people well
- A woman who during the days of dancing is able to endure sleep.
- A woman who respects the kinship rules.

#### Diets

During this period, the girl or (adult woman) ought to follow certain rules of behavior, such as cultural restrictions and diets; if she does not comply and disrespects her body then such behavior affects cassava, the maloka, children and adults; because all of them are her children and the force of menstruation makes her get sick. For that reason, the girl remains seated in that period until they pray the food in order to avoid contamination of the spaces, (if she is an adult woman, she will rest in the house until the mens-

truation is over), otherwise it will stain the thoughts of everybody present, both men and women.

During menstruation, if the woman is an adult, then she can not approach the young people who are in the learning process because the thought channels or the organs in charge of intelligence get closed and weakened. The knowledge process is interrupted.

## The speeches of Gender Equity (The External)..

*“It is about not taking away the mother’s power. She is the one with power because she is in charge of quality food, good healthcare, good education. The woman is the owner of food and the man is the owner of healing.”*

Reinaldo ortega Autoridad tradicional Pueblo Barasano.

*“In the colonial contexts, there were no gender debates as the current terms indicate, not because there weren’t posed any debates between women and men, but the responded to other ontological categories as well as visions of being an indigenous individual and being a man or a woman.”*

Astrid Ulloa Universidad Nacional de Colombia

Let's start by identifying What we know about some concepts:

- What is gender?
- What is gender equity?
- Is there any relationship between identity and gender for indigenous peoples?
- How are gender relations managed inside the Amazon peoples?
- What is the current situation of the indigenous Amazon woman?

To understand the situation of gender relations within the Amazon indigenous peoples requires recognizing those actions and achievements in all possible scenarios where women have played a decisive role for the indigenous process:

- Women have been carriers of the processes’ strengthening for their peoples and communities inside and outside the territory (leaders, defenders of the territory, traditional authorities).
- With their work the peoples participate and demand their rights. "The Amazon chagra, was to a large extent support for the process of resistance of ONIC , we women were in charge of bringing food, to ensure that we all could eat, while discussing the issues."  
Murui Indigenous woman Amazonas.

- From the everyday women speak out themselves and report about what happens in the territories. Women are leaders and spokeswomen in the claim of attention regarding the needs of their communities (local spokesperson in the communities).

- Women are support and guarantors of the structures and local organizational processes (Secretaries of the organizations, members, treasurers, presidents, women's area coordinators).

- Women as professionals, teachers, advisors, councilors, and recently as candidates for special national constituencies, they are visible in their actions by prioritizing the strengthening of peoples.

- As defenders of human rights and those of the indigenous peoples.

- As representatives of the peoples in national and international scenarios (Secretariats or Coordination of Women, OPIAC, COICA, delegates to the alliance of women by Agreement for Biodiversity).

- As producers when they organize themselves from different spaces as entrepreneurs in associations, cooperatives, legal representatives of the organizations, also, as direct beneficiaries of projects.

- As builders of political participation and formulation of differential policies. (Delegates to gender tables).

- Women as creators of organizational fabric in networks at all levels; community, local, national, regional and global. They have built their own organizational territory.

However, current demands of the indigenous Amazon women, both in the organizational and cultural context, pose the need to read their individual and collective expectations from other •

- "Women deserve their own spaces of conversa-

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tion; (... lots of women's organizations have criticized us, in the secretariat we are inquired about why the indigenous women do not speak, they just want to talk about complementarity?) The question is: do indigenous women speak only about that? Indian woman Kamentza.

- In short, clarifications are required regarding those problematic situations that directly affect her status as an indigenous woman; because such affectations do indeed exist, many of them are very serious, and no action is taken regarding them, which is reflected in the information that was collected during the workshops. Decree 092. Amazon women.
- Consensus is needed within the organizations and the communities regarding the importance of generating concrete actions that contribute to the reduction of the vulnerability of Amazon indigenous women, with actions ranging from the exercise of special jurisdiction to the application of the law 1257. Decree 092.
- Indigenous women have to know what the other person is talking about (individual rights? feminisms? Equity? gender equality?), We ought to be able to perceive those concepts deriving from others, because it is just there where we can find many allies in this path. Women's Conference OPIAC School.
- When we meet with women, we see that this must be in the direction of women's training, there must be a selection or purification of what is important for women and for peoples. It has to be a collective process with women. Women's Conference OPIAC School  
Escuela OPIAC.

