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*Working Group 12*

*CHAPTER 32*

**MILESTONES AND CHALLENGES IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND EXPANSION OF  
A PARTICIPATORY INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE AMAZON**

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**ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATION**

COIAB: Coordination of the Indigenous Organization of Brazilian Amazon

CRIOMC: Asociación de Autoridades Tradicionales del Consejo Regional Indígena del Orteguzza  
Medio Caquetá

BIE: Bilingual Intercultural Education

BIEK Pamáali: Indigenous school of Baniwa and Koripako peoples

FOIRN: Federation of Indigenous Organizations of Rio Negro

FUNAI: National Foundation of Indigenous People

IE: Intercultural Education

IEB: International Institute of Education of Brazil

IPAM: Amazon Environmental Research Institute

ISA: Socioenvironmental Institute

MIC: Intercultural Knowledge Mediation

OIBI: Indigenous Organization of Içana Basin

REDD+: Reduction Emissions from Forest Deforestation and Degradation

SENA: National Education Service from Colombia

SENNOVA: Innovation, Technical Development and Research Programme from SENA Colombia

TNC: The Nature Conservancy

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

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1 **KEY MESSAGES**

2 1. Despite the great knowledge that exists in the Indigenous People and Local Communities of the  
3 Amazon, there is an epistemic violence in the development of educational processes.

4 2. Intercultural education implies that the parties not only have the possibility of expressing their  
5 visions, but also have openness to other perspectives and types of knowledge and practices.

6 3. The populations that inhabit the Amazon have an immense wealth in terms of cultural, historical  
7 and ethnic diversity, reflected in their worldviews, knowledge, ways of life and their particular  
8 relationship and interdependence with the resources of nature. It is important that these knowledge  
9 and practices are recognized and incorporated in the curricula.

10 4. There is an urgent need to broaden the dialogue of knowledge in the Amazon by exchanging  
11 significant experiences so that the strengthening of capacities generates inclusive learning spaces,  
12 connected with the territory and dialogued symbolic languages.

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**1 ABSTRACT**

2 Intercultural education and capacity building in the Amazon does not recognize, in general, the  
3 knowledge, practices, and resources that already exist in the region. Not only has Indigenous and  
4 local knowledge (offered by Indigenous People, but also by local communities) been  
5 systematically ignored, but there is also an epistemic violence in the development of educational  
6 processes and in capacity-building processes. There are various paths the Indigenous Peoples and  
7 local communities from the countries of the Amazon have gone through in the construction of an  
8 intercultural education. Challenges and lessons learnt from these experiences are equally varied.  
9 This chapter seeks to make visible some significant experiences from the region, collected from  
10 different authors, that are developed to build and expand a participatory and dialogic intercultural  
11 education, starting with the problematization of the general educational system and the reflections  
12 that this problematizing view leads to. With the cases presented, we reflected not only on the  
13 importance of a participatory educational construction for Indigenous Peoples and local  
14 communities, but also that knowledge is constructed as a form of communication and political  
15 influence that help in their struggles to guarantee their rights and surveillance.

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1 GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT

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Epistemic Violence: cognitive universals, formal activities, homogenizing models to understand development and learning.

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Recognitions of practices and knowledge developed by different communities of the Amazon.



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Complementary training with pedagogic use of participatory intercultural tools (bird watching in collective territory).

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Dialogic Learning, connected with territory, with symbolic languages and with different productive and technological needs.



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14 *Examples of mainstream education's epistemic violence (a), which can be overcome through*  
15 *Intercultural Education, including recognition of practices and knowledges (b), post-secondary*  
16 *education with intercultural tools (c), and dialogic learning connected to the territory (d).*

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

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The countries of the Amazon have gone through various paths to construct intercultural education.

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Challenges and lessons learnt from these experiences are equally varied. This chapter seeks to

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make visible some significant experiences that are developed to build and expand a participatory

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intercultural education in dialogue, starting with the problematization of the general educational

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system and the reflections that this problematizing view leads to. Additionally, this chapter

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contains brief reflections, through the presentation of case studies, on the role of local capacity-

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building in facing current problems, such as climate change.

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According to Walsh (2009: 5), "Since its inception, interculturality has meant a struggle in which

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issues such as cultural identification, law and difference, autonomy and nation-state have been in

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permanent dispute. It is not surprising that one of the central spaces of this struggle is education,

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as a political, social and cultural institution: the space for the construction and reproduction of

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values, attitudes and identities and of the historical-hegemonic power of the State." In this

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framework, colonial-style educational systems have rarely aligned with diversity understood as

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wealth and opportunity, on the contrary, the trend towards sociocultural homogenization and

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curricular standardization is observed.

