



IWGIA
GENDER
STRATEGY
2021-25

Documenting
Advocating
Empowering





Indigenous community standing up for their rights in India. CREDIT: Signe Leth / IWGIA

I. INTRODUCTION

IWGIA's gender strategy formulates how we, as an organisation, intend to support Indigenous women, their organisations and movements in achieving greater equity and equality. IWGIA applies a feminist approach in our work on gender issues because we firmly believe that all genders are equal, and therefore deserve to have the same social, political and economic opportunities.

Addressing the situation of Indigenous women demands an intersectional approach¹ that takes into consideration both a gender and an Indigenous Peoples' rights perspective. Furthermore, an intergenerational approach is also needed so that the wisdom of elders can be passed on to the new generations of the Indigenous Peoples movement, and vice versa. IWGIA's *gender* strategy is a gender strategy – and not an Indigenous women's strategy – because the whole society, with its breadth and variety of genders, needs to be part of the change together for greater gender equity and equality. Indigenous men and male leaders need to be on board as allies to create the transformation needed for greater gender equality.

IWGIA aims to gain experience working with an inclusive gender understanding and will over the next five years work towards widening our understanding and experience in working in a more gender inclusive manner. We aim to engage in discussions, work and advocacy to counter discrimination against a particular sex, social gender or gender identity, and will not perpetuate gender stereotypes. Currently, our inclusive understanding of gender is limited to encourage the participation of all. Our current strategy is focused on supporting greater equality between Indigenous women and men and countering the violence that Indigenous women experience much too often.

1. An intersectional approach recognizes that Indigenous women face more than one layer of discrimination – they are discriminated against for being women, but also for being Indigenous. When addressing the violence, racism and discrimination, several pressure points need to be utilized to address the different layers. An intersectional approach takes into account the historical, social and political context and recognizes the unique experience of the individual based on the intersection of all relevant grounds. This approach allows the particular experience of discrimination, based on the confluence of grounds involved, to be acknowledged and remedied.

In a world where one in three women experiences violence,ⁱ where women do not have an equal say in decisions affecting their livesⁱⁱ and where the predominant view on women in many cases is sexist and discriminatory – it is necessary that we all pull our weight to improve the situation. Especially for Indigenous women, who disproportionately face intersectional discrimination and multiple expressions of violence, it is urgent to challenge and end harassment and violence, discriminatory attitudes and stereotyping based on gender, ethnicity and Indigenous identity – trends that persist and are entrenched obstacles to Indigenous women’s equality.ⁱⁱⁱ

IWGIA is committed to contributing to this struggle and convinced that a lot can be achieved because **Indigenous women are powerful changemakers** despite the multi-dimensional challenges they face – as they have themselves affirmed: *“we have been and continue to protect, transmit, and develop our Indigenous cosmology, our science and technologies, our arts and culture, and our Indigenous socio-political economic systems, which are in harmony with the natural laws of mother earth. We still retain the ethical and aesthetic values, the knowledge and philosophy, the spirituality, which conserves and nurtures Mother Earth. We are persisting in our struggles for self-determination and for our rights to our territories. This has been shown in our tenacity and capacity to withstand*

and survive the colonization happening in our lands in the last 500 years” (Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women, 1995).^{iv}

The IWGIA gender strategy has been developed taking point of departure in the rights of Indigenous Peoples secured in the UN Declaration (UNDRIP) and taking into consideration the many years of experience IWGIA has in collaborating with Indigenous women. It is also based on selected documentation and publications that exist on the topic, as well as crucial inputs and analysis generously provided from Indigenous women and their organisations, for which we are extremely grateful. Through a consultative process, IWGIA has collected the perspectives, visions, ideas and analysis of Indigenous women from the different regions where we work and from our global network.

The IWGIA gender strategy focuses on violence against Indigenous women as the overarching problem we wish to address because it has been identified as one of the most pressing issues Indigenous women struggle with on a daily basis. Violence against Indigenous women triggers other negative affects pertaining to mental and physical health issues as well as lower self-esteem/ self-worth, which again lessens the possibilities of earning an income and lowers the level of participation and decision-making powers of women, who dare not speak up for their rights. It is a vicious cycle that urgently needs to be broken.



Maasai women from the Ngorongoro Conservation Area in Tanzania. CREDIT: Marianne Wiben Jensen / IWGIA



A group of Samburu women and girls meet in northern Kenya discussing ways to combat the harmful traditional practices against them. CREDIT: Samburu Women Trust

II. OVERARCHING ISSUE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Indigenous Peoples all over the world face systemic discrimination rooted in persistent racism as well as past and present colonialism. Indigenous Peoples forced to live in countries created and ruled by the descendants of settler colonialists from overseas, or in countries created after the colonizers had left and are now ruled by the elites of the dominant society, result in their experience of discrimination, dispossession and disempowerment that follows colonization. Many Indigenous communities have been forcefully relocated, lands have been taken away, forests have been destroyed, mountains have been mined and valleys have been dammed and flooded. Children have been taken away to boarding schools, living and dying under terrible and destructive circumstances in the name of assimilation, or are forced into schools where

none of their languages are spoken and none of their knowledge and values are taught and practiced. And they are forced to live under governments that are not their own, in which they can hardly participate and on which they have no influence. Being colonized and suppressed obviously results in a series of negative consequences including racism and systemic discrimination that also leads to much violence against Indigenous women. When the wider society views Indigenous Peoples as secondary citizens, the likelihood of violence with impunity happening against them increases – the countless murdered and missing Indigenous women in Canada^v or the countless unreported and unrecorded rape cases against Indigenous women by settlers, military, police, workers from outside, or tourists, are brutal examples of this.

