

OHCHR 2026 INDIGENOUS FELLOWS



GENEVA, JUNE 22 – JULY 17, 2026

OHCHR 2026 INDIGENOUS FELLOWS
ENGLISH-SPEAKING FELLOWS



GENEVA, JUNE 22 – JULY 17, 2026



Anthony Kadubabari Aalo
Indigenous People: Ogoni Nation
Country: Nigeria

Organization: Movement for the Survival
of the Ogoni People (MOSOP).



: anthonyaalo53@gmail.com

Mr. Anthony Kadubabari Aalo is a Human and Environmental Rights Activist. A senior program officer at the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). Anthony is also a cofounder of Kallop Humanitarian and Environmental Centre, a grassroots organization that works to support the agitations of the Ogoni indigenous people for environmental safety and indigenous rights to self-determination in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

He has served as the Niger Delta lead consultant with the Theater for Development Centre (TFDC), Amadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria. He is a consultant with Kebetkache Women Development and Resource Centre on Climate Change and Energy Transition, and also working as a consultant on Niger Delta stakeholders' engagement with the African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development (Centre-LSD), Abuja.

Anthony is an energetic, and passionate about environment with extensive experience in the indigenous Ogoni environmental activism. He has been advocating for political control of Ogoni affairs by Ogoni people, adequate and direct representation as of right in the Nigerian national institutions, the use and development of Ogoni language in Ogoni territory and full development of Ogoni culture. He is currently leading the campaign on ending fossil fuel extraction, decommissioning of old oil facilities, clean-up of polluted sites and restoration of the environment in Ogoni communities.



Buyantogtokh Sukhbaatar

Indigenous People: Durvud Ethnic Group

Country: Mongolia

Organization: Khuduunii Ail Yesch NGO (Nomad Kids ESC/
Cultural Revitalization Initiative)



: sbuyanaa740@gmail.com

Buyantogtokh Sukhbaatar is a cultural practitioner, community educator, and Indigenous rights advocate from Mongolia. She is the founder and lead coordinator of Khuduunii Ail Yesch NGO, an organization dedicated to revitalizing Indigenous nomadic culture, strengthening rural communities, and empowering Indigenous children and youth through education, health, and cultural transmission.

For over five years, Buyantogtokh and her team have worked to revive and safeguard the disappearing cultures of 13 Indigenous ethnic groups in Mongolia recognized by UNESCO, reaching more than 5 million people globally through community-based programs, digital education, and cultural storytelling. She has built a trusted local network and established a “Oirad Mongol” community cultural center that supports nomadic children in learning traditional knowledge, language, values, and skills.

Her work integrates Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural education, and holistic well-being, including training programs on health, nutrition, and traditional food systems adapted to nomadic lifestyles. Buyantogtokh is also a practitioner of traditional folk dance and Mongolian calligraphy, and actively teaches cultural skills to younger generations.

Passionate about Indigenous rights, cultural survival, and intergenerational knowledge transfer, Buyantogtokh works at the intersection of community development, education, and cultural diplomacy. Her vision is to ensure that Indigenous nomadic cultures are not only preserved, but actively practiced, respected, and protected within national and international human rights frameworks.



Gunjal Ikir Munda
Indigenous People: Munda
Country: India
Organization: RUMBUL
 : gimunda@gmail.com

Gunjal Ikir Munda is an Indigenous scholar and cultural practitioner from Jharkhand, India, working at the intersection of tribal culture, language documentation, education, and community research. He currently serves as Manager – Culture at PIRAMAL Swasthya Management and Research Institute, building partnerships with Indigenous communities and government agencies to strengthen cultural, health, and education linkages.

A former Assistant Professor at the Centre for Endangered Languages, Central University of Jharkhand, he has worked extensively on documenting Indigenous languages and cultural traditions, particularly among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups. Gunjal is a co-investigator and coordinator in several major research projects on tribal cultures and knowledge systems and has authored and edited numerous publications on Adivasi history, language, and cultural movements. He is Chairperson of the Asia Young Indigenous Peoples' Network and actively supports Indigenous youth leadership, language preservation, and community empowerment initiatives. He is also the co-founder of RUMBUL, an Indigenous youth led initiative for encouraging and promoting cultural rootedness among the Indigenous youth.



Dr. Lizette Rivera "Guani"

Indigenous People: Taino

Country: Borikén (Puerto Rico)

Organization: United Confederation of Taino People (UCTP)



: lizetteviviana@gmail.com

Dr. Lizette V. Rivera joins the 2026 United Nations Indigenous Fellowship Program as a representative of the United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP). She serves as the UCTP Liaison of Illinois (USA) and is an enrolled citizen of Ikaieke Guainía Borikén (Taíno Tribe of Puerto Rico). Born and raised in Chicago to parents from the Central and Southeast ancestral regions of Puerto Rico, she represents Taíno peoples of Borikén, the Caribbean, and the diaspora. Her work centers on advocacy, education, and international Indigenous engagement. Lizette is a Behike in Training, a Taíno ceremonial leader, and serves on the Board of Directors for the Caney Indigenous Spiritual Circle. Her Taíno name, "Guani" (colibrí/hummingbird), represents a sacred bird in Taíno culture and is revered within the Taíno Medicine Wheel. Guani also means Brave Warrior. Lizette is also a Taíno Indigenous bead artisan, continuing ancestral artistic traditions. Her cultural grounding informs her leadership and strengthens her commitment to Indigenous sovereignty, relational responsibility, and the preservation of Indigenous heritage and knowledge. In 2025, Lizette completed the Project Access Indigenous Partnership United Nations Intervention Training and participated in the UCTP delegation at the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York. She brings over fifteen years of experience in higher education and nonprofit organizations, advancing diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility through grant-supported initiatives and institutional development. Dr. Rivera holds a Doctorate of Education from National Louis University, a Master of Public Administration from Roosevelt University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She received the Taíno Koa Educator Award in 2025 for her contributions to Indigenous education and leadership.



Lynn Konwaia'tanón:we's Jacobs

Indigenous People: Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) Nation,
Haudenosaunee Confederacy

Country: Canada

Organizations: Indigenous World Association, McGill
University, Indigenous Leadership Initiative



: lynnjacobs.kahnawake@gmail.com

Lynn was raised in her father's community, Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Territory; a Kanien'kehá:ka community in the urban interface near Montreal. She is an Indigenous scientist and has worked on the land in her community for more than two decades on issues related to biodiversity, pollution, chemicals, waste, environmental racism, and Indigenous environmental justice. In her work she combines knowledge from her degrees in environmental science and ecology, with the knowledge and science of her Kanien'kehá:ka culture, which is rooted in generations of respectful, reciprocal, and kinship relationships with the natural world. Lynn is currently a PhD candidate at McGill University in the Natural Resource Science Department. Her research is focused on the colonial and environmental justice aspects of plastic throughout the plastic lifecycle, impacts to Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous science and solutions to address the plastic pollution crisis from local to global levels.

