

AMAZONIA INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

SUPPORTING THE FAR-REACHING ROLES OF
INDIGENOUS WOMEN IN CONSERVATION,
INNOVATION, AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2022



AMAZONIA



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Although Indigenous women play a key role in environmental stewardship and communal politics, persistent barriers remain, including land and resource rights, access to formal education, and full and effective participation in decision-making processes.

The [Amazonia Indigenous Women's Fellowship](#) Program is an opportunity for Amazonia's Indigenous women to pursue their interests in conservation and climate-related activities. The region-wide program connects women with funding, training, mentoring and networking opportunities to change their world and ours.



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Fellows Katty Guatatoca and Gladis Yolanda Greja in the 1st Meeting of Fellows in Quito, Ecuador.

OUR VISION

Engage, equip and connect Indigenous women for more effective and equitable socio-environmental solutions.

Indigenous women in the Amazon are transformational leaders. They are essential to ensure the preservation of the culture, identities and societies of Indigenous people. Supporting Indigenous women is a step toward gender equality in the Amazon.

The program was launched in 2021 as part of the [Our Future Forests–Amazonia Verde](#) project, led by Conservation International and the Coordinator of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA), and funded by the French Government, Chloe, and the Estee Lauder Companies Foundation.

The Fellowship Program promotes conservation, leadership, and environmental initiatives in the Amazon, based on the traditional knowledge of Indigenous women in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Suriname. The program provides the tools, training and funding needed to implement their initiatives, manage their territories and promote overall conservation of the Amazon.

The program awards funds to the best ideas for social-environmental transformations, that enhance Indigenous women's leadership to influence conservation and policies in indigenous territories in the Amazon. The program strives to develop local competencies, create consensus-building opportunities, foster agreements and promote networks that advance conservation and improve livelihoods.

IMPACT BY 2027

The Fellowship seeks to engage, equip, and connect Indigenous women for more effective and equitable socio-environmental solutions in the Amazon. To do this, we want to promote the following outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Enhanced Indigenous women's participation in the regional program
- **Outcome 2:** Strengthened capacities in project management
- **Outcome 3:** Increased effectiveness in advisory support to the Fellows
- **Outcome 4:** Effective advocacy and networking
- **Outcome 5:** Lasting socio-environmental actions

Our goal is to significantly increase the number of Indigenous women in the Program for greater impact in conservation and livelihoods and leadership roles in the Amazon. To achieve this, we will pursue additional funding and sustained accompaniment through continued engagement and awareness-building with donors and partners.

FELLOWSHIP STRUCTURE

The Fellowship cycle starts with country-level calls for project proposals and a selection process led by Conservation International (CI) and national Indigenous organizations, such as the Women's Council at the Coordinator of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA). The selected women are invited to participate in a one-year grants program where they are guided by advisors in project implementation and learning opportunities.

The Fellowship provides the women with networking and learning opportunities as well as financial and technical support in project implementation. CI's support enables the Fellows to elaborate work plans, complete milestones and reporting

mechanisms (follow-up, execution, spending). It also guides the women in building confidence in managing grants and provides them with training, experience and skills.

In addition, there is a strong communications aspect to the Fellowships supporting the women to tell their stories and share experiences with other groups and Indigenous women leaders across Amazonia.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Supporting Indigenous peoples and their contributions to the environment are key aspects of our work. Together we are conserving the Amazon and improving livelihoods.

To track progress and impact, we developed indicators for each program outcome as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system. The M&E system follows an adaptive management approach. Improvements are made continuously based on lessons learned and feedback gathered during the Fellowship cycle.

An impact framework was also created to measure and monitor impact in participation. An impact evaluation was established to identify changes and project activities that highlights how the Fellows are building awareness, leadership, well-being, and project results. The first impact results will be available in January 2023.

MEET THE 1ST COHORT

As part of the first generation, 24 women from 7 Amazonian countries — Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, and Suriname — were selected after a region-wide open call. They began their project implementation and leadership journey



guided by CI and local mentors. Project priorities include, strengthening local leadership; recovery and revitalization of traditional skills and knowledge; nature conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

A prominent achievement in the first cohort has been the growth in direct access grants to emerging and

established Indigenous women leaders. The program has awarded \$240,000 dollars in direct grants to the 24 Indigenous women in the 7 countries. Fellows have implemented their projects in a one-year timeframe with variabilities and a 6-month extension period has been granted with additional funds to enhance exchange and project opportunities.