Indeed, Indigenous women and girls are significantly more likely to be victims of different forms of sexual violence and more likely to experience rape than non-Indigenous women and girls.^{vi} This includes a higher exposure to various forms of sexual violence, trafficking and domestic violence. Violence against Indigenous women and girls also occurs in contexts such as during armed conflicts and militarization of their territories, during the implementation of development, investment and extractive projects, and while exercising the defence of their human rights. In some cases, this form of violence is politically motivated.² For the most vulnerable women and youth, namely unmarried mothers, child-brides, orphans, widows, LGBTQ+ and women living with disabilities, the cycle of poverty disproportionately marginalizes them and is perpetuated from generation to generation, placing them at the bottom of society, where violence with impunity is even more pervasive.

Indigenous women face discrimination and violence in the exercise of their economic, social and cultural rights. Indigenous girls are at higher risk of sexual violence on their way to and from school, or when they move away from their communities to study or work, as a result of the remoteness of many Indigenous communities and the long distances they need to travel to attend school or work.^{vii} When Indigenous Peoples migrate as a result of eviction from their territories, there is also a higher risk of violence and poverty. The former UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples reported that Indigenous

2. Political violence is the deliberate use of power and force to achieve political goals (World Health Organization (WHO), 2002). As outlined by the World Health Organization (2002), political violence is characterized by both physical and psychological acts aimed at injuring or intimidating populations.

women accessing health services related to pregnancy, childbirth or postpartum period have been sterilized without their consent or forced to use contraceptives.^{viii} In fact, obstetric violence against Indigenous women is a widespread practice in the Americas and in other continents, with common reports of practices such as forcing Indigenous women to give birth in a supine position rather than their preferred vertical position, banning traditional midwifery and criminalising traditional practices, or ridiculing Indigenous women for their traditional clothing or their belief in the effects of traditional medicine; among others.^{ix}

Because Indigenous lands are often coveted by diverse actors for the natural resources they contain or for their development potential, Indigenous communities – and Indigenous women in particular – often end up “caught in the crossfire of conflict situations and subjected to militarized violence.”^x The militarization of Indigenous lands has exposed Indigenous women to sexual violence, including rape by military forces, forced prostitution and sexual slavery.^{xi} In several countries, such as Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Kenya, the Philippines, Thailand and Timor-Leste, the militarization of and conflict over Indigenous land has led to gang-rape, sexual enslavement and killing of Indigenous women and girls.^{xii} The militarization of their lands also makes them particularly vulnerable to forced labour and trafficking.^{xiii} Indigenous women and girls worldwide who leave their families and communities fleeing difficult socio-economic conditions or armed conflicts are thus highly vulnerable to trafficking, including severe economic and sexual exploitation and sexual violence.^{xiv} In Nepal for instance, Indigenous women and girls amount to almost 80% of the total of trafficked persons, although the proportion of Indigenous Peoples in Nepal is only officially 37%.^{xv}

Development activities on or near their traditional lands have generated increased risks of sexual violence for Indigenous women and girls globally. Development projects and the presence of temporary workers camps or armed security personnel in remote areas have led to “an increase in involuntary prostitution of Indigenous girls, forced/unwanted pregnancies, STDs and sexual violence.”^{xvi} The rapid expansion of tourism in some areas has also led to increased “sexual harassment, insecurity and sufferings for the Indigenous women and girls.”^{xvii} Moreover, Indigenous women and girls have an exacerbated

risk of health problems associated with environmental contamination when development projects are implemented in their territories.^{xviii}

Additionally, Indigenous women leaders and human rights organizations working for the defence of Indigenous women’s rights are frequently targets of intimidation, threats and attacks on their life.^{xix} They face criminalization on the basis of false allegations, are subjected to unfounded criminal proceedings, as well as to imprisonment in order to demoralize them, paralyze their human rights defence work and delegitimize their causes.^{xx} The combination of this pattern of violence against human rights defenders and the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by Indigenous women creates conditions that facilitate and perpetuate violence against Indigenous women.

Indigenous women and girls across all regions are significantly more likely to be victims of domestic violence than non-indigenous women, both from non-indigenous and Indigenous partners.^{xxi} Due to racial discrimination, colonial history and in some cases the motives behind the marriage (i.e. non-indigenous men marry Indigenous women to get access to land) means that mixed marriages between Indigenous women and non-indigenous men are more likely to face violence. Indigenous men are suffering from colonial trauma and current systemic discrimination leading to, for example, an increase in mental health issues, alcoholism, etc. seriously affecting Indigenous women and children negatively. As examples, we can highlight the harrowing statistics IACHR has come up with to show the prevalence of domestic violence suffered by Indigenous women throughout the Americas.^{xxii} Or the data from Cameroon that shows that, 55% of Indigenous Mbororo women reported facing violence before the age of 15.^{xxiii} We do not have data from all regions and countries, so these are just indicative examples. Domestic violence may be felt more acutely by Indigenous women and girls owing to the lack of access to support services and justice, as well as their specific cultural and economic circumstances.^{xxiv}