Lynn has worked extensively in UN mechanisms to uplift the rights, science, knowledge, and participation of Indigenous Peoples, including in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) on Plastic Pollution, the Intergovernmental Science Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution (ISP-CWP), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), and the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). She is honoured to join the OHCHR Indigenous Fellowship. Her goal in the fellowship is to take her knowledge and experience in international law and UN structures and processes to the next level, so she can be more effective and strategic in her international work, and step into a mentorship role for other Indigenous delegates and youth.



Maria Tavui Laki

Indigenous People: Samoa Country

Country: New Zealand

Organization: Tu Mau



: mariatavuilaki@gmail.com

Maria Katalina Tavui Laki (Samoa) is a legal researcher supported by Tu Mau, a Pacific-led movement advancing dignity and labour justice for Pacific communities. She is completing a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Business, majoring in Economics with a minor in International Business Strategy, at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. Her work focuses on Pacific labour mobility, using Samoa as a case study to examine the human rights implications of the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme and Australia's Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme, through an international human rights and labour law lens. Her research focuses on equality and non-discrimination, access to justice, and employer driven control mechanisms, including circumstances that may amount to forced labour or practices analogous to contemporary forms of slavery.



Naomi Watts

Indigenous People: Ngāti Kuta, Muaūpoko, Taranaki, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Kahungunu

Country: Aotearoa New Zealand

Organisation: Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University



: naomiwwatts@gmail.com

Naomi Watts represents her community as a descendant of her ancestor Ihaia Taueki of Muaūpoko, and her hapū (subtribe), Ngāti Kuta. She also descends from the tribes Taranaki, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāti Kahungunu in Aotearoa New Zealand. Naomi is a Kaiarataki (Advisor) and Kaiārahi Tiriti (Treaty Advisor) at Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University within the Student and Global Engagement portfolio. Guided by their Kaiarataki Matua (Senior Advisor), her team's work centres on bringing Tiriti provisions and principles to life by building staff capability, embedding Tiriti-honouring practice, and encouraging Indigenous ways of engaging. She holds a Master's in Māori and Indigenous Leadership, with research focused on decolonising and indigenising cultural practices relating to Māori women and their bodily autonomy. Naomi is an ongoing learner of her Indigenous language and is determined to strengthen language and cultural practices within her whānau and community. A new māmā and aunty to many, Naomi is inspired by the next generation in her pursuit of tino rangatiratanga (complete authority, autonomy and collective self-determination) for her people.



Ngelmau Dirrukebid Polloi

Indigenous People: Palauan

Country: Palau

Organization: Palau Resource institute (PRI)



: ngelmau@gmail.com

Ngelmau Polloi is a Palauan currently pursuing a degree in Civil Engineering at the National Taiwan University. Growing up in Palau gave her an early awareness of the unique challenges Palauans face as an island nation, and studying abroad has since allowed her to deepen her technical knowledge while also broadening her understanding of how infrastructure and development intersect with the needs of Indigenous and Pacific communities. In the past she has participated in international programs focused on leadership, disaster resilience, and global cooperation. Most recently, she took part in her first UN Pre-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development for Pacific Youth, where she presented a Palauan youth perspective on climate change displacement in Palau. These experiences have strengthened her commitment to be more actively engaged in Indigenous rights advocacy and to work towards more meaningful representation of Indigenous and Pacific voices in global conversations.



Omod Oguok Okuri

Indigenous People: Anywaa

Country: Ethiopia

Organization: Ethiopian Minorities and Indigenous Peoples Rights Organization (EMIPRO)



: omotogwok@gmail.com

Mr. Omod is the founder of Ethiopian Minorities and Indigenous Peoples Rights Organization (EMIPRO) based in Ethiopia. He has previously served as the Executive Director of EMIPRO. Currently, he holds the position of Program Coordinator at EMIPRO. Mr. Omod is an advocate for the rights of indigenous peoples, including minority groups in Ethiopia. He has been actively promoting the rights of indigenous and minority communities at national, regional, and international levels for over three years. He was a participant in the second and third African Regional Forum on Business and Human Rights held in Addis Ababa and Nairobi. He also represented Indigenous Peoples in the United Nations Business and Human Rights Forum in Geneva. When Ethiopia adopted the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights, Mr. Omod led his team in intensive engagement with the Ministry of Justice in Ethiopia to ensure meaningful participation of indigenous peoples and minority groups in the policy development.



Alissa Takesy

Indigenous People: Remathau Cultural Group

Country: Federated States of Micronesia

Organization: Ulithi-Falalop Community Action Program



[:atakesy@ucsc.edu](mailto:atakesy@ucsc.edu)

Alissa Takesy is a PhD candidate in the Environmental Studies Department at the University of California Santa Cruz. Alissa also holds designated emphases in Coastal Science and Policy, and Critical Race and Ethnic Studies. Alissa is the first *Remathau* graduate student researcher to support the Ulithi-Falalop Community Action Program, which is a community-based organization located in Ulithi Atoll, Yap State, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

Remathau means “descendants of the sea lanes” (as defined by Alissa’s Ulithian sponsors) or “people of the open ocean” and its knowledge system is based on a common oceanic and island culture around non-instrumental navigational wayfinding in the Western Central Pacific Ocean and islands. *Remathau* covers mostly the Western low-lying islands in the Federated States of Micronesia and the Southwest low-lying islands of the Republic of Palau, and by historical cultural extension to Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands. Alissa has the privilege of having *Remathau* roots through her maternal and paternal sides’ extended family and clan connections. She also has cultural ties to Pohnpei, Kosrae, Marshall Islands, Nauru, and Kiribati, basically most of the Micronesian island nations and territories. In addition, she has kinship ties to Asia through her maternal grandmother and paternal grandfather.

As a *Remathau* scholar, Alissa’s research focuses on Indigenous science reinforcing natural resource management in the Western Central Pacific Ocean region and islands, rights-based fisheries, and Indigenous political ecology. Her 12-year professional experience in natural resource management in the FSM national government and serving as its national biodiversity negotiator in the Convention on Biological Diversity have informed her research interests.

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Aissatou SOW

Indigenous People: Fulani (𞤅𞤆𞤂𞤂𞤂𞤂)

Country: Republic of Guinea

Organization: Winden Jangen ADLaM



:aysha.sow12@gmail.com

Aissatou Sow is an activist dedicated to promoting and protecting the cultural, linguistic, and educational rights of indigenous peoples in Guinea. She champions the Pular language and the ADLaM writing system as pillars of identity, collective memory, and self-determination for communities. As the founder of FINDE Communication, she has helped teach literacy to many people, designed educational tools, and authored a book to facilitate the learning of ADLaM writing. Through Winden Jangen ADLaM (Let's Read and Write ADLaM), she has helped open several community literacy centers, promoting access to inclusive education, particularly in rural areas. She also organizes the ADLaM Pulaagu Cultural Day, dedicated to promoting indigenous languages and cultures and empowering women and youth. As president of Sukaabhe ADLaM Windere, Aissatou Sow raises awareness among communities and decision-makers about linguistic and educational rights. With this fellowship, she aims to strengthen her expertise in international mechanisms for protecting the rights of Indigenous peoples, educational and cultural advocacy, and strategies for preserving Indigenous languages and heritage, in order to amplify her impact at the national and international levels. For her, the education of Indigenous peoples is essential to ensuring the preservation of their rights.