1 ST GENERATION FELLOWS	COUNTRY	PROJECT
Bernice Serataya	Bolivia	Equal opportunities in the creation of community natural pharmacies with a gender approach, and conservation of renewable natural resources in Chiquitanía; responsible for gender at the Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia (CIDOB).
Elibeth Peredo	Bolivia	Crafts protection of the blue paraba and prevention of COVID; supported by the Indigenous Council of the Holy Trinity.
Evelin García	Bolivia	Generate an intergenerational learning cycle, revaluing the use of medicinal plants in the community and schools; supported by the Indigenous Central of Native Communities of Lomerío (CICOL) and the El Puquio Cristo Rey Community.
Agripina Tibubay	Bolivia	Training for the creation of products derived from the chestnut; supported by the Las Pampitas Community.
Samela Lorena Vilacio Marteninghi	Brazil	Document the ancestral knowledge of traditional Sateré Mawé medicine through workshops, and implementation of medicinal plant nurseries.
Edina Carlos Brandão (Pekāshaya)	Brazil	Exchange of ancestral knowledge from elderly women on the use of medicines in the forest, in the village of Shane Kaya.
Josiane Otaviano Guilherme	Brazil	Strengthening of the Indigenous culture in the Upper and Middle Solimões River region, through participation in agro-ecological activities.
Maria Francisca Arruda Batista Apurinã	Brazil	Construction of the Jumamadi Natural Pharmacy using traditional techniques and collection of medicinal plants.
Lilia Isolina Java Tapayuri	Colombia	Recognition of the role of women in ancestral fishing practices, and their participation in decision-making for the management of natural resources.
María Célsida Biguidima Kuyediño	Colombia	Recovery and conservation of degraded areas through the planting of Canangucha in the La Samaritana community in the municipality of Puerto Leguízamo, Putumayo.
Carmenza Yucuna Rivas	Colombia	Research of Melipona Bees, strengthening the care and management of the environment to promote among women the traditional knowledge of melipona bees and the values of sustainable work in the community while generating financial mechanisms.
Gladis Yolanda Grefa Mamallacta	Ecuador	Strengthening women's leadership in business, with handicraft projects using native species and ancestral knowledge. Strengthening women's leadership in business, with handicraft projects using native species and ancestral knowledge.
Katty Elizabeth Guatatoca Lema	Ecuador	Develop a process to influence Kichwa women for environmental management and care, with a community project on the conservation and restoration of nature based on ancestral knowledge.
Immaculata Casimero	Guyana	Advocate for protection of the main headwaters of the South Rupununi; raise awareness through workshops on environmental laws.
Caroline Jacobs	Guyana	Document and record the traditional leadership knowledge of our council of elders within four geographic communities, focusing on women, to ensure conservation of a healthy environment.

1 ST GENERATION FELLOWS	COUNTRY	PROJECT
Esther Marslowe	Guyana	Promote the preservation of Indigenous culture and youth empowerment, especially for other young, Indigenous women.
Loretta Fiedtkou	Guyana	Highlight the importance of replanting an area in the community with Crabwood trees, Hubadi trees and other endangered trees; remind people about the benefits of the old ways of farming and caring for land.
Althea Harding	Guyana	Support women leaders not only in their homes but also in their communities and further afield; develop, enhance and teach a variety of skills and traditional knowledge.
Sharmaine Artist	Suriname	“Bio-hydroponic farming” project, to encourage women to plant in an environmentally friendly way and to teach several sustainable techniques of waste management.
Marijane Makadepuung	Suriname	Raise awareness in knowledge of waste management; create a Management Manual to be socialized in the communities.
Gabriela Loaiza Seri	Peru	Enhance the value of ancestral knowledge, focused on bio-jewelry, following a transgenerational approach promoting values of respect and awareness towards nature.
Cecilia Martinez	Peru	Conserve, promote, and recover non-timber resources that are important for the development of Yanesha textile and jewelry crafts.
Judith Nunta	Peru	Promote the leadership of Indigenous women, ensure their participation in decision-making spaces in three thematic areas: territory, climate change and forests, and women's participation.
Nelyda Entsakua	Peru	Strengthen the management capacities of the organization of women artisans, focused on handicrafts based on bio-jewelry; strengthen the process of ecosystem recovery in the community of Shimpiyacu.