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This educational system in the Amazonian context is equally homogenizing. It does not always

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start from the recognition of the diversity of knowledge, practices and resources present in

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Amazonian societies. The asymmetry of the educational system can be illustrated by the practice

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of teaching exclusively in the official language of the nation and prohibiting other languages, and

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by the adoption of a standardized model of knowledge transmission (Freire, 2002), which promotes



1 national values above the deep knowledge constructed day-to-day in the interaction with the  
2 territories.

3 From this perspective, according to Sepúlveda (1996:40), “interculturality cannot be considered  
4 as a simple communication or a transference of cultural content between two cultures, since this  
5 communication and transference is complicated by the social asymmetry in the relationship  
6 between the two.” (...) “The logic of transference and instruction is quickly assimilated to the logic  
7 of power and to symbolic violence. As long as the discourse of one is restricted, there is a  
8 manifestation of greater legitimacy of the other, in which a monolingual and monocultural  
9 character is evident.”

10 Within this framework, there is a necessity to strengthen intercultural education processes.  
11 Indigenous and Local Knowledge is not always valued and treated with rightful attention in the  
12 formal education systems of the various countries of the Amazon. This failure falls into the  
13 aforementioned epistemic violence.

14 This chapter is made up of seven sections. In the first section, “Towards Understanding  
15 Intercultural Education and Capacity Building the Amazonian Context,” we introduce concepts of  
16 intercultural education and capacity building through a critical lens. In the second section,  
17 “Diversity in Intercultural Education and Capacity Building,” we explore the concept of diversity  
18 as a possibility and as a condition to enrich intercultural educational processes. In the third section,  
19 “Recognizing Previous Knowledge and Education Contexts to Promote Diversity”, we reflect on  
20 the necessity to start with previous knowledge and experiences as a pedagogical resource that  
21 allows for the promotion of diversity. In the fourth section, “Intercultural Education in Practice:  
22 Significant Cases,” we present six case studies where intercultural education has been

1 implemented in diverse contexts and countries of the Amazon. In the fifth section, “Emerging  
2 Reflections and Identified Needs,” we reflect on the presented case studies to harvest lessons that  
3 nourish the construction and extension of a participatory intercultural education in the Amazon  
4 region. In the sixth section, we present the identified needs and the established recommendations,  
5 and finally, in the seventh and last section, we provide final conclusions.

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## 7 **2. TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION (IE) AND** 8 **CAPACITY BUILDING THE AMAZONIAN CONTEXT**

9 Interculturality is usually understood as the construction of spaces for dialogue between different  
10 cultures and their equitable interaction to generate shared cultural expressions. This dialogue  
11 implies that the parties involved not only have the possibility to express their visions, but also have  
12 an openness to other perspectives and types of knowledge and practices (Van der Hammen et al.,  
13 2012).

14 By placing this notion of interculturality in the Amazon, we find a great cultural and linguistic  
15 richness that reflects different worldviews and ways of interacting with the natural environment.  
16 Unfortunately, not all Amazonian countries have public policies that promote the development of  
17 indigenous languages through public education, and in the cases where there is a “Law of  
18 Languages,” as there is in Colombia, there are few mechanisms that generate symmetric bilingual  
19 exchanges. Alarcón (2007:35) attests “...it is assumed that Spanish should be studied and learned  
20 in order to access Western knowledge, science, and technology, without evaluating or analyzing  
21 the effects of these integrating processes” (see chapter 10, “*Indigenous languages*”).

1 Each one of the nearly 400 Indigenous Peoples groups (Llorente and Zacona, 2012; COICA and  
2 IACHR, 2019) that inhabit the Amazon, represents an immense wealth in terms of cultural,  
3 historical and ethnic diversity, reflected in their worldviews, knowledge, ways of life and particular  
4 relationships and interdependence with the natural resources. Different communities and  
5 populations of the Amazon have coexisted with the territory and nature for many years and have  
6 established their lives and their existence on these notions of balance and interaction with the  
7 resources that allow them to survive (Rodríguez & Van der Hammen, 2000).

8 Hence, the Amazonian context constitutes a scenario in which the construction of intercultural  
9 education becomes an important setting for the encounter of diverse knowledge systems.