Christina Dubé Connelly

Indigenous Peoples: Atikamekw Nehirowisiw (Canada)

Country: Canada

Organization: Atikamekw Nation Council



: christinaconnellywemotaci@gmail.com

Christina is a law student at the Université du Québec à Montréal, where she is completing her second year with the future goal of helping members of her community access justice. She holds a degree in economic development in an Indigenous context from the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi.

Between 2024 and 2025, she served on the High-Level Table as a consultant, providing technical support on various issues for the Atikamekw Nation Council. She participated in the summer schools of the Centre for Inter-University Studies in Indigenous Studies and Research (CIERA): Indigenous Constitutionalisms in 2021 and International Rights and Issues of Indigenous Peoples in 2022.

In October 2025, she submitted the Mocom Albert Connelly protected areas project in response to the Government of Quebec's Call for Protected Areas Projects in Southern Public Lands, with the aim of protecting the ancestral family territory targeted by major wind energy development projects. Through the program, she aims to develop expertise in international law to defend Indigenous rights and protect Indigenous territories, including that of the Atikamekw Nehirowisiwok.



Emilie Finette Dehmed

Indigenous People: BAKA (MESSOUME) Indigenous People

Country: Cameroon

Organization: Action for Sustainable Development (ACDD)



: dehmedacdd@gmail.com

Emilie is a young BAKA Indigenous leader with a high school diploma who has been coordinating the ACDD association for the past six years.

She has completed several training programs, including:

- APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY; BAFOUSSAM; CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION; GEF SMALL GRANTS; YAOUNDE; DISTANCE LEARNING CERTIFICATE; UNITED NATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS; YAOUNDE; TRAINING CERTIFICATE.

Her primary objective is to actively work toward the empowerment of the indigenous Pygmy populations of the BAGYELI and BAKOLA. She and ACDD have therefore worked on various projects carried out by the organization in the Southern Region, specifically in Kribi, the department where the BAGYELI and BAKOLA populations are located, within the framework of projects focused on Water and Sanitation, Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Support for Income-Generating Activities, and Environmental Management and Protection, including the conservation of a Protected Area. She is deeply committed to issues concerning the rights of indigenous peoples and works actively with ACDD to resolve the land-related problems regularly faced by the BAGYELI and BAKOLA. She is also actively engaged in issues specifically affecting indigenous women, particularly regarding economic empowerment, by providing financial support for income-generating activities (IGAs) in these communities.



Kirei Tokoragi–Vanaa

Indigenous People: Maohi (Tahiti)

Country: French Polynesia/France

Organization: Tavini Huiraaatira No Te Ao Maohi



: kirei.tokoragi@gmail.com

Kirei Tokoragi–Vanaa, born on February 6, 2006, in Tahiti, is a third-year undergraduate student at the University of Vienna, specializing in sociology, ethnology, and social policy. Coming from a deeply committed family background, she has been involved since a very young age, alongside her parents, in the struggles against the health, environmental, and social consequences of the nuclear tests conducted in Polynesia by the administering power for over 30 years, and for the full sovereignty of Maohi Nui, in accordance with international law and United Nations resolutions. As a victim of the nuclear bomb, Kirei sadly never had the pleasure or the joy of knowing her grandmother, who died prematurely at the age of 35 from breast cancer in 1984—a disease recognized as radiation-induced. Her approach is rooted in a strong commitment to using the social sciences as tools for justice, memory, and recognition of colonized peoples. An annexed territory, and re-listed as a Non-Self-Governing Territory awaiting decolonization since May 17, 2013, Kirei is committed to continuing her studies and defending the interests of her people by speaking out and making her voice heard on the international stage. Passionate about reading, history, and politics, she aspires to strengthen the bonds between the Indigenous peoples of our Overseas Territories and to carry on the struggle of our ancestors.



Mina Abdaoui Amazigh from Morocco
Indigenous People: Amazigh
Country: Morocco
Organization: ACAL



: abdaouimina68@gmail.com

Bachelor's degree in law (taught in French) from Moulay Ismail University, Meknes, Morocco
Holds a diploma in Management Information Systems from EFET, Marrakech, Morocco
Treasurer of the ACAL association in El Hajeb, Morocco, of which Amina Amharech is president:
The association is active in defending the rights of the Amazigh people to their lands, territories, and natural resources, as well as their socio-economic and cultural rights.

ACAL organized the International Conference on Rights to Land, Territory, and Natural Resources in 2017 in El Hajeb in partnership with other national and international associations, including the APM and the CMA, in the presence of the Chair of the UNPFII and the Chair of the EMRIP.

I was introduced to advocacy through an online training course on human rights systems, with a particular focus on United Nations and European Union mechanisms, the rights of indigenous peoples, the environment, and human rights, held from March 15 to April 5, 2024, and organized jointly by AZUL and DOCIP.

Following that, I participated in the DOCIP training in Geneva from July 1 to July 5, 2024, before attending the 17th session of the MEDPA from July 8 to July 12, 2024. My presentation focused on new laws regarding communal lands and planned reserves on the lands of Amazigh tribes. I have also been a member of the Amazigh indigenous network AZUL since 2013.

It is a network composed of Amazigh associations and activists working for the defend, mobilize, and promote Amazigh identity in accordance with the principles of the UNDRIP.
-Founding member of the AMGHAR 2002 Association for Culture and Development in Khénifra, of which I served as president from 2016 to 2019. The association focuses on Amazigh culture and the preservation of the Amazigh people's tangible and intangible heritage, as well as the teaching of the Amazigh language—initially in-person, before authorities barred us from accessing the relevant public institutions. The association continued its work online and also enabled the diaspora to continue these courses.

The association has organized conferences and seminars, the most significant of which focused on the official recognition of the Amazigh language and its integration into the education system.
-President of the ZAMHARIR cooperative for Amazigh women and the promotion of local products in the village of Assoul, Khénifra province: the cooperative was created with the aim of empowering my sisters in the village despite our struggle with a lack of funding and bureaucratic obstacles



Océane Trolue-Uhila

Indigenous people: Kanak (New Caledonia)

Country: New Caledonia

Organization: French Ministry of Justice: Magistrate,
Court of First Instance of Nouméa (New Caledonia)

Equality/Diversity Liaison for the jurisdiction of the Nouméa
Court of Appeals



: cvynano@gmail.com

A lawyer by training, I currently serve as a judge at the Court of First Instance of Nouméa.

In addition to my official duties, I serve as a resource person within civil society at community and institutional events... addressing social issues such as "domestic violence and its impact on the indigenous Kanak people," "Kanak customary law and its application," "the place of Kanak women in contemporary society," "Kanak youth, their place and role within society..."