### Let's see the Debate...

There are diverse interpretations of Amazon women concerning their realities, and the ways such interpretations ought to be addressed:

- Those women in favor of defending the value of complementarity as its own cultural value; and founding their defense from the very collective, without separating the reflection of what happens inside the communities. (No differences, those are imposed) Astrid Ulloa.
- Those women who under the influence of external representation policies have adopted figures within the communities such as women's areas, women's coordination, women's secretariats. (The unequal relations are in the very peoples and it is necessary to take the shouting).
- Those who have taken distance (by own decision or due to displacement) from the dynamics of their peoples and organizations in order to face their own realities, with speeches and elements of reflection on what is happening to them within the communities, organizing by themselves. (There are inequalities and they are reflected differently according to the context).



Let's take a tour regarding External concepts:



### **Indigenous Identity**

It can be understood as the primordial essence of each human being, whether man or woman in each indigenous peoples, it is all that exists in the being and in life of those who claim to be indigenous peoples, and to which they can not give up; that is something with what one identifies for oneself, but also with others.

The identity is directly related to the right to Self-determination. It is about the possibility of self-recognition as a member of a cultural group or people with particularities, with their own practices regarding their origin, their life and their relations with the environment.



### **Identity**

It is a symbolic process of construction in which individuals define and construct themselves in close symbolic interaction with other people.

It is the ability to consider oneself as a subject, and along that process to build a narrative about oneself. Such a capacity is only acquired in a process of social relations measured by the symbols. (...)

Answers the question: "Who am I in the eyes of others?" Or "What would I like to be considering the judgment that significant others have of me?"

### **Gender**

It is a category of analysis that refers to the social meaning of biological difference in the sexes. It studies relations between the biological, psychical, social and cultural. The gender includes all the set of accepted ways of being a man or a woman in each period of historic time, context, or peoples.

It is built over time and depends on a context: People, community, age, religious creed, girl different from an adult woman, peasant woman different from indigenous or urban woman.

This topic has been gaining spaces in the indigenous agenda, despite the resistance of some peoples and communities with the argument of not knowing if it indeed responds to the needs of the very communities; or if, on the contrary, embracing it as a category of analysis allowing to generate transformations within communities.

While the concept seems external or foreign, what is new for the indigenous peoples has to do with its significance. The Amazon peoples have always defined the differences between the masculine and the feminine; and such differences are always present in every single relationship of INTERDEPENDENCE with nature, others, with the spiritual, with the territory.

### **Gender relationships**

It is a category that allows us to identify how these relationships between genders are; that is to say, to identify if there are inequities in those relationships of being a man and / or a woman, it implies bearing in mind:

- Activities (roles).
- Affectivity.
- The language.
- Individual and collective values.
- The imaginaries, the narrations.
- body perceptions,
- The sense of belonging, similarity, difference.
- The power
- The condition and political position.
- Knowledge scenarios (The chagra, the Maloca, The healing house, the jungle, the orchard).



***The analysis of gender equity begins by asking ourselves if these differences are possible, and whether in the very sense, the opportunities for men and women.***

***It is about being able to identify what the obstacles are in the collective and individual dynamics; and also being able to see if they generate loss or revitalization of the autonomy and potential of the people.***

***People are social, historical, and generic individuals involved in the development of culture, so the question is: how much do they have in order to achieve their individual and collective objectives? How many resources do Amazon women have? How much capacity?***

### **Gender equality**

It means that when men and women are placed in different locations, with different histories, certain actions and assessments of the capacities of one and the other can be facilitated or hindered. That's why we must ask ourselves if this opportunity is egalitarian or due to the situation or condition of gender this is different; and if such differences become visible in identifiable expressions.