Indigenous women and girls’ rights to physical integrity are also violated by their own communities through different traditional, harmful practices. For example, across Sub-Saharan Africa, and in countries in South Asia early and forced marriages remain a major concern for Indigenous girls. Early marriage is closely related to removal from school, higher probability of domestic violence,

complications in pregnancy and childbirth, and psychological trauma.^{xxv} A prevalent practice called “beading” in the Samburu region in Kenya, where men of the “warrior” age group can have sanctioned sexual relations with girls as young as nine years old in exchange for specialized beads and other goods, constitutes a serious violation of Indigenous girls’ rights.^{xxvi} Female Genital Mutilation is also prevalent among Indigenous communities in many countries in Africa, causing serious harm and violence towards the affected girls and women. In India, Indigenous women face brutal human rights violations when their communities brand them as witches: young women branded as “witches” are shunned from their communities at best, and at times even stoned, tortured and killed.^{xxvii}

It is also important to recognize that several Indigenous customary practices are also favourable of Indigenous women and bolster their position in their communities – the matrilineal Khasi of India and Bangladesh^{xxviii} is an example of this, or the Kreung in Cambodia, whose customary practice includes the newly wed couples to live in the community of the bride, then later move to the groom’s

community and finally jointly decide where they wish to live, providing some protection for the young women. Traditionally, Kreung women would be the ones administering the family income.

Although Indigenous women and girls face enormous challenges, violence and discrimination, they should not only be portrayed as victims or a vulnerable group. Indigenous women are active change agents and important leaders in the movement and struggle for the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous women worldwide have built a movement and insisted on being given space to raise their issues within the broader Indigenous Peoples’ movement, as well as within the broader women’s rights movement. They have resiliently and consistently been pushing their messages in various spaces at all levels – from the family and grassroots level to the global arena – because they have specific priorities they need everyone to pay attention to and address. Indigenous women have also, in some places, established their own parallel social and political structures if not enough space was provided within the established structures (both state and Indigenous structures).



Souy woman in Cambodia who defended her village’s land from an infrastructure development company. CREDIT: Bue Heckmann / IWGIA

III. THE IWGIA APPROACH TO GENDER MAINSTREAMING

As a human rights organization, IWGIA promotes the rights of Indigenous women based on international human rights frameworks. IWGIA will provide assistance and support to projects directly developed and implemented by Indigenous women's organisations and other projects that focus on empowering Indigenous women and strengthening their leadership through awareness raising, civic education and supporting their participation in the development and review of legislation, policies and practices that affect them. By working with Indigenous women and their organisations, IWGIA believes that they will become even stronger change-agents, countering the violence and discrimination facing them collectively. They will also be better equipped to engage actively and effectively in the development of policies and programmes that could otherwise negatively affect them. IWGIA will also pay particular attention to Indigenous women in relation to the prevention and elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, and their access to justice and remedies.³ IWGIA will also engage with and support Indigenous women's organisations that address violations, which are based on culture and traditions, and which take place internally within the Indigenous communities. Finally, IWGIA often includes components of dialogue and capacity development of the whole community, pushing the Indigenous men and leaders to become allies in the struggle for gender equality.

IWGIA INSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES

IWGIA's institutional principles⁴ naturally guide how IWGIA works in support of Indigenous women. Therefore:

1. **"Partners and alliances are at the forefront"** in IWGIA's gender strategy, which means: a) taking point of departure in the realities and visions of

Indigenous women themselves and listening to their needs for support; and b) supporting Indigenous women's own organisations as well as the mainstreaming of Indigenous women's rights and participation in other Indigenous Peoples' organisations supported by IWGIA.

2. The gender strategy is an effort to visualize how IWGIA intends to implement our **"Human Rights Based Approach"** in relation to gender. Human rights are a means as well as an end. This strategy is therefore framed and formed by international human rights standards.
3. **"From local to global and back to local: our multi-level approach"** means that we take point of departure in the situation, visions and needs of Indigenous women at the local level. We support Indigenous women leaders to bring forward their aspirations for change at the regional and international levels together with other Indigenous women for joint advocacy for change. The achievements gained at the international level will be brought back to the local level through supporting initiatives for awareness raising and joint advocacy at the national level. Through this approach we promote Indigenous women's capacity to act by supporting their organisations and connecting them in order to strengthen global solidarity and action.

Indigenous woman measures a storage house wall being built via a pilot project her community designed and implemented for their food security.
CREDIT: *Ena Alvarado Madsen / IWGIA*



3. IWGIA Institutional Strategy 2021-2025

4. Ibid

4. **“Adaptability, agility, flexibility”** means that IWGIA combines long-term, consistent efforts with an eye to adaptability and agility in our work as the reality for Indigenous women is such that situations change and problems arise often at a moment’s notice, which requires us to be swift in our response. While recognising the need for strategic direction and priorities, IWGIA therefore also maintains its flexible approach as a cornerstone of our working methods in order to effectively address unpredictable challenges.