New Caledonia, home to the indigenous Kanak people as well as other communities from various Pacific nations and other regions, faces the challenge today of finding solutions to foster "better coexistence" within this territory.

I would like to explore the mechanisms and procedures applicable to human rights in order to expand my limited knowledge in this area and thereby contribute effectively to the protection of the rights of the Kanak people on their territory.



Oumou Dicko
Indigenous people: Fulani
Country: Mali (Sahel)
Organization: AJDHPE



: oumouinne04@gmail.com

Oumou Dicko is a young Fulani indigenous leader from the Sahel (Mali) committed to defending human rights and protecting the environment. As President of the Association of Youth for Human Development and Environmental Protection (AJDHPE), she works to promote education, the empowerment of women and youth, and the preservation of natural resources through community-based initiatives and awareness campaigns. She holds a bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from the University of Letters and Human Sciences in Bamako (ULSHB), is an alumna of the U.S. Department of State's SUSI Young Women Leaders 2022 program, and is currently pursuing a master's degree in Environmental Management and Sustainable Development at Delta C University. Oumou has participated in several international forums, including the SBS60 PreConference on Climate Change, COP 28, COP 29, COP 30, and COP 16 on biodiversity, as well as the IUCN World Conservation Congress, UNEA7, the UNCN Leadership Forum, and the 11th session of the ARFSD, where she advocated for the Sahelian communities on environmental justice, biodiversity protection, and the participation of youth and women. She aspires to contribute to a just and sustainable world where Indigenous Peoples fully enjoy their rights, where lands and cultural identities are protected, and where women and youth play a central role in building inclusive and equitable societies.



Valérie Boudreault

Indigenous Peoples: Innu (First Nation)

Country: Canada

Organization: Regional Committee on Ancestral Languages



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With over eighteen years of experience in the public service, where she primarily advised the Government of Quebec on relations with Indigenous peoples, Valérie Boudreault now puts her expertise to work for First Nations organizations. With a master's degree in anthropology, she currently serves as program manager at the Regional Committee for Ancestral Languages. Convinced of the importance of ancestral languages as a pillar of identity, Valérie aims to make a tangible contribution to the defense of Indigenous peoples' linguistic and cultural rights.

A member of the Nutashkuan Innu First Nation and a Quebecker by her mixed heritage, she brings a unique perspective on Indigenous issues, government relations, and the daily challenges faced by Indigenous organizations. She firmly believes in the power of an international network among Indigenous peoples and in the value of expertise drawn from diverse contexts, united by the same passion and an urgent—almost sacred—sense of honoring ancestors while charting a path toward a future grounded in dignity and equality.

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Awex Mejia Cipriano

Indigenous People: K'iche' - Sakapulteka

Country: Guatemala

Organization: Association for the Promotion and Development of the Ceiba Community



:awexmmc@gmail.com

Awex Mejia Cipriano, a K'iche'–Sakapulteka Indigenous woman, peasant farmer and social worker, committed to social struggles and the defense of the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples and women, I promote agroecology as a way of life and as a means of reclaiming my roots and identity through work and the defense of the land. I grew up in an indigenous and peasant family; my father and mother moved to another municipality near the capital city to seek access to education and employment. I currently serve as a coordinator at Asociación Ceiba, supporting institutional planning processes, project management, and providing operational support to the technical field team in the areas of: food sovereignty and agroecology, defense of the body-land territory, and comprehensive community health.

Over the course of 15 years of work, I have supported processes of empowerment, organization, and participation with women in promoting actions that enable access to livelihoods, and have provided support to Indigenous peoples and peasant communities to promote practices that contribute to the care and conservation of Mother Earth and the building of a good life. Additionally, I have designed and managed projects for four regions of the country with Indigenous populations (K'iche', Mam, Kaqchikel, and Tzutujil) and rural communities to help strengthen organization, participation, and advocacy for the enforcement of individual and collective rights.

I have been a member of the political council of the National Network for the Defense of Food Sovereignty in Guatemala, and a delegate in national forums to participate in the development and advocacy processes for the approval of legislative initiatives to defend biodiversity and promote women's economic development.



Gladis Faviola Rodríguez Rodríguez

Indigenous people: Tojolabal

Country: Mexico

Organization: Independent Central of Agricultural and Peasants (CIOAC)



: gladischiapas@gmail.com

Gladis Faviola Rodríguez Rodríguez is a technical educational advisor for the 705th Supervisory Zone Headquarters in Las Margaritas, Chiapas, responsible for delivering courses, workshops, and lectures to indigenous elementary school teachers, promoting the defense of the cultural and linguistic rights of indigenous children. She is a project designer involved in the development and monitoring of agricultural and cultural projects in indigenous communities in the state of Chiapas, through the Independent Central of Agricultural Workers and Peasants (CIOAC). She actively participates in institutions of the justice system as an interpreter and defender of the rights of indigenous peoples. Gladis Rodríguez is a community leader, social justice activist, and popular educator of the Tojolabal language. She is a volunteer community teacher (*votán*) at the Little School of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) in communities of the Lacandon Jungle in Chiapas.

Gladis was a fellow in the CIESAS-CONAHCYT graduate fellowship program, pursuing a master's degree in Intercultural Bilingual Education in Latin America (PROEIB-ANDES) in Cochabamba, Bolivia, which enabled her to develop research projects with Quechua and Aymara indigenous peoples in Bolivia. She is a passionate and steadfast defender of the rights of indigenous women and girls. A community activist who protects ancestral knowledge and territorial sovereignty, and a tenacious defender of Mother Earth. She is a researcher in indigenous communities threatened by severe deforestation in the jungle regions of the state of Chiapas.



Joel Huamán Balbuena

Indigenous people: Quechua Wanka

Country: Peru

Organization: National Organization of the Asháninka and Ashéninka Indigenous Peoples of Peru (ONPOAAP)



:joelhb82@gmail.com

Joel Huamán Balbuena is a sociologist from the Quechua Wanka people and a specialist in public management, interculturality, and social projects, with over fifteen years of professional experience in the design, implementation, and evaluation of public policies and community interventions related to human rights, indigenous peoples, gender equality, and territorial development in Peru. He holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology from the National University of Central Peru and has completed graduate studies in Public Management, Strategic Business Administration, and Interculturality and Management for Development. He has held positions in various Peruvian government agencies, including the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations, the Ministry of Labor and Employment Promotion, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Education, participating in community intervention processes, the prevention of gender-based violence, employment promotion, and capacity building in intercultural contexts. Notable is her participation in the implementation of the community strategy "Men for Equality," aimed at working with men and preventing violence against women at the local level. She has extensive experience working with indigenous and civil society organizations. He has served as a technical advisor to the National Organization of the Asháninka and Ashéninka Indigenous Peoples of Peru (ONPOAAP) and as project manager at the NGO ONAMPITSITE NOSHANINKAPAYE TSINANE (ONOTSI), contributing to institutional strengthening, the defense of collective rights, territorial planning, advocacy, and sustainable development from a perspective of indigenous self-determination. He has provided consulting services to public and academic institutions on topics such as the translation of regulations into indigenous languages, the development of bilingual intercultural educational materials, the monitoring of social projects, and social baseline studies in Amazonian territories. His work is characterized by an intercultural, participatory, and territorial approach, focused on the promotion of human rights and the strengthening of community leadership in contexts of cultural diversity.