IMPACTFUL STORIES

“The [Amazonia Indigenous Women’s Fellowship] Program is very important because it has brought us together and as I said, I believe in unity and strength because as Indigenous Peoples once we can unite no one can break us”.

— Immaculata Casimero, first-cohort Fellow from Guyana.



IMMACULATA CASIMERO

Is a Wapichan woman from Guyana and one of the 24 women supported in the first cohort of the Fellowship. As a result of her project, women and village leaders in the communities of Shea, Maruranau, Awarewaunau, Aishalton and Karaudarnau were trained in environmental sustainability, environmental laws, environmental stewardship, the importance of the headwaters of the South Rupununi and the key role women play in protecting natural assets. Immaculata reported that the Tosaos and village councilors are now better equipped with

knowledge to advocate for the protection of the South Rupununi headwaters from mining and harmful activities.



AGRIPINA TIBUBAY, one of the Fellows from the Bajo Madidi in Bolivia, conducted trainings with women from Las Pampitas Community on the sustainable production of Brazil nuts. She was invited by CI-Bolivia to participate as a local communicator of the Bajo Madidi and reported on the challenges of the Brazil nut value chain, the importance of traditional medicine and conservation, and some of the difficulties communities face in seeking medical attention. Thanks to one of her testimonials, the municipal government of Ixiamas was informed about a malaria outbreak in the area and managed to

send medicine to the region. This shows the impact of her project in not only generating awareness about sustainable practices but how women have a role in promoting well-being for the people who work to protect biodiversity.



Agripina Tibubay leading a workshop on the sustainable production of Brazil nuts. November 2022.



JOSIANE TIKUNA from the Santo Antonio Indigenous territory in the state of Amazonas, Brazil, finished her project about agro-ecological practices in the Upper and Middle Solimões River. She reported a rise in appreciation of Indigenous cultural identity (which is being lost) and millenary Indigenous knowledge. Community members reflected on the importance of food habits, the power of collective work, the value of medicinal plants and the importance of having community seed banks. As a result of her project, techniques in rainwater harvesting have provided access to higher-quality water in the communities she worked with.



Training led by Josiane Tikuna on soil management without burning. Vila Betânia community, Brazil.

The Fellowship also supports the women in building confidence by providing them with training, experience and leadership skills. Through our networking program, Fellows Judith Nunta, Gabriela Loayza, Cecilia Martinez and Nelyda Entsakua in Peru participated in local capacity-building activities. They completed a five-module workshop on leadership, project management, gender equality and rights, and the role of Indigenous women in protection forests. Fellows Katty Guatatoca and Gladis Grefa (from Ecuador) participated in the “Amazonía en Común” forum organized by the Embassy of France in Ecuador. They presented their projects, and the challenges Indigenous peoples face in the Amazon including the low participation of Amazonian women in economic and political processes.

“This is a grand project. It has great perspectives and visions, and this is beautiful [...] there are women who have this knowledge and this natural gift for leadership, and they want to learn” – Katty Guatatoca, Fellow from Ecuador.



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MEET THE 2ND COHORT

The second call for Fellows was launched in February 2022 with over 155 applications received. The selection committee included representatives from the Women's Council in COICA and CI advisors. Twenty-eight women have been selected to be a part of the second cohort from Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Suriname. Fellows began their project cycle in August 2022.

THEME	2ND GENERATION FELLOWS	COUNTRY	SELF IDENTIFICATION	PROJECT TITLE
Indigenous Autonomy	Juana Pariamo	Bolivia	Tacana	Territorial Management and Development through Conservation and Equality
	Juma Xipaia De Carvalho	Brasil	Xipaia	"Legal and administrative knowledge for the Xipaia Territory"
Reforestation and restoration	Taynara Caragiu Guajajara	Brasil	Guajajara	"Harvesting Dreams": Reforestation of rivers and springs.
	Imelda Restrepo	Colombia	Vuelta el Alivio	Repopulate a degraded area with medicinal plants by carrying out research of traditional health systems for the protection, recovery, promotion and prevention of diseases centered on women.
	Danixa Moreno	Colombia	Nouya	Recovery of high-quality timber plant species with cultural and economic importance in the community of Peña Roja to contribute to improving the quality of life of future generations and the planet through the empowerment of women.
	Jiyunt Uyunkar Kaniras	Ecuador	Achuar	Reforestation and meliponiculture activities to protect biodiversity and generate income through the production and sale of different bee products such as honey, wax, propolis, and others
	Claudia Flores	Peru	Murui	Recovery and sustainable management of the taricaya turtle in the Tres Esquinas community.
	Angelica Peña	Peru	Bora	Reforest medicinal plants and record the knowledge of the wise men, women and curacas of the 14 communities on the use of medicinal plants in order to create a booklet on the use of medicinal plants in the Ampiyacu watershed.
	Fulvia Medina	Bolivia	Tacana	(Re)valuing Tacana Identity Through Weaving
Indigenous knowledge in nature conservation	Yadira Ocoquaje	Ecuador	Siekopai	Perpetuate cultural manifestations, through the daily practice and knowledge of ancestral ceramics.
	Filomena Quispe Surco	Bolivia	Aymara	Implementation of cultivation and production practices of the "Native Bee (ladies)" through the participation of the women of Alto Chispani.
	Maria Valdenice Silva De Souza	Brasil	Nukini	Intercultural knowledge to tackle the solid waste problem, with a focus on conservation, in the Inu Kui Ni (Nukini) villages."