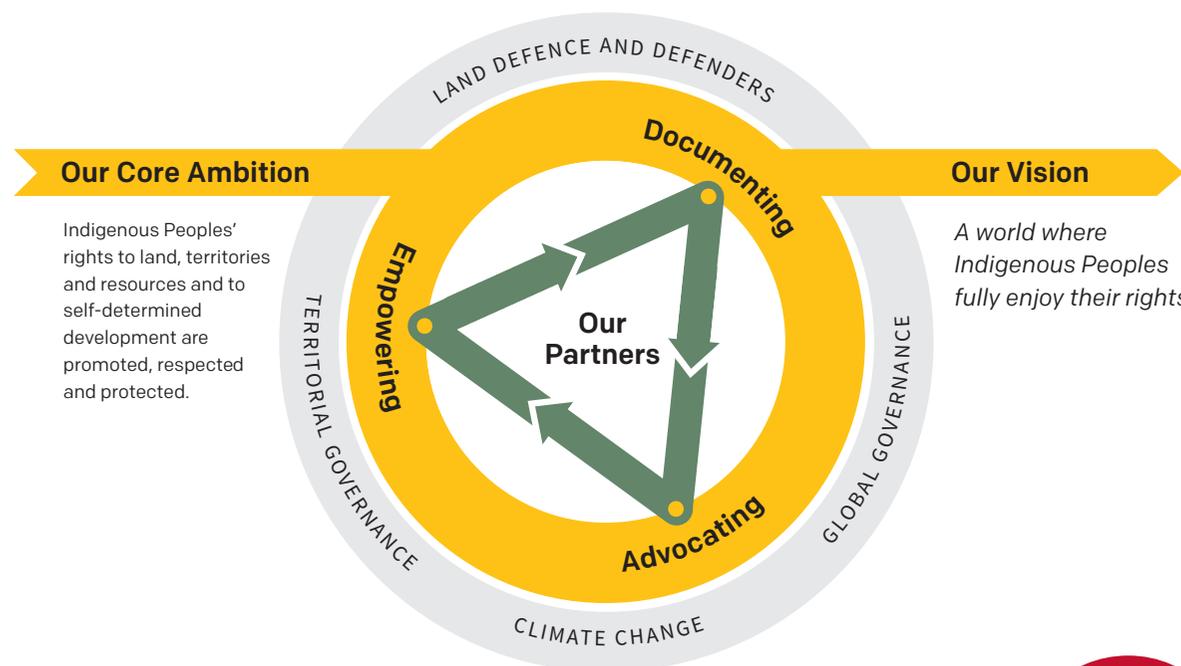
IWGIA’S TRIANGLE OF CHANGE

IWGIA’s Triangle of Change also applies to IWGIA’s gender-related work. Gender-related work is part of all thematic programmes (the grey outer circle) as described in section IV.

When supporting Indigenous women and their organisations, the same kind of support is rendered to other Indigenous Peoples and their organisations that IWGIA supports. We collaborate to document the human rights violations that Indigenous women face and the contributions and inspiration they bring to global challenges. IWGIA also supports Indigenous women in their advocacy efforts through capacity development, awareness raising, campaigning and strategic participation in spaces for their voices to be heard by important decision-makers. Finally, IWGIA supports the empowerment of Indigenous women, their organisations and constituencies by providing the tools they need, including documentation and advocacy, building their movements and strategies and connecting to other likeminded supporters and networks for joint efforts.

In preparation of this strategy, IWGIA has carried out consultations with Indigenous women within our network. The below analysis reflects the results from these consultations and thus, the main challenges and opportunities defined by them.

Indigenous women and girls participating in a community meeting in Nepal.
CREDIT: Signe Leth / IWGIA



DOCUMENTATION



There is a need for awareness raising and capacity development among Indigenous women in order for more Indigenous women to be able to document their situation and issues. Areas mentioned by Indigenous women themselves include: knowing what a human rights violation is, where to go to address them or what kind of documentation is needed to advocate for justice. Also, one of the main challenges in documenting violations is ensuring the life and safety of the complainants and their communities. There is a need for more awareness and capacity development within this area among most Indigenous Peoples' and Indigenous women's organisations. There is a lack of resources to create conditions so that women can speak out in confidence and with consent, as it takes time to create these conditions. There is a need for support of more documentation where Indigenous women are themselves part of every step of the process (construction of objectives, methodologies, field work, analysis, etc.). This is both a capacity developing, collective approach and an empowering exercise.

Indigenous women lack easy-to-understand guidelines on how to safely document human rights violations in Indigenous languages, produce publications on women as role models/ inspirational cases – not celebrities, but of ordinary women that achieved transformation that could inspire other women (like the AIPP Her Story series), and conduct analysis of climate change impacts and of Indigenous self-governments using a gendered perspective. They also highlight a need for a digital portal to document violations and create data related to human rights violations faced by Indigenous women.

IWGIA's support to documentation related to Indigenous women will include:

1. capacity development and awareness raising on how to do proper documentation, how to use it and how to do it in a safe way (possibly including support to develop tools and guidelines in Indigenous languages specifically for Indigenous women);
2. publicizing material showing Indigenous women's contributions to overcome challenges – promoting their capacities and strengths; and
3. support the production of more publications where Indigenous women take lead in creating the content and using the publications, thus ensuring a gendered perspective and analysis of the issues documented.



CREDIT: Samburu Women Trust

ADVOCACY



When Indigenous women try to engage in advocacy efforts there are several challenges: lack of capacity and awareness of advocacy tools and avenues, lack of access to decision-making spaces (not only because of male-domination of the spaces, but also because it can be difficult to leave the home and children or because of lack of financial and moral support), often there are language barriers, and lack of solid documentation of cases and data to bring forward in advocacy spaces.