Leonardo Simón Crisóstomo Loncopán

Indigenous People: Mapuche

Country: Chile

Organization: Association of Mapuche Communities
Winkulmapu



:leonardosimoncl@gmail.com

Leonardo Simón Crisóstomo Loncopán is a Mapuche geographer, territorial leader, and human rights defender. Born and raised in the Kurarewe territory in the Araucanía Region, he has held community leadership roles since the age of 16, actively participating in organizational processes and in the defense of his people's territorial and collective rights in the face of socio-environmental conflicts and challenges in the governance of protected areas. He is currently president of the Winkulmapu Mapuche Communities Association, an organization that coordinates communities in the mountainous region on issues of territorial governance, biocultural conservation, and the defense of indigenous rights. In this role, he promotes initiatives for indigenous territorial planning, organizational strengthening, and proposals for co-governance in state-protected areas, advocating for the effective recognition of indigenous rights in public policies on biodiversity and conservation. At the same time, he collaborates with the Observatorio Ciudadano, a human rights organization in Chile, supporting programs related to biodiversity, indigenous peoples, and international human rights standards. His work focuses on the intersection of territorial rights, nature conservation, and the effective participation of indigenous peoples in decision-making that affects their territories. Committed to strengthening community capacities, Leonardo has facilitated training and participatory territorial mapping processes in Chile and across Latin America, contributing to the documentation of traditional uses, advocacy, and the promotion of indigenous peoples' right to self-determination.



Luis Alonso Abarca González
Indigenous People: Maya Tzotzil
Country: Mexico

Organization: Emiliano Zapata Peasants' Organization,
Carranza Region (OCEZ-RC)



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Luis Alonso Abarca González is a human rights defender who has been working directly with Indigenous communities in the border state of Chiapas, Mexico, for the past 25 years.

He has provided accompaniment and advocacy for communities affiliated with his organization (OCEZ-RC) in the municipality of Venustiano Carranza and other regions of Chiapas, supporting Indigenous leaders who have been victims of arbitrary detention, extrajudicial killings, and enforced disappearance. His work has focused on supporting these communities in defending their land and territory against threats from the government, organized crime, and large-scale mining projects.

Luis Alonso Abarca González's knowledge of human rights has been developed through self-taught practice, enabling him to engage with national authorities and the United Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearances. He holds a Bachelor's degree in History from the Autonomous University of Chiapas.

He co-founded the Chiapas Digna Ochoa Grassroots Human Rights Committee in 2010 and currently serves as its coordinator. The committee is a space where he carries out advocacy, accompaniment, and promotion of human rights in Chiapas, and he has become a leading figure due to his public advocacy and his willingness to take on high-impact cases.

Since 2021, with the influx of thousands of people on the move at the Chiapas-Guatemala border, he has taken on the role of providing defense, assistance, and legal support to foreign nationals of various nationalities who have been detained or require legal residency in Mexico, supporting them in obtaining refugee status and visas on humanitarian grounds, as they are victims of human rights violations or are traveling with vulnerable children.

She collaborates with the indigenous women's NGOs Centro de Formación y Capacitación AC and Kinal Antsetik AC, following instructions from the OCEZ-RC assembly in Chiapas to defend the human rights of indigenous women.



Maria Isabel Jansasoy Jansasoy

Indigenous People: Inga

Country: Colombia

Organization: Entidad territorial atun wasi iuiwai AWA



: etipicawai@gmail.com

An indigenous woman from the Inga people of Colombia, she is an educator, indigenous leader, and advocate for the rights of indigenous peoples and indigenous women. She is a member of the Atun Wasi Iuiwai Awai Territorial Entity of the Inga People of Colombia. She has served as the education delegate for the Ciudades 1 region, promoting self-directed education, cultural identity, and participation. She is currently in her eighth semester of the undergraduate degree program in ethno-education at the Pontifical Bolivarian University, in partnership with the Missionary Institute of Anthropology (IMA), where she also serves as coordinator of the indigenous group. As part of her training, she participated as a fellow in the “Ana Tulia Zapata” National Diploma in Political Advocacy (2023) and the “Strengthening the Leadership of Indigenous Women – Second Edition,” developed by the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), in coordination with the University Program for the Study of Cultural Diversity and Interculturality, the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Intercultural Indigenous University, with a duration of 121 hours (November 2021). She has served as an advisor to Indigenous women in Medellín and actively participated in the Dialogue Committee on Public Policy for Urban and Rural Women, contributing to the visibility and effective participation of Indigenous women, who were previously excluded from these spaces. Founder of the first Indigenous Women’s Movement in Medellín and creator of the Indigenous Women’s Gathering in Medellín, which has been held for five consecutive years. A collective process to strengthen the leadership, identity, and political advocacy of Indigenous women. Throughout her career as a traditional authority, she served the Inga Council of Medellín as the senior female mayor, responsible for self-governance issues. She served as governor of the Inga community of Medellín during the 2021–2022 term and is currently a member of the Council of Traditional Authorities. Her work and leadership have been recognized in various forums, including the Recognition of Women Leaders of Medellín – Political Leadership Category (2023) and the national recognition “Podemos Ser: Influential Women 2025,” an initiative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) in Colombia and the Universidad del Rosario, which highlights female leaders with significant political influence in the country. Her greatest motivation is to help ensure that new generations of Indigenous people do not forget their roots, feel proud of their identity, and continue to advocate for the collective and individual rights of Indigenous peoples, especially women.



Romina Villafañe
Indigenous Peoples: Mapuche-Tehuelche
Country: Argentina

Organization: Kim Trafintuwülun
Indigenous Women Educators



: romisol.villa@gmail.com

Romina Villafañe is a history teacher with extensive experience in secondary, tertiary, and university education in the province of Chubut, Patagonia, Argentina. She currently teaches adolescents and young adults and works in non-formal education, leading workshops in various Indigenous communities throughout the country. She promotes learning networks centered on the past and present, with a focus on the situation of indigenous women and children. With her group Kim Trafintuwülun, she carries out various cultural activities for broad audiences, promoting indigenous cinema and art.

With a degree in History, Romina focused on the study of the country's recent history, and in recent years has specialized in Human Rights and Genocide Crimes, with the aim of rethinking the history of the Mapuche-Tehuelche people to which she belongs. She completed her undergraduate studies at public universities in Argentina, receiving various national and provincial scholarships. As a fellow at the University of Deusto in *Spain's* "Experts on the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples" program, Romina has supported various processes of territorial recovery, revaluation, and indigenous self-recognition. She is currently conducting research on the construction of a neologism in the Mapuche-Tehuelche language: the Mapudungun term linked to a'onekoaien.