## What about the Complementarity?



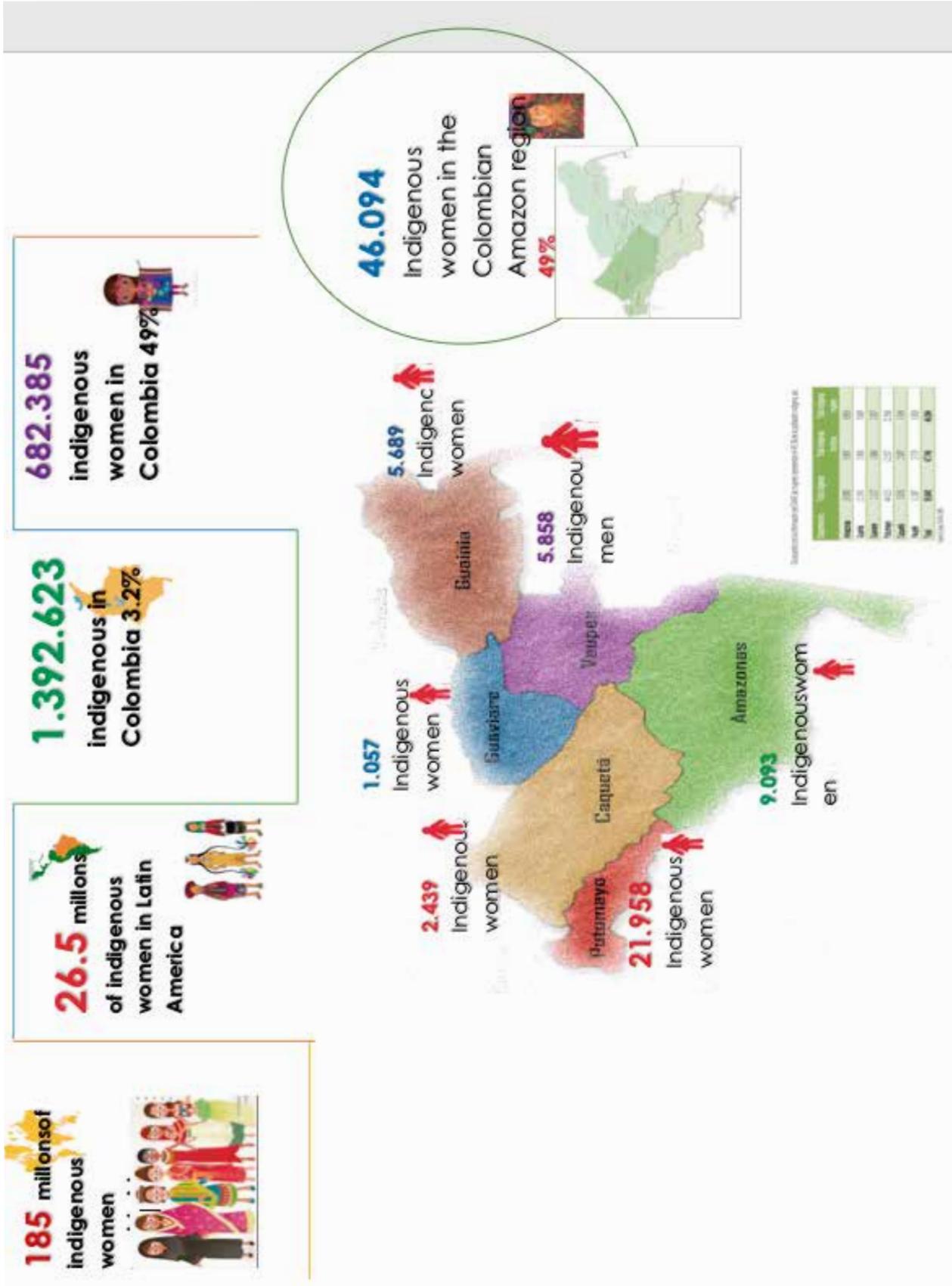
This is an intrinsic value of indigenous peoples, which symbolizes a general value of their culture. It is conceived as a starting point to develop egalitarian gender relations. For instance, in our own economy or for life; complementarity is an element of the activities in the chagra according to gender, there are no forces measured for activities, but what is sought is a balance of work as a couple, in family and in community.