There is a need to support Indigenous women in capacity development (in their own languages and in a culturally appropriate manner) in areas of advocacy skills as well as national and international advocacy avenues. They also need psychological support, encouragement and solidarity. All of these are long term needs. There are no quick fixes to build up the capacity of Indigenous women who have been left behind for far too long.

IWGIA's support to advocacy efforts of Indigenous women will include:

providing long-term technical support to enhance advocacy and documentation capacities of Indigenous women (when possible in their mother-tongue, through their own organisations), prioritise Indigenous women when supporting Indigenous representatives to participate in advocacy spaces to ensure gender balance, connect Indigenous women from different parts of the world to strengthen the Indigenous women's movement and joint advocacy efforts, make every effort to bring advocacy opportunities to Indigenous women (also in remote areas),⁵ and stand in solidarity and encourage Indigenous women in advocacy spaces where IWGIA engages.

EMPOWERMENT



The level of organisation of Indigenous women varies greatly from country to country and region to region. Some countries and regions have well-established, functioning networks of Indigenous women and their organisations, while others do not. There is a need for consistent movement building and support to those countries and regions that are still struggling to reach women at the grassroots level, and to have capacity in their networks to get organized for easier information sharing, solidarity, mobilization and joint advocacy.

The level of capacities within Indigenous women's own organisations also varies greatly. Common for most is the need for long-term, consistent and flexible support (financial and technical) to strengthen their institutions from the grassroots level and to strengthen their collective voice on the political agendas they wish to contribute to. Likewise, small funds for local network groups for the realization of their activities (institutional strengthening, productive projects, etc.) is needed. Organisational strengthening also includes support to projects designed from their own perspective that include advanced technologies to increase the safety of the women fighting in very dangerous areas.

IWGIA will support the empowerment of Indigenous women by:

1. providing long-term, flexible support to Indigenous women's own organisations, projects that have components of women empowerment and projects that support the visions of Indigenous women (within our thematic overall framework); and
2. provide more training and material to strengthen their institutions and organisations – especially on safety and security of Indigenous women at the forefront.

5. An example of this was when IWGIA facilitated members of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights visiting Indigenous Women in their communities in preparation of the publication - <https://www.iwgia.org/images/documents/Books/IndigenousWomen.pdf> or when IWGIA organises fact-finding missions with journalists to bring forward the voices of Indigenous Women.

IV. TOOLS & METHODOLOGY

In order to strengthen the gender focus in IWGIA, we will conduct a gender audit in 2022. The gender audit will help us identify our blind spots, strengths and challenges. An action plan will be developed and implemented based on the audit findings.



Indigenous women gathering community data in Ayacucho in the Peruvian highlands. CREDIT: Pablo Lasansky

PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION OF PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

When implementing projects and programmes, IWGIA and partners will consider the vulnerability of girls and women. Our interventions will be respectful of local practices, but at the same time ensure that we do our best to secure gender balance and conduct activities in a gender sensitive manner so that girls and women can freely and actively engage. Furthermore, we will put specific emphasis and attention on the additional threats and violations faced by Indigenous Women.

Indigenous women need to be part of the full project cycle from planning to implementation to evaluation of projects and programmes.

CHECKLISTS & FORMATS

In the coming years IWGIA will develop simple checklists for staff to ensure that an appropriate gender lens is being used for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programmes and projects.

IWGIA's partner proposal and reporting formats (Danida frame) will also be revised to ensure better gender-focused reflection and content.

BUDGET & FUNDRAISING

This gender strategy outlines how IWGIA will work on gender and Indigenous women's rights over the next five years with the limited human and financial resources that we have. To implement the strategy IWGIA needs further fundraising efforts. Budgeting and fundraising for gender issues does however form an integrated part of IWGIAs project planning.

Fundraising for gender-focused projects or activities can represent a challenge as some institutional donors funding gender projects require that the applicant is a women's organisation either representing women and/or having as its core mission to support women and gender equality. However, many donors

supporting human rights, Indigenous Peoples or development include a focus on women/gender in their strategy and operations and often make it a requirement in the project to be supported to include gender considerations.

Fundraising for the gender strategy and subsequent budgets will therefore focus on projects aimed specifically at “Gender related issues and empowerment”, broader projects that include a gender focused component/output, or smaller projects in collaboration with gender focused implementing partner organisations.

The fundraising effort will strive to:

1. systematically include a gender perspective in funding applications in the form, for example, of objectives, outputs or indicators of success; and
2. research and reach out to donors that could potentially support projects or activities focusing on women and gender equality.

DATA

Indigenous women across the board have highlighted the need for disaggregated data to develop effective public policies aimed at Indigenous women and girls. Indeed, disaggregated data is generally lacking with regards to the human rights situation of Indigenous women and girls, which prevents an accurate understanding of their needs and realities and is an obstacle to crafting policies and programmes to adequately address them. For example, Indigenous women in the Arctic region reported that violence was one of the most compelling issues affecting Indigenous women in all states in the Arctic region, but that the availability of data on violence varied greatly from one country to another.^{xxix} Indigenous women in Nepal have brought up the fact that there is “very little clear statistical data regarding health, access to education and other quality-of-life indicators specifically for Indigenous Peoples and more so for Indigenous women.”^{xxx} Indigenous women in India have stressed that disaggregated data is “urgently needed in order to ensure that the extreme marginalization and discrimination of Adivasi/tribal women is being addressed in a more targeted manner and their needs are prioritized by appropriate state interventions.”^{xxxi} The former UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples highlighted the lack of disaggregated statistics to document the

problems faced by Indigenous women in Brazil and recommended to the State that it ensure comprehensive and disaggregated statistics are produced.^{xxxii}

Through our Indigenous Navigator project, IWGIA will contribute to the development of comprehensive and disaggregated data on violence and discrimination against Indigenous women, including their access to justice and to economic, social and cultural rights, as well as other quantitative and qualitative information that may be relevant to ensure their human rights.