In her free time, she is passionate about mountain activities, where she nurtures her culture through an understanding of the natural environment, the forces that inhabit it, and Indigenous cosmogony. For Romina, in the wake of the genocide perpetrated by the State, the colonists, and the Catholic Church in Argentina, it is essential to foster understanding and self-recognition among the surviving populations, with the aim of achieving social justice, equal rights, and better living conditions.



Ronal Boriz Cruz Martinez
Indigenous Peoples: Suyu Suras

Country: Bolivia

Organization: Jach'a Marka Tapacari
Condor Aapcheta

**Indigenous Leader and Attorney for Jach'a Marka TCA and
Suyu Suras**



[:ronalborizcruzmartinez@gmail.com](mailto:ronalborizcruzmartinez@gmail.com)

Ronal Boriz Cruz Martínez is an Indigenous leader and lawyer who is deeply committed to defending the rights of Indigenous peoples and the environment, promoting a vision based on balance, respect, and harmonious coexistence between people and nature. He believes that the preservation of ecosystems and Indigenous cultures is a collective responsibility for present and future generations.

He is a member of the National Coordinator of Indigenous Territories and Protected Areas (CONTIOCAP) in Bolivia, a platform through which he coordinates actions with indigenous and social organizations to defend the country's territories and protected areas. He also actively participates in meetings, cultural exchanges, and dialogue forums with indigenous communities and nations from different regions, strengthening cultural identity and unity among indigenous peoples.

Another highlight of her career is her work in education and training for traditional authorities, community leaders, and Indigenous youth, promoting knowledge of Indigenous rights, human rights, environmental legislation, and the rights of nature. Through these efforts, she fosters organizational strengthening and the active participation of younger generations in the defense of their communities and territories.

Her work represents a constant commitment to social justice, the self-determination of indigenous peoples, and the building of a future based on respect, dignity, cultural identity, and the protection of Mother Earth.



Sailyn Beatriz Fernández Fernández

Indigenous Peoples: Wayuu

Country: Venezuela

Organization: Guajira Human Rights Committee



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Sailyn Fernández Fernández belongs to the Wayuu indigenous people of the Jayariyuu clan. She was born on September 7, 1979, in Paraguaipoa. She is the fourth of eight siblings, the daughter of Wayuu parents who were informal traders. She had a happy childhood with her family.

She attended elementary school at a Catholic school. As a teenager, she commuted daily to Maracaibo to complete high school. She later studied Social Communication at the University of Zulia (Venezuela) and Bilingual Intercultural Education at the Experimental Pedagogical University "El Mácaro," graduating in 2007 and 2008, respectively. Her admission to university was made possible by the creation of La Guajira's first indigenous newspaper, Wayuunaiki, which was launched by her cousin.

In 2007, she joined Venezuela's first Indigenous radio station, Radio Fe y Alegría, where she began by supporting young people in adult education and engaging in street journalism. In 2009, after winning a contest by producing educational spots on non-violence against indigenous women, she went on to complete internships at radio stations affiliated with the Latin American Association for Radio Education (ALER) in Bolivia, gaining experience in indigenous communication.

The La Guajira human rights office operates out of the Radio Fe y Alegría facilities. There, she was invited by José David González to become an active member of the Human Rights Committee, taking on roles in indigenous communication and rights advocacy.

Between 2010 and 2020, she supported the families of victims from the Military District, where more than 45 young people were killed by the Venezuelan state. Today, they are still awaiting legal proceedings, and the reporting of these cases continues.

She is currently the director of Radio Fe y Alegría Guajira, an active member of the Guajira Human Rights Committee, and also coordinates training for young people at the Wayúu People's School of Communication in their territory, serving as an indigenous communicator to amplify the voices of her people.



Zaida Maria Sanchez Mejia

Indigenous Peoples: Nahua Indigenous Federation of Honduras (FINAH)

Country: Honduras

Organization: Nahua Indigenous Federation of Honduras
FINAH

Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Honduras (CONPAH)



: nahuasfinah@yahoo.com

Zaida María is a human and territorial rights defender in Honduras; she is an Indigenous woman belonging to the Nahua people. She brings leadership and extensive experience in the Indigenous peoples' movement in her country. Her work as a defender focuses on three main pillars: the defense of territorial rights, the defense of intercultural bilingual education, and the defense of Indigenous women's rights.

Zaida María was a fellow in the certificate program "Governance of Lands and Natural Resources in Indigenous Territories of Central America" at URACCAN University in Bilwi, Nicaragua; she participated as a fellow at the University of Deusto, earning the title of "Expert in Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples"; and was a fellow of the Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States (OAS), earning a certificate in Strategic Feminist Activism.

Zaida is a woman passionate about defending rights for the benefit of people; she loves doing fieldwork, traveling through the territories, and fighting for the education of others and the transmission of knowledge. She has survived criminal attacks for defending territorial rights, but this has not stopped her from continuing her work. She longs for a more conscious, just, respectful, and equal world for all.

"Never again a Honduras without us"

**OHCHR 2026 INDIGENOUS FELLOWS
PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING FELLOWS**



GENEVA, JUNE 22 – JULY 17, 2026



Amirele Porto Machado

Indigenous People: Guarani/Kaiowá and Terena

Country: Brazil

Organization: Organization of the Terena People of Greater Dourados (OTGD)



:amirele.machado98@gmail.com

Amirele Porto Machado is an indigenous woman of Guarani, Kaiowá, and Terena descent, born and raised in the Dourados Indigenous Reserve (MS), where she lives in the village of Jaguapiru. A craftswoman since childhood, she values indigenous crafts and fashion as forms of cultural expression, particularly through the traditional designs of her people.

She holds a Bachelor of Laws from the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS) and a Master of Laws from the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), she conducts research on the criminalization of Indigenous leaders, with a focus on the Guarani-Kaiowá territory in Mato Grosso do Sul.

Her work analyzes the contexts of territorial conflicts marked by the expulsion of indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands to make way for agribusiness expansion, especially for soybean and corn cultivation and cattle ranching, highlighting how the state and the justice system act to criminalize Indigenous people fighting to protect their territories.

She is part of the Indigenous Language Alive in Law (LIVD) Program, contributing to the translation of legal documents into Indigenous languages, expanding access to information, and strengthening rights. She also works on analyzing initiatives led by Indigenous women, with a focus on cultural empowerment and women's leadership.

In 2026, she was appointed youth representative in her territory for the period from 2026 to 2029, reaffirming her commitment to defending Indigenous rights and empowering new generations.