This does not mean that the Amazon peoples are symmetrical societies, in the Amazon, both, men and women have access to strategic resources as well as to particular processes on which they are willing to reach certain status or power regarding knowledge. This means, different ways and forms of physical and social reproduction, along with a strong relationship of interdependence where both of them play their role in the construction of knowledge for their people.

From a feminist viewpoint, complementarity and duality occurs between two opposites, man is different from woman; woman is different from man, that is why they are complementary in such difference, one can not be understood without the other, correspondence is relational horizontal and reciprocal. "I give to the extent that the other gives, proportionality is the value given in justice".  
Nina Pacari

For the purpose of explaining the situation of indigenous women in the framework of relations between Amazon men and women, it can be assumed that the Amazon peoples recognize a role and a status for indigenous women similar to the one they propose in their reflections from the malocas, the healing houses, the yage intake, among others. However, it is possible to identify ideas that generate tensions:

- 1 The discourse of complementarity has functioned more as the closing of the debate around the issues that the indigenous women themselves have pointed out as heartfelt concerns, and in face of the urgent need to build a fairer life for them and their daughters.
- 2 There are in fact within the indigenous communities of the Amazon truly own dialogues that propose a change of values where everyone can participate and decide.
- 3 The Amazon peoples are giving the possibility of individual and collective development of the Amazon indigenous women inasmuch as women are the caretakers of life.
- 4 It is only the "destabilizing external forces" the responsible ones that offer criticism regarding the implementation of Own Justice or indigenous justice, given the fact that the very internal regulations guarantee that indigenous women develop their potential inside and outside the communities.
- 5 Those actions or omissions against Indigenous Women which in several cases are perceived as "a cultural tradition", begin to be perceived as intolerable, bearing in mind that most of these acts of violence attempt against the satisfaction of their basic needs and sometimes against their fundamental rights, which ought to be above any consideration. OPIAC diagnosis.



## The Realities of the Amazon Women

There are multiple public policies focused on the empowerment of rural women in the continent. This is as a result of the Millennium Goals routing in which it is pointed out the need to promote gender equality and the Autonomy of Women. Such work implies for the countries to think about the approaches of a public policy containing differential policies for indigenous women; since they are the ones who are mostly subject to segregation from every viewpoint in terms of rights.

Within the framework of these dynamics of differential attention, more and more programs in the countries focus their attention on the inclusion of indigenous women in processes of strengthening and defending their rights, in their formal and informal education, as well as in their participation in concertation areas with the indigenous peoples.

It requires a two directions work. On the one hand, sensitization of traditional authorities and indigenous women; and on the other one, the articulation of public policies with a gender focus and a differential approach for indigenous peoples. Such an exercise of inclusion and participation is an initial process that is not yet reflected in the daily dynamics of indigenous peoples. Yetara Uai OPIAC working document.

Women continue facing particular barriers due to various factors related to gender. As they themselves pointed out in due time (Beijín 1995). "Various factors isolate or marginalize these women [...] denying them their human rights, they do not have or are denied access to education or vocational training, employment, housing and economic self-sufficiency; apart from being excluded from the decision-making processes".

Violence against women is perhaps one of the strongest indicators of discrimination against women, besides, it is also a structural obstacle to their development and for the social development of the countries. Albeit States are committed to the eradication of violence against women; and laws have been enacted, and programs, campaigns as well as care centers to prevent have also been designed with the purpose of preventing and also punishing acts of violence against women

## Are there acts of violence against the Amazon women?

### Workshop

We will work with the following data taken from the Diagnosis on Forms of gender violence and other dimensions of violence that affect indigenous women in the Colombian Amazon. Such information responds to 125 interviews with indigenous women in the Amazon region.