IWGIA will monitor results on gender through its key implementation plan 2021-2025 (KIP). Gender is an integrated part of IWGIA’s core ambition and four outcomes (thematic areas) and will therefore be monitored by qualitative and quantitative indicators identified in the KIP. IWGIA will also use the Indigenous World as a means of verification by ensuring that authors provide specific information related to gender issues in their articles (by country and international process).

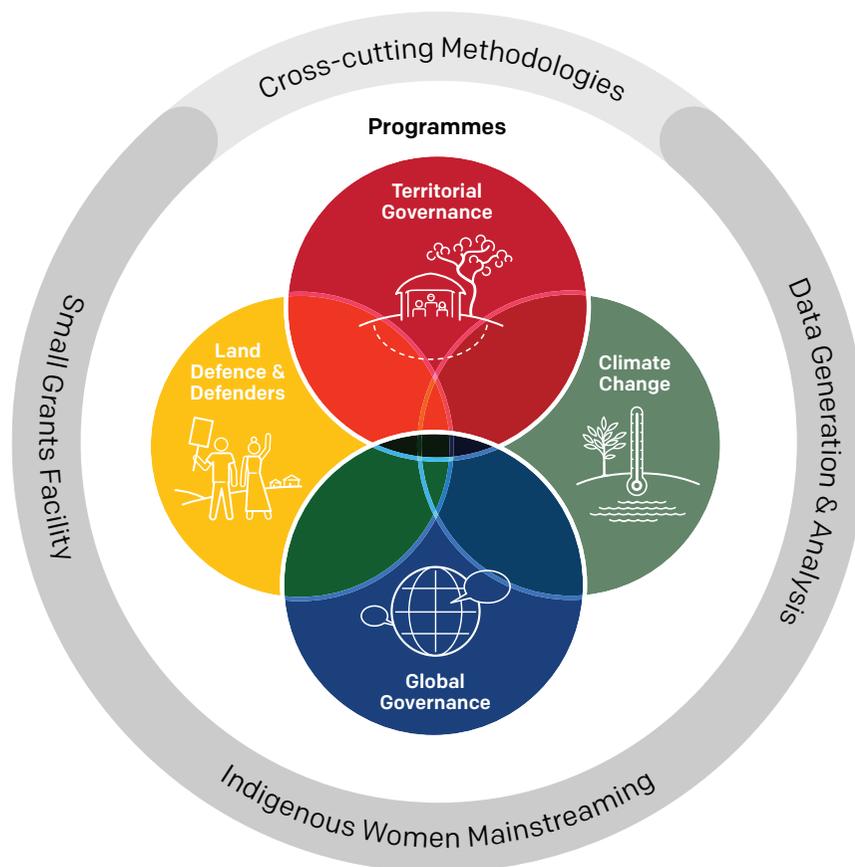
IWGIA COMMUNICATION ON GENDER

IWGIA will continue to highlight the stories of Indigenous women and girls as both strong and integral members of their communities and the advancement of the Indigenous movement, as well as victims of severe and disproportionate violence and harassment. Over and above the severe human rights violations Indigenous Peoples face in their everyday lives, Indigenous women face their own gender-specific violations that are not often visible or taken seriously. As such, and in accordance with the will and desire of Indigenous women, our partners and the movement, it is paramount for IWGIA that we facilitate the visibility of the unique position and reality that Indigenous women hold and face globally.

Due to their unique position and importance, Indigenous women and the issues they face are an important cross-cutting part of IWGIA’s work; therefore, IWGIA will communicate the importance of Indigenous women, the issues they contend with and the proactive actions they take throughout our four programme areas. The communications interventions we take will be a mix of gender-focused products as well as the inclusion of gender themes in products focused on other themes where the role of Indigenous women or the negative/positive experiences of women are necessary to be told.

ANNEX 1

IWGIA FOCUS AREAS

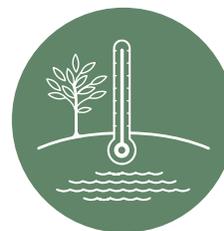


As we have seen in the context analysis (section II) the overarching problem facing Indigenous women and girls is the systemic racism against Indigenous Peoples, and the violence this results in, that particularly affects Indigenous women in different forms and shapes, and the negative additional effects this

triggers (mental and physical health issues, low self-esteem and self-worth, leading to less possibilities to participate in decision-making, speaking up against violations and earning a living). Gender-based discrimination, violence and racism will therefore be addressed in IWGIA's various programmes and projects.