Diana Nascimento
Indigenous People: Kaingang
Country: Brazil

Organization: The Nature Conservancy Brazil (TNC Brazil)



: dhi.nascimento@gmail.com

Diana Nascimento is an indigenous member of the Kaingang people and a specialist in sustainable development among indigenous peoples and traditional lands. Her career has been marked by her work promoting indigenous rights and developing solutions that integrate environmental conservation, territorial development, and social inclusion. She has over 10 years of experience in designing, implementing, and coordinating projects focused on sustainability, territorial governance, and institutional strengthening. She is currently a member of the team at The Nature Conservancy Brazil (TNC Brazil), where she works on the implementation of socio-environmental public policies, with a focus on the National Policy for Territorial and Environmental Management of Indigenous Lands (PNGATI). Her work involves providing direct support to the Indigenous Lands of the Xavante people in Mato Grosso, contributing to the strengthening of local governance, Indigenous leadership, and organizations in the defense of their rights and the management of their territories within the context of the Cerrado biome. In addition, she develops and monitors projects aimed at strengthening traditional agriculture, adapting to climate change, and promoting gender equity. Throughout her career, Diana has also worked directly with her own people, the Kaingang of the Nonoai Indigenous Territory in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, within the Atlantic Forest biome, supporting initiatives in territorial and environmental management, the strengthening of traditional agriculture, and community organization. This experience has strengthened her work in developing strategies rooted in local territories, respecting ways of life, traditional knowledge, and the unique dynamics of each community. With experience in coordinating between civil society organizations, Indigenous peoples, and public institutions, Diana leads initiatives in complex contexts, promoting multisectoral dialogue and the development of strategies tailored to local contexts. Her academic background and professional work are guided by an Indigenous perspective on sustainability, which views environmental issues as an inseparable relationship between humans and nature. For Diana, as for Indigenous peoples, the forest is not merely a resource, but part of life, being, and identity. Based on this vision, she argues that it is possible to build sustainable pathways for land use that reconcile conservation, income generation, autonomy, and improved quality of life for the populations within these territories, thereby ensuring a good life.



Dirleny Maria Paulina Almeida

Indigenous People: Krenak

Country: Brazil

Organization: BAKÂN Association/Community



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Dirleny Maria Paulina Almeida, a 54-year-old social worker from the Krenak people in the municipality of Resplendor, Minas Gerais, is a community leader with 19 years of experience in public social welfare policy. She holds a degree in Social Work from Vale do Rio Doce University (UNIVALE) and has been working for nearly two decades to ensure the rights of children, adolescents, families, and indigenous peoples, with a strong commitment to comprehensive protection, human rights, and community empowerment.

Currently, Dirleny works at the Santa Rita do Ituêto (MG) Shelter for Children and Adolescents as a case manager, where she provides specialized technical support, offers professional counseling, develops and monitors Individual Care Plans (PIA), and coordinates with the intersectoral network—including Justice, Health, Education, and Social Services, with the goal of family reintegration or, when that is not possible, placement for adoption.

A Krenak Indigenous woman, Dirleny has built her career alongside her people since childhood, participating in community life, learning from elders, and engaging in collective struggles. While still young, she left the village to study, always motivated by the desire to return with knowledge to contribute to the Krenak people. After completing her education, she returned to the territory, where she worked as a teacher in Indigenous School Education, contributing to the education of children, the strengthening of cultural identity, and the promotion of the mother tongue.

Dirleny played an important role in the political organization of the Krenak people, having served as secretary of the first Krenak Indigenous Association. She was also one of the founders of the first Krenak Indigenous Women's Association and is a founding member of the National Council of Indigenous Women (CONAMI), amplifying the voices of Krenak women in spaces for dialogue, education, and political advocacy at the national and international levels.

Currently, in her village of Bakân, she serves as vice-treasurer of the BAKÂN Indigenous Association and volunteers to work with children and women, with support from a project funded by Vale do Rio Doce. These initiatives focus on reviving culture and the mother tongue through workshops and community activities, including environmental stewardship with agroecological gardens, raising native stingless bees, producing indigenous crafts and artwork, promoting respect for diversity, and providing guidance on women's rights, such as the Maria da Penha Law. Dirleny also works to support the leaders of the nine Krenak communities, strengthening dialogue with public institutions and the defense of indigenous rights. She has represented the Krenak people in national and international forums, including appearances in London, where she participated in actions and representations before the international court against the company BHP, one of the entities responsible for the Mariana dam collapse—a socio-environmental crime that severely impacted the Krenak territory and people. She also traveled to Lima, Peru, representing CONAMI in a training course, sharing the knowledge gained with the community and local leaders.



Edileia Santiago Oliveira (Wasady Xakriabá)

Indigenous People: Xakriabá

Country: Brazil

Organization: Xakriabá Youth Network (AJUX)



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Edileia Santiago Oliveira (Wasady Xakriabá) is a 28-year-old Indigenous woman from the Xakriabá people, living in the village of Catito, located in the Xakriabá Territory in northern Minas Gerais. A mother and passionate advocate for her community, she is one of the co-founders of the Xakriabá Youth Network (AJUX) and holds a bachelor's degree in Social Work from the Federal University of Goiás (UFG). As an activist and a woman of the Cerrado, Wasady is deeply committed to cultural revitalization and grassroots mobilization. She was a member of the organizing committee for the First Meeting of Indigenous Women of the Cerrado and actively participates in the Articulation of Women and Youth of the Catito Village and Surrounding Areas (AMJACA). Her work focuses on strengthening the leadership of indigenous youth and women and, above all, on valuing the spirituality present in collective movements. She was part of the Kuntari Katu program: Indigenous Leaders in Global Politics, created by the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples, as part of Brazil's first class of indigenous diplomats (2024–2025). As a project coordinator, she works to empower women and young people in her territory and to promote local initiatives. For Wasady, Indigenous movements are more than spaces of resistance—they are also places of spiritual renewal, cultural exchange, and unity, where distinct traditions meet and complement one another.



Gemina Brandão Borges (Xiu Shanenawa)

Indigenous People: Shanenawa

Country: Brazil

Organization: Organization of Indigenous Women of Acre, Southern Amazonas, and Northwestern Rondônia (SITOAKORE)



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Gemina Brandão Borges, also known as Xiu Shanenawa, is an Indigenous leader and entrepreneur with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the Federal Institute of Education, Science, and Technology of Acre (IFAC) – Rio Branco Campus, a social activist, and a coordinator committed to defending the rights of Indigenous peoples, with an emphasis on strengthening the participation and leadership of Indigenous women in political and social decision-making spaces. Active in community organizing and political advocacy, Gemina Xiu contributes to strengthening the collective agendas of indigenous peoples by participating in the development of institutional positions, policy advocacy processes, meetings, mobilizations, and spaces for dialogue with public institutions and civil society organizations. Her work is also linked to initiatives promoting culture, the autonomy of indigenous women, and the defense of territories, contributing to increasing the visibility of indigenous issues and strengthening women's participation in community governance structures and spaces of political representation. Gemina is also a member of important institutional spaces for participation and social oversight. She is a member of CEDIM—the State Council for Women's Rights, a member of CEMEC—the State Council for Women Entrepreneurs, a member of NEABI—the Center for Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous Studies, and a full member of the State Council for the Promotion of Racial Equality in the State of Acre. She currently serves as coordinator-president of the Organization of Indigenous Women of Acre, Southern Amazonas, and Northwestern Rondônia (SITOAKORE), an organization dedicated to strengthening the agency, rights, and opportunities of indigenous women and expanding their spaces for participation. As an Indigenous leader, Gemina Brandão Borges (Xiu Shanenawa) is involved in collective efforts that seek to promote social justice, respect for Indigenous rights, and the strengthening of Indigenous organizations, reaffirming the role of women as key actors in the defense of life, territory, culture, and the rights of Indigenous peoples.