% de encuestadas que manifestaron padecer o conocer alguna situación de afectación sobre las Mujeres por algún tipo de violencia	% de violencia intrafamiliar y otras formas de violencias
Conocen 98,4%	Violencia Intrafamiliar 74%
No conocen 1.6%	Otras formas de violencia 26%



1. Estudio financiado por ONUMUJER en el marco del proyecto Fortaleciendo la participación de la Mujer Indígena Amazónica Colombiana. 2012.

### 3.3 Violencia Intrafamiliar



#### 3.3.2 Violencia masculina hacia la mujer cercana

Tipo de agresión que recibe o recibió la mujer de otro miembro de la familia	N° de veces que fue nombrada
1. Mujer menor de edad abusada sexualmente por el papá/padrastro	8
2. Mujer golpeada por su padre	4
3. Mujer golpeada e insultada por su hijo/hija	2
4. Mujer menor de edad abusada sexualmente y asesinada por el padrastro	1
5. Mujer menor de edad abusada sexualmente por sus tíos	1

Let's answer the following questions:

What do the data tell us?  
With these data, how is stated gender equity in the Amazon peoples?  
What can we do as young people facing these realities?  
Does OwnJustice have an important role?

#### Gender and Violence

The concepts regarding violence against women and gender violence have as many relationships as there are differences. "Violence against women refers to the forms of violence whose victims are women. This study is focused on the determination of the degree of extension in society, its causes, explanations and effects. Not all conducted studies with regard to this field apply a gender approach. "

The term gender violence refers to those acts of violence that have their roots in the definitions and dominant gender relations in a society. From this viewpoint, there can be analyzed different structures of violence, including some that do not have as a direct victim a woman, but such forms of violence can be explained, more adequately, from gender considerations. OPIAC diagnosis.

### Do women count on tools for the defense of their rights? (The Appropriate).

How is the participation of Amazon women in decision making processes?  
What is the scope of the experiences of the Secretariats of Amazon Indigenous Women?  
How have the struggles of indigenous women been reconsidered with respect to the political participation spaces related to the inclusion of gender analysis?  
Is there then a recent need for inclusion?

#### Tool from "The Own"

- 1 Own justice systems built within the framework of Autonomy and in accordance with the particularities of each people or organization.
- 2 The Integral Life Plans.

#### "Appropriated" Tools

- 1 The Program for the Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Women in the Colombian Amazon, Women Displaced and at Risk of Displacement. Auto 092

The Colombian Constitutional Court by means of Decrees 092 and 237 of 2008 evidences a particular reality about the life of women and on their part, such Decrees force the State to take actions facing women's situation. Consequently, compliance with the mandate of the Constitutional Court requires that in addition to reviewing Own Justice processes; there should also review the adoption of more inclusive measures for indigenous women within those decision-making bodies; likewise, matters about changes in the forms of attention to women in indigenous territories; from modifications to regulations, laws, and decrees. A whole mobilization of the State should be generated in order to pay attention to this public problem.

OPIAC's document has identified 4 types of affectations of the armed conflict for indigenous Amazon women:

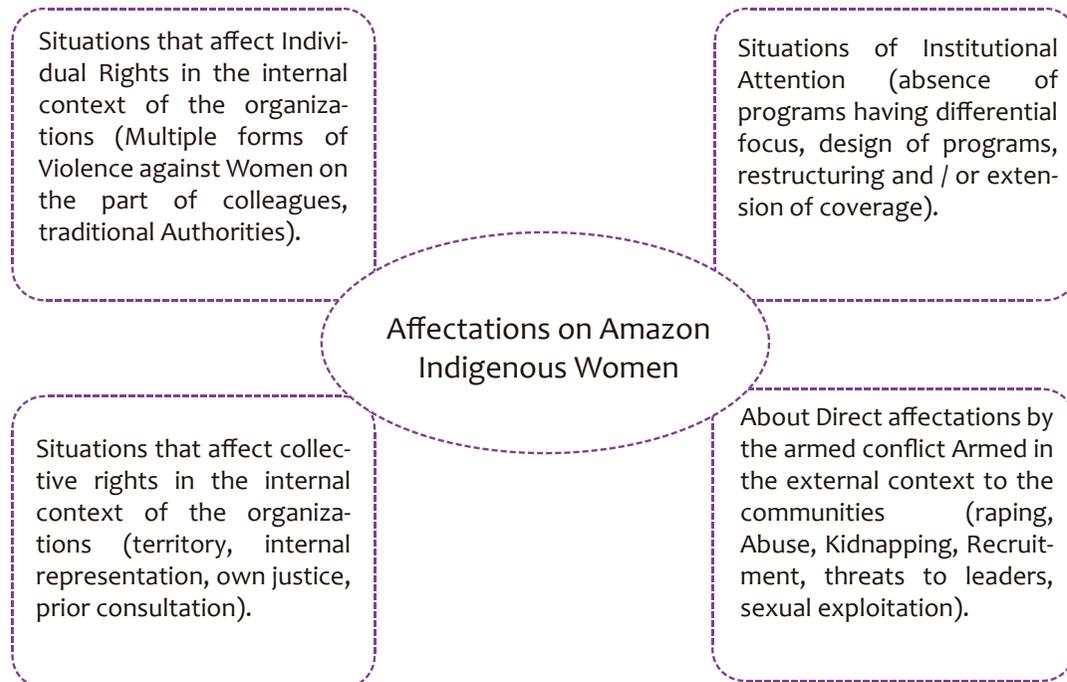


Figura Documento Auto 092 OPIAC. Claudia Duarte

**2** Law 1257, 2008

By which norms are divided regarding sensitization, prevention and punishment of different forms of violence and discrimination against women, such a law prevents and punishes all forms of violence and discrimination against women, however, the reality is different.

What is the purpose of the Law?

To adopt norms that allow guaranteeing for all women a life free of violence, in both, the public and private spheres, the exercise of the rights granted in the domestic and international legal system; to access to administrative and judicial procedures for their protection and attention, as well as the adoption of the public policies necessary for its accomplishment.

**3** The Indigenous Women's Participation

Participation in political life and in decision making processes is still a pending issue of the equality agenda. They participate in economic and cultural life; however, they are still excluded from political power.

This discriminatory reality is even more severe for indigenous women, the electoral processes have adopted positive action measures in order to ensure maximum quotas of one gender for the candidacies; these measures have not been proposed for the political participation of women with differentiated identity.



They have participated in the struggle for the rights of indigenous peoples, they have fought for individual and collective rights, from each community, and from each village, from each organization. At the same time they have dealt with resolving differences and contradictions with male leaderships, they have identified the inequalities that they suffer within their communities and have developed strategies with their organizations and networks to eradicate discrimination, mainly the violence forms they suffer in the midst of their spaces of life (community, local, national and international). FIMI

In the 90s within the framework of the celebration of the Fourth International Conference in Beijing, indigenous women came to position themselves in an organized and cohesive way at the international level to become a social movement.



In the framework of the 4th conference, indigenous women ourselves strongly condemn regarding our situation.

Face up to this reality, we find the movements of indigenous women which develop an intense activity in the field of political power, there is a consciousness at the level of the indigenous women's movement about the importance of political power for the economic and social transformation.

In a study carried out by the UN-INSTRAW - International Research and Training Institute of the United Nations -, it is stated that political participation and indigenous women have an aggravating factor that has to deal with triple inequality, which is related to weaknesses such as:

- The limited visibility connected with the specific problems of indigenous women, inconsistencies and contradictions in the census information in relation to the evolution of their political participation;
- General shortcomings in the gender disaggregation of available data, conservative positions of traditional indigenous organizations that have a critical influence on the possibilities of women's empowerment and difficulties for the structuring of an own agenda with vindication.
- Unawareness of the guarantees for the protection of their rights.
- The protection of rights for indigenous women still has a long way to go in terms of formulating mechanisms, norms, laws and public policies with a differential approach that fits their particularities,
- The right to participation of women in the processes of Prior Consultation. There are very few Amazon indigenous women who come to the spaces of participation, only a mere 1% can be invited or come to these spaces of interest. Neither information nor consent, free, prior and informed reaches women,
- The lack of attention of the government and its structure

for women simply discourages them and there is no participation in the different spaces.