IWGIA will take point of departure in the institutional strategy^{xxxiii} and the priorities and needs of Indigenous women themselves. IWGIA's core ambition for 2021-25 is that Indigenous Peoples' rights to land, territories and resources and to self-determined development are promoted, respected and protected. This ambition is intrinsic to all IWGIA's work and runs as a backbone through our programming and engagement – including the work related to gender. IWGIA will not only address and stress the importance of **ensuring Indigenous women's rights can be fully respected and realised** but will also stand up and speak out when these rights are rolled back, ignored or simply put on paper without any real action behind them. IWGIA will promote self-determined pathways to exercise these rights and contextualise this work through our four thematic programmes within regional, national and local contexts.

CLIMATE CHANGE



There are numerous challenges for Indigenous women in relation to climate change. For example, women are more severely affected by the challenges to produce or collect sufficient food, challenges of water scarcity or displacement because of climate change (thunder bolts, flooding, drought, unpredictable weather, decrease in food varieties, etc.). In accordance with culturally defined gender roles, Indigenous women are often the ones responsible for collecting firewood, fetching water, tending fields and feeding the family. Secondly, many traditional occupations of Indigenous women are also under threat because of climate change.⁶ Climate change mitigation actions implemented by governments or the private sector (such as green energy

6. For example, a woman from Taymyr, Russia had to quickly sell all the deerskin she had, because she had no place to keep them in cool, when the spring came early.

projects or the establishment of national parks or protected areas) severely and negatively affect Indigenous women if they are not involved in the design and implementation of such efforts. When women must spend more time and walk longer distances to produce/collect food and water, their vulnerability to violence also increases. There are numerous examples of this, for instance in Nepal and Thailand, where Indigenous women living in buffer zones of national parks face brutal human rights violations when entering the park to collect food, herbs, medicinal plants or water.^{xxxiv} Or in Kenya, where Indigenous women lost their traditional occupation as pastoralists due to the construction of a windmill farm and some women had to sustain their families through prostitution.^{xxxv}

Even though Indigenous women face all these challenges related to climate change, they must also be seen as role models for their sustainable practices in the resource management of forests, water and land. Many Indigenous women have expressed their deep-felt connection to the environment and wish to protect it. Among many forest-dependent Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous women play a central role in forest conservation and management, they are a repository of Indigenous knowledge on non-timber forest products and herbal medicine, and are often the keepers of seeds and thus in charge of preserving domesticated plant varieties. Indigenous women are adapting to climate change by, for example, growing new types of plants or berries that traditionally were unheard of. Their knowledge can be used in building climate-resilient communities and adaptation plans for which their inclusion and participation in policies and programmes related to climate change is essential. These invaluable roles and contributions of women for the wellbeing of their families and communities are neither properly acknowledged nor recognised by community or government actors. Indeed, despite being important agents of change, Indigenous women are often excluded from participating in decision-making processes that are linked to climate change issues at all levels.

IWGIA's climate change programme will work towards:

1. facilitating greater awareness and access to information for Indigenous women on climate change and how it affects their lives;
2. promoting Indigenous women as champions of climate change solutions and their inclusion in decision- and policy making related to climate change issues at all levels; and

3. raising awareness about the challenges that Indigenous women face as a consequence of climate change (such as violence) as well as women's contribution to climate change mitigation.

LAND DEFENCE AND DEFENDERS



While land dispossession and land tenure insecurity are major problems for all Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous women are even more vulnerable since they traditionally have very limited influence and decision-making power on land matters and productive resources (such as livestock among the Masai for instance) and often suffer the most when land is lost and they no longer are able to provide for themselves and their children. In addition to challenges of internal migration and displacement, Indigenous women also become victims of trafficking in many cases (especially in Asia).

Indigenous women are those affected the most by loss of land and territories and they play a fundamental role in the protection, reconstruction and recovery of lost, dispossessed or fragmented territories. Women have taken leadership and initiatives to organise their communities to be ready for negotiations, taken lead in actual negotiations with governments and have come up with solutions to redefine, for instance, boundaries when necessary. Indigenous women are active Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights Defenders (IPHEDs). As IPHEDs they are facing additional risks and threats because of their gender, such as sexual violence, harassment and in some cases discrimination within, and lack of support from, their own communities. Not only do Indigenous women suffer harassment themselves, but if their husbands or men in the communities actively engage in the land rights struggles and are persecuted, it is the women who must assume the additional work burden in their absence. There are examples of resisting communities who put women community members in the frontline when confronting corporate intruders in the hope that this will deter physical confrontation – this strategy proves effective in some cases, whereas in others the outcome is different than intended.

Rape and sexual violence targeting Indigenous women and girls are part of a systematic and brutal strategy to subjugate and terrorise Indigenous communities and displace them from their lands.^{xxxvi} Figures on sexual violence remain indicative as cultural taboos, language and capacity barriers, and security concerns prevent women in many cases from seeking justice.^{xxxvii} Cases of threats and homicides against women defenders of their territories have occurred in most regions and countries, making evident the greater vulnerability of women who lead processes of protection, conservation and restoration of their territories and natural assets.

It is essential to step-up action to enhance the recognition and protection of women's space and respect within the management and decision-making of the collective Indigenous Peoples' land and natural resources, and to ensure their access to remedies in case of dispossession. In the land defence and defenders programme Indigenous women therefore have a central role in the results framework, because it is demonstrated that when consciously involving women as central actors, better results are achieved for the communities on the ground. So, women are central to the programme not only for being adversely affected, but also for being a central player to achieve results. Men and women can play very different and complementing roles in land defence, which this programme seeks to utilise.