Gildo Gomes Da Silva
Indigenous People: Mbyá Guarani
Country: Brazil
Organization: Guarani Mbyá Association
Tenondé Rã



: gildokarai@gmail.com

GILDO GOMES DA SILVA is the chief of the Para Roke Village and President of the Guarani Mbyá Tenondé Rã Association. He is currently a law student at the Federal University of Rio Grande Foundation (FURG). The meaning of the Association's name in Mbyá already reflects the philosophy of the Para Roke Village: THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE. It is with this aim that Gildo served as a teacher in Indigenous schools, fighting to preserve ancestral knowledge. On the other hand, together with the community, he has sought resources to ensure a dignified life and the recognition of the rights of the Mbyá Guarani people. In this struggle, he has identified the need to incorporate certain elements of Western culture into the daily lives of the Mbyá people: basic sanitation, agroecology (integrating new knowledge consistent with Mbyá culture into ancestral wisdom), and the mechanization of farming, in pursuit of food security and decent housing.

Due to his work, during the 4th meeting of leaders of the Guarani Yvyrupa Commission, held in September 2025, he was nominated by the leaders to serve as Guarani Coordinator in FUNAI's Local Technical Coordination Office in the city of Rio Grande. In this role, he will engage in dialogue with leaders from various villages to assess their situation and, based on his analysis, seek appropriate solutions to address the challenges faced by indigenous communities, ranging from the legalization of their lands to housing and food security issues. He is also serving as a Territorial Agent for Indigenous School Education, where he acts as an intermediary between the villages in southern Brazil and the Ministry of Education, particularly regarding the right to a school curriculum specific to the culture of the Guarani peoples.



Janete Figueredo Alves

Indigenous People: Desana

Country: Brazil

State: Amazonas

Organization: Federation of Indigenous
Organizations
of the Rio Negro - FOIRN

 : janete@foirn.org.br

Janete Alves is an indigenous leader of the Desana people, a native of the Iauaretê region, Alto Rio Negro Indigenous Territory (AM), in Brazil. Janete is the daughter of farmers and artisans from her people, having grown up immersed in the traditional culture of the Rio Negro. She is the mother of five children and has strong ties to her community and the regional indigenous movement. Her political and community work began within local organizing spaces and expanded over the years, leading her to hold important positions representing Indigenous peoples.

♦ Rio Negro Indigenous Women's Department (DMIRN)

Between 2017 and 2020, Janete served as coordinator of the Rio Negro Indigenous Women's Department (DMIRN/FOIRN), where she worked to strengthen women's participation, led discussions on gender-based violence, and spearheaded community campaigns, such as mobilization efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the end of 2020, she was elected Director of FOIRN for the 2021–2024 term. And at the end of 2024, Janete was elected vice president of the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro (FOIRN), also being recognized as one of the first women to hold this prominent position on the organization's leadership.

National and International Coordination

As Vice President of FOIRN, Janete has participated in important national and international forums. For example, she represented the federation at Climate Week in New York (USA), where she presented experiences of Indigenous governance and sustainable management in the face of climate change. In addition, she participated in sessions at the UN in Geneva (Switzerland), reinforcing demands regarding the rights of Indigenous women and the threats they face in their territories.



Samuel Lima Pereira Arara
Indigenous People: Shawãdawa (Arara)

Country: Brazil

Organization: Tetepawa Comunica Indigenous Communication Collective / UFAC Indigenous Students Collective (CeiUfac)



: samuelararaaa@gmail.com

Samuel Lima Pereira Arara is a young Indigenous man from the Shawãdawa (Arara) people, born in the Arara Indigenous Territory of Igarapé Humaitá, in the municipality of Porto Walter, Acre, in the Brazilian Amazon. He is pursuing a degree in Forest Engineering at the Federal University of Acre (UFAC), where he serves as president of the Indigenous Students Collective (CeiUfac), leading initiatives aimed at improving access, retention, and empowerment for Indigenous students in higher education.

His journey brings together youth, ancestry, science, and communication. From an early age, he built a strong connection with the traditional knowledge of his people, which guides his work in defending Indigenous territories, culture, and rights. In 2023, he co-founded the Tetepawa Comunica Indigenous Communication Collective, a network that brings together more than 300 Indigenous communicators from 35 Indigenous Lands and 18 Indigenous peoples in Acre, with significant participation by women and a diversity of identities. The collective works to promote ethnocommunication as a tool for resistance, inclusion, and cultural empowerment, and was recognized in 2025 with the Indigenous Sciences Award from the Podáali Indigenous Fund.

Samuel also works in the field of socio-environmental communication and journalism, having completed training in Socio-Environmental Journalism, Investigative Geo-Journalism, and digital content production for Indigenous youth. In 2025, he joined the team at Jornal Varadouro, expanding his work in covering topics related to Indigenous peoples and the Amazon.

He actively participates in national and international forums, including the Acampamento Terra Livre (ATL), the Indigenous Women's March, the Indigenous Peoples' Summit, and global climate conferences such as COP28 (Dubai), COP29 (Baku), and COP30 (Belém), as well as the Latin American Regional Youth Climate Conference (RCOY 2024). Her work includes audiovisual production, interviews, and digital content that raise the visibility of the Indigenous cause, reaching thousands of people on social media.

In the academic field, he conducts research on the indigenous student movement in Acre, focusing on territoriality, collectivity, and indigenous science, with findings presented at events such as the National Meeting of Indigenous Students (ENEI). Committed to strengthening the autonomy and leadership of Indigenous peoples, Samuel works to build networks, defend Indigenous rights, and promote ancestral knowledge, contributing to the protection of the Amazon and the development of new generations of Indigenous leaders.



Sandro Rogério da Silva Pacheco
Indigenous People: Terena
Country: Brazil
Organization: Terena People's Council
 :sandro-terena@hotmail.com

Sandro is an Indigenous communicator and member of the Terena People's Council, working in the field of Indigenous Health as a social communicator. An Indigenous activist of the Terena people, he carries out his work from the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, contributing to the strengthening of Indigenous communication, the defense of collective rights, and the expansion of dialogue between Indigenous peoples, public institutions, and society. As a Terena Indigenous person, his work focuses on communication as a tool for social mobilization, cultural appreciation, and political advocacy, particularly in the field of Indigenous health and the structural issues facing Indigenous peoples. Sandro crafts narratives that shed light on the realities, challenges, and struggles of the Terena people and other indigenous peoples of Brazil. A journalism student at Estácio University in Campo Grande (MS), Sandro combines his academic training, indigenous activism, and communication practice to strengthen processes of information sharing, awareness-raising, and empowerment within the indigenous communities where he works.