- In the Colombian Amazon the rulers of the six departments have never thought of spaces for indigenous women as the majority and vulnerable population of these territories, there are no secretariats of indigenous women, neither in the governorships, nor in the city halls. This is also reflected in the different institutions

#### 4 International Arenas

Indigenous women are part of both the movement of indigenous peoples and the women's movement, in both of them their prominence has been built in a complex way, given that to identify themselves as women within the indigenous peoples and as indigenous with women's organizations has not always been easy.

Women have engaged in these two processes which are difficult, complex, diverse and not always coincident, they have developed their imagination and strategies with a view to build their own movement within the framework of individual and collective rights, inside the framework of women's rights.

That, indigenous women have accomplished the construction of leaderships that, under the same difficult conditions, they have aimed to: be representative individuals, articulate the processes from the very indigenous women in the communities as far as to see indigenous women in national, regional and international forums. This construction of leadership has been supported by various initiatives, especially initiatives of international cooperation – FIMI –.

Some scenarios:

- Human rights, Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 (Resolution 217 A III of the General Assembly of the UN).
- The Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination against Women 3, 1981, in this Convention,

- Four International Conferences on Women, Mexico, 1975, followed by Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985)
- The Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing in 1995.
- International Forum of Indigenous Women (FIMI).
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Continental Connection of Indigenous Women at the level of the Americas.
- UNWOMEN
- Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- Caucus They are part of the UN Internal Model, and they refer to regional and / or thematic groups.
- Coordination of Women COICA.

## 5 National Scenarios

- High Counseling for the Equity of Women
- Offices of Women at the regional and municipal levels
- Family Commissariats, Colombian Family Welfare Institute – ICBF –
- Feminist NGOs.
- OPIAC Women and Family Area Coordination.

### Towards the Own Scenarios construction?

Activity: Let's make a debate based on the following text by Professor Astrid Ulloa.

Indigenous movements have been important in the recognition of the rights and demands of indigenous peoples. However, there is very little discussion about the role of women's political participation and the new processes that have been generated from it.

The political participation of indigenous women took place through the following processes: 1) Consolidation in indigenous grassroots organizations. 2) The implementation of policies, programs and participation spaces for indigenous women. 3) The political and academic formation of indigenous women. 4) The conformation of grassroots organizations of gender and indigenous women. 5) The active presence of non-indigenous non-governmental organizations involved gender. 6) Changes in government

policies with respect to gender equity policies. 7) The reassessment of the role of indigenous women from the very academy (and). 8) The relationship between women and nature in environmental contexts. Astrid Ulloa.

The above suggests new debates and possibilities to read the realities of Amazon women. Nowadays they are torn between thinking about their struggle focusing on their own independent needs; but without losing the collective perspective, without competing, or taking away spaces belonging to the Amazon men; women simply want to be supported in this struggle and be given the importance it deserves. Auto 092 OPIAC.

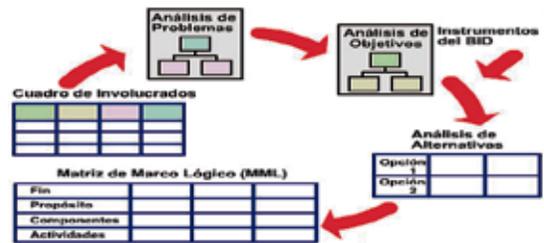
In a case identified by OPIAC within the framework of Auto 092, an indigenous woman working as a governor was pressured by an armed group to retract herself regarding an Own Justice measure, which led her to look for protection that was never guaranteed with the existing measures for this type of cases. In another case, the fact of complying with a public function as a public servant has turned her into a target of the two groups who press her to supply information regarding the other party's actions, jeopardising her and her family



## Indigenous Women, object of intervention? (The Imposed)

How are women included in projects formulated by indigenous communities?  
Is it more an outside demand than an interest of the peoples?  
How do the peoples guarantee the participation of indigenous women in the relationship with the

Take the word from the Own teaching, the participation of women is diverted, we have to see how to settle the role of women, how their participation is within the organizational processes; why it deviates and breaks the role that women have in the territory.