THEME	2ND GENERATION FELLOWS	COUNTRY	SELF IDENTIFICATION	PROJECT TITLE
Indigenous knowledge in nature conservation	Elinalda Gama Da Silva Kumaruara	Brasil	Kumaruara	“Knowledge Oca (house)”
	Shondell Rodrigues	Guyana	Warrau	“Indigenous Warrau women as leaders in sustainable forest and garden management combining ancestral knowledge, forestry and agriculture education and effective leadership skills.”
	María Elena Paredes Márquez	Perú	Ashéninka	A Sustainable Development Plan for the Sawawo Community
	Grace Watamaleo	Suriname	Arowak	“Management plan for Marinbo park”
	Valeria Etzamaren	Ecuador	Achuar	Strengthening leadership among Achuar women to promote conservation and territorial defense.
	Zoyla Ochoa	Peru	Huitoto Murui	Working with youth to recover ancestral knowledge and good environmental practices
Environmental awareness	Cecilia Elvira Martínez Mesías	Peru	Yanesha	Working with Indigenous youth to reinforce their cultural identity and sense of belonging to adapt to the effects of climate change
	Katy Betancourt	Ecuador	Kichwa	Building capacities of women part of training schools in the Amazon (Napo and Pastaza), through the development of teaching materials and dissemination of knowledge.
	Kim Spencer	Guyana	Wapichan	Enhancing the leadership capacity of female Indigenous Youth in the Rupununi, Guyana
	Ana Isabel Lopez Rojas	Colombia	Awa	Recovery and strengthening of biocultural knowledge about the territory in Putumayo communities
	Kelistina Ann Merenke	Suriname	Wayana	“Waste management in Apetina”
	Ema Tapullima	Peru	Kukama Kukamiria	Revitalizing tourism activity through environmental awareness with the support of the Artisans Women’s association.
Food Sovereignty	Caroline Lima Da Costa	Brasil	Puyanawa	“Recovery of degraded areas and Puyanwa food sovereignty”
	Maria Do Rosario Piloto Martins	Brasil	Baniwa	“Enhancing food culture and promoting income generation for Indigenous women through sustainable production in the Rio Negro territory”
	Kathy Ruiz	Peru	Huitoto	Recover ancestral knowledge, food variety and plant diversity for the autonomy of local food production
	Mirna Rengifo	Peru	Yaguas	Trainings on production and sales of the charapita chili bell pepper for income generation and improved quality of life in Indigenous territories

CREATING AN AMAZON-WIDE NETWORK

Networking and peer-to-peer learning are powerful ways to share, replicate, and scale up conservation action. Successful knowledge exchanges have the power to motivate participants to act together and empower each other while sharing their initiatives, community context and local challenges. Indigenous women are the traditional knowledge-bearers in their local communities. Coming together as knowledge holders provides recognition, consensus and self-agency.

In April 2022, 21 fellows came together for the [1st First Meeting of Amazonia Indigenous Fellows](#) in Quito, Ecuador. The weeklong meeting was designed to unite the women and ignite a community of Indigenous women leaders across the Amazon. Activities included a “Knowledge Fair” where the women shared their community projects; and several training and dialog sessions where Fellows shared their experiences, discussed challenges and opportunities for women and their territories, and provided feedback on the Fellowship Program. The struggle for land, territory and natural resources are topics that were consistently raised by the women along with the importance of creating (and continuing) a space to expand their alliances and improve women’s participation in decision-making spaces.