The land defence and defenders programme will work towards strengthening the Indigenous women's movement through:

1. long-term capacity development and awareness raising of communities and Indigenous women on Indigenous women's rights to land, territories and natural resources, and their role in the land defence;
2. supporting the empowerment of Indigenous Women as land defenders;
3. supporting advocacy for the respect of Indigenous women's participation in the management and decision-making over their collective land rights – trying to raise common issues in solidarity among different organisations and countries; and
4. active support activities countering the violence Indigenous women face in relation to defending their land, territories and natural resources.

TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE



Indigenous women of most countries are still under the influence of patriarchal structures within their self-governing systems. The patriarchal structures both stem from processes of colonization and religious conversion, as well as from the Indigenous traditional patriarchal culture of some peoples. As a result, the participation of Indigenous women in decision making bodies and processes within their territories are still minimal at every level. There is a general

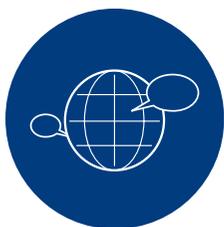
lack of recognition of their contributions to society and their important roles in making the community function. For instance, Indigenous women have particular knowledge on land and environment; their expertise and skills can be an asset within Indigenous Peoples' governance systems if they are included in the political processes and decision-making bodies. Indigenous women can also play an important role in conflict resolution – both at the community/village level and in conflicts where outsiders are involved. If given the space, some Indigenous women have skills and experience that can be utilised for the benefit of the territories.

The first barriers that need to be overcome for the full inclusion of Indigenous women within their territorial governance systems are the visualisation and recognition of their contributions in society.

There has been some consolidation of the global Indigenous women's movement in recent years with the development of organisational and communication skills and coordination between national and international networks. Indigenous women have also shared their struggles with other social movements in a number of places experiencing the same barriers to full political participation. The challenge is to bring the victories of the global Indigenous women's movement back to the territories and to ensure that Indigenous women gain full recognition within the self-governing structures of the Indigenous governments. It is important however to recognise that it is the women of each community who must decide what role they want or are willing to play in the government of their territories, and for this reason, the external support that is intended to be offered to them must go through a dialogue and open consultation process the initial purpose of which is to promote and respect the autonomous decision of the women themselves in this regard.

The territorial governance programme will therefore:

1. support initiatives for training, exchange of experience and inclusion of Indigenous women in the different areas offered by the autonomous Indigenous governments in order to strengthen their participation in decision-making;
2. actively promote the important contributions Indigenous women have to offer Indigenous self-governance systems and push for their inclusion in all policy decision-making (such as health, education, resource use, economic development policies, etc.); and
3. in appropriate ways, ensure that Indigenous governments supported by IWGIA take serious steps to counter the violence against Indigenous women within their territories.

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Indigenous women are actively contributing to international processes relating to Indigenous Peoples' rights and women's rights and they promote their role as champions of sustainability. Indigenous women are part of the solution to many of the challenges that societies, and women within those societies, face worldwide. Within this context, there has been a steady progress in the achievements made by Indigenous women at the national, regional and international levels. Indigenous women have begun to organize in associations, networks and alliances to speak up against violence, discrimination and violations of their rights, and promote change.

However, 26 years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the advancement of the situation of Indigenous women is still constrained by the major barrier that is the full and effective recognition, protection and fulfilment

of the rights of Indigenous Peoples as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The absence of recognition in national legislation, as well as land dispossession and lack of protection of their land rights are key human rights issues that affect Indigenous women disproportionately.^{xxxviii} Complex and profound challenges and systemic injustices continue to threaten Indigenous women (as described in section II of this strategy). IWGIA has conducted an internal analysis that concluded that 261 global recommendations and 100 country-specific recommendations for IWGIA focus countries⁸ related to the situation of Indigenous women were made by various UN processes, but that the implementation by states is minimal. We will direct our resources to possibilities of addressing the implementation gap at all levels.

Through the global governance program IWGIA will support Indigenous women to:

1. strengthen the awareness, self-organization, solidarity (nationally and cross-border), self-confidence and ability to influence issues which are fundamental to them at the international level;
2. based on the specific needs voiced by the Indigenous women's organisations, we will contribute to building the Indigenous women's movement through the provision of funding and technical support so that Indigenous women's organisations can bring their issues forward at regional and international levels;
3. we will strengthen partnerships with Indigenous women's own networks which are actively engaged in global processes;
4. we will also facilitate the strengthening and establishment of platforms to exchange knowledge and experience across communities, countries and regions; and
5. finally, we will facilitate the creation, and partnerships with, alliances that can act collectively and promote change for the situation of Indigenous women at individual and collective levels.

7. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted unanimously by 189 countries at the UN Conference in 1995, is considered to be the most comprehensive global policy framework for women's rights. It recognizes women's rights as human rights and sets out a comprehensive roadmap for achieving equality between women and men. Since the Beijing Conference, the implementation of the Platform for Action has been assessed by the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) each year and through a review process carried out every five years, reaffirming States' commitment to its full implementation.

8. India (9), Bangladesh (8), Nepal (19), Myanmar (1), Kenya (4), Tanzania (0), Colombia (31) and Peru (28)

ENDNOTES

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Indigenous girls in a village in Bangladesh.
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