## WHAT DOES INDIGENOUS WOMAN DO IN LIGHT OF TERRITORY RISKS?

The territory for indigenous women acquires a dimension with regard to their daily life, which makes them permanent defenders of such territory. The mobility of indigenous peoples has not been limited to the borders defined by the States, but such mobility is built by cultural elements of territoriality that in many of the Amazon peoples it has crossed the lines of what for the States constitute their sovereignty.

However, the arrival of phenomena such as the armed conflict and the control of groups over the territory, confrontations, extraction of resources, timber extraction, have forced to the indigenous peoples from the Colombian Amazon territory to move out to other countries – it is important to bear in mind that the Colombian Amazon borders Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela and Brazil – As it is well known, the conflict has had its particular dynamics in the Colombian borders, likewise other groups have had to resist due to the fact that such groups do not have means to arrive or at least where to arrive.

This is another problem that women refer to for the Protection of their Rights. According to indigenous Amazon women, many families have had to move to urban areas or to the other side of the borderline. For example, in Venezuela and Brazil, many indigenous peoples have found a better State response to their needs; however, women indicate that in spite of this positive response many families have expressed their desire to return but the security conditions have not allowed them to do so, in a manner that such reality has fragmented their cultural and family ties, besides they have been compelled themselves to leave their chagras and their safeguards with no guarantee of recognition when wanting to return.

### Declaration of the indigenous women Conference Beijing 1995.

We, the women of the indigenous peoples, have actively fought with the purpose of defending our rights to the self-determination and to our territories which have been invaded and colonized by powerful nations and interests. We women have suffered and continue suffering multiple oppressions as indigenous peoples, as citizens of colonized as well as neo-colonial countries, as women, and as members of the poorer social classes.

Despite this, we have protected and continue protecting the territories, we have transmitted and continue transmitting, we have developed and continue developing our indigenous cosmovision, our science and technology, our art and culture, and our socio-political and economic systems which harmonize with the natural laws of Mother Earth.

We maintain ethical and aesthetic values, knowledge and philosophy, the spirituality that preserve and nourish Mother Earth. We persevere in our struggle for the right to free-determination and for our right to our territories. We have demonstrated this through the tenacious posture and capacity to support and survive the colonization of our lands during the last 500 years

This module is a tribute to the indigenous Amazon women who, through their actions, have promoted the recognition and defense of the territory.



Emperatriz Cahuache Pueblo Cocama  
María Clemencia Herrera, Pueblo Murui  
Irene rojas. Pueblo Curripaco  
Waira Jacanamijoy Mutumbajoy. Pueblo Inga  
Doris Delgado Mutumbajoy, Pueblo Inga  
Bernardita Remuy. Pueblo Murui  
Bernarda Ramírez Lima. Pueblo Cubeo  
Belkis Herrera. Pueblo Murui  
Isabel Fajardo. Pueblo Uitoto  
Angélica Teteye. Pueblo Bora  
Carol González, Pueblo Cubeo  
Josefina Teteye, Pueblo Bora  
Gilma Román Pueblo Murui  
Fanny Kuiru. Pueblo Murui  
Rufina Román. Pueblo Murui  
Ati Quigua. Pueblo Cubeo  
Yolanda Durán. Pueblo Curripaco  
Rita López. Pueblo Desano  
Rosalba Jiménez. Pueblo Sicuani  
Agripina Garreta. Pueblo Inga  
Jaide Angulo Trujillo. Pueblo Pasto

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