In August, sixteen Fellows from seven countries attended a weeklong series of meet-and-greet sessions. Fany Kuiru, Coordinator for the Women, Children and Family unit in the National Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Colombian Amazon (OPIAC), opened the session and spoke about the role of Indigenous women as the real stewards of the Amazon. During the meeting, the Fellows introduced themselves and shared their projects, the scope of their initiatives; their questions about the Program operation were also answered.



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1st generation Fellows meet in Quito, Ecuador. Evelyn Garcia, Samela Satere Mawé and Valeria Etzerman.

“My project is to create the Achuar women’s association so that women can be the spokesperson for territorial defense and conservation. It a dream to have an association for the Achuar women of Ecuador so they can continue spreading this consciousness.” — Valeria Etzamaren, Fellow from Ecuador

NATIONAL GATHERINGS

The networking component is key in the program. Creating a space for the women to share common barriers, challenges and reinforce their power as movement-builders at national level was another grand accomplishment this year. In 2022, national exchanges took place in Brazil, Ecuador and Peru with the participation of first- and second-cohort Fellows.

The meeting of first- and second-cohort Fellows in Brazil took place in Manaus in November. The objective of the meeting was to generate a space for knowledge exchange, connection, inspiration, training and collaboration. During the first and second day, Fellows presented their projects and carried discussion about gender perspectives and cosmology in the Alto Rio Negro, Amazonas.

Fellows visited the Amazon Museum, the Indigenous medicine center in Manaus and the Teatro Amazonas.

Also in November, sixteen Fellows in Peru met to share their knowledge and conservation projects in Iquitos, Peru. This was an opportunity to connect first- and second-cohort Fellows as they get ready to implement their initiatives in valuing nature and their ancestral practices.



Meeting of Fellows in Manaus, Brazil (Edina Carlos Brandão, Valdirene Nascimento da Silva Oliveira, Josiane Octaviano Guilherme, Caroline Lima da Costa, Juma Xipaia de Carvalho, Maria do Rosário Piloto Martins, Maria Valdenice Silva de Souza, Taynara Caragiu Guajajara, Elinalda Gama da Silva – Povo Kumaruara). November 2022.



Meeting of Fellows in Peru, November, 2022.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. More time and financial support needed for Fellows to complete projects and build capacity and leadership skills – at the suggestion of Fellows, fellowships have been extended by 6 months.
2. More opportunities for exchanges between 1st and 2nd cohorts.
3. Support from local advisors and mentors is essential to guide the women in administrative processes and the project cycle. The fellows commented that this support should be available from the beginning. All countries are now incorporating advisory support.
4. Promote regional exchanges when fellows first join so they can meet and interact. It is also important to organize exchanges based on common themes (Indigenous knowledge and reforestation, autonomy and food sovereignty, environmental and cultural awareness). At the suggestion from the Fellows, exchanges will be promoted throughout the year.
5. Continue promoting Knowledge Fairs so women can build their capacities in public speaking to further communicate their project's achievements. Understanding the priorities for Indigenous women in their conservation approaches is key to reimagining conservation and the sustainable opportunities to support those who depend on forest resources, including:
 - Advocating for Indigenous rights;
 - The importance of community well-being;
 - Participation of Indigenous women in decision-making; and
 - Communication of the challenges in IP territories.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS



Esther Marslowe - Guyana Santa Cruz Okono - 0734

Throughout the year support was provided to accompany the Fellows' journey in elaborating work plans, milestones and reporting mechanisms. Advisors and CI staff guided the women in creating confidence in managing grants and leading their own projects. This required much dedication and commitment from the advisory group, an essential part of this program. Funders were also key in building relationships and experiences by providing flexible funding to the regional community of Indigenous women to build their institutional knowledge, skills and resources.

Building relationships means building a network of influence based on trust. Conservation International is committed to expanding the Amazonia Indigenous

Women's Fellowship program through participation and direct financing that enables communities to act and respond to new challenges and opportunities. We believe in the knowledge of the Indigenous women we support. We respect their perspectives, understanding and assessment of the barriers and challenges they face. We want to continue promoting spaces for them to exchange their wisdom and amplify their voices in this restorative and powerful movement. We seek to continue scaling and supporting more ambitious Indigenous women leaders, enhancing our communications efforts and creating more partnerships for continued accompaniment. We invite those who wish to join us on this journey to support our commitment in restoring relationships with the land and its peoples.



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