10 "Since the 1980s, interculturality began to be understood in Latin America in relation to the  
11 educational policies promoted by indigenous peoples, NGOs and / or the State itself, with  
12 intercultural bilingual education (IBE)" (Walsh 2009: 5). According to the author (2009: 2), "since  
13 the 90s, there has been a new focus on ethno-cultural diversity in Latin America, a focus that stems  
14 from the legal recognitions and an increasing need to promote positive relationships between  
15 different cultural groups, to confront discrimination, racism and exclusion, to make citizens aware  
16 of the differences and to train them to work together on the country's development and on the  
17 construction of a just, equitable, egalitarian and plural society." These normative processes of  
18 focusing on ethnic and cultural diversity have been designed and implemented in different ways  
19 in the countries that make up the Amazon and within them, intercultural education is a contested  
20 space that can be interpreted from different socio-political positions.

21 In Colombia, indigenous education, initially at the hands of the Catholic Church, has undergone  
22 changes based on the social and political struggles carried out by different indigenous

1 organizations in the 70's and 80's, with the support of non-governmental organizations and  
2 academics who expressed their concern for an education that defends culture and language. These  
3 stances served as input for the 1991 constitutional reform, which led to the ethnoeducation program  
4 (Decree 804 of 1995) by the Ministry of National Education (Molina-Betancur, 2012).

5 During the eighties, in Ecuador, the most significant initiatives and proposals of indigenous  
6 education were forged. “In response to the requests of the indigenous peoples of the highlands and  
7 the Amazon, the Ecuadorian State decreed, in 1988, the creation of the Indigenous Directorate of  
8 Intercultural Bilingual Education (DinBIE) and the Provincial Directorates of Intercultural  
9 Bilingual Education. In 1992, the National Congress approved the decentralization of the DinBIE.  
10 In 1993, the Bilingual Intercultural Education Model was made official, and in 2000 the  
11 educational directorates were organized by nationality, within the framework of the different IBE  
12 zone networks” (Vélez, 2008: 106).

13 The 1988 Federal Constitution of Brazil was considered a milestone in the process of recognizing  
14 Brazilian sociocultural diversity, thanks to the mobilization of the indigenous movement, leaders  
15 of the black movement and partners who fought for this recognition, at least in terms of documents  
16 (Fialho and Nascimento, 2010). Recognition of socio-cultural diversity entered educational spaces  
17 well before the federal constitution, however, it was only in the nineties that the construction and  
18 implementation of affirmative policies and actions began in order to promote the recognition of  
19 these differences, having as scope, the social inclusion of minority and culturally differentiated  
20 groups that have been occupying marginal spaces in society (Fialho and Nascimento, 2010). With  
21 the presidential decree of 1991, the Ministry of Education of Brazil becomes responsible for the  
22 education policy of indigenous populations, in collaboration with states and municipalities, the  
23 latter being responsible for the execution, but with the guidance of the ministry. In addition to this

1 decree, the LDB (Law No. 9,394 / 96), Opinion No. 14/99 of the National Council of Education,  
2 which addresses the National Curriculum Guidelines for Indigenous School Education and the  
3 National Education Plan (PNE) (Law No. 10,172 of 9 January 2001).

4 The Peruvian Federal Constitution of 1993 recognizes the BIE (Bilingual Intercultural Education)  
5 as a fundamental right of indigenous peoples, following the movement that occurred both in other  
6 Amazonian countries, with the construction of their new constitutions, as well as international  
7 legislation, which increasingly advanced in recognition the rights of indigenous peoples and local  
8 communities. The Law for the IBE, Law No 27818, needs the Ministry of Education to be  
9 responsible for designing a National Intercultural Bilingual Education Plan for all levels and  
10 modalities of national education, with the effective participation of indigenous people in what  
11 corresponds (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2011). Also following the progress of other Amazonian  
12 countries, indigenous participation in universities has grown in the last decade, as well as the  
13 creation of training courses for bilingual teachers (Espinosa, 2017).

14 To explore the future of intercultural education, we will use three perspectives or lens proposed by  
15 Walsh (2009) that allow us to understand various roles attributed to interculturality. The first is the  
16 relational perspective that refers to the contact and exchange between cultures, peoples, practices  
17 and diverse knowledge systems, which occur within conditions of equality or inequality. The  
18 second perspective is the functional one that seeks acknowledgement of diversity and cultural  
19 differences in order to be included within the system. From this point of view, interculturality is  
20 functional to the system and does not include asymmetries or sociocultural inequalities as part of  
21 its work. The third perspective, critical interculturality, stems from the acknowledgement that the  
22 difference is built under colonial and unequal schemes. From this point of view, interculturality is

1 understood as a process built from the base and that contrasts with the functional perspective to  
2 the extent that its purpose is the transformation of unequal structures.

3 From the critical interculturality perspective, it can be argued that the physical violence as well as  
4 the contempt and denial of the various cultural expressions and thinking processes, which occurred  
5 during the complex colonization processes, still reside in the memory of the peoples of the  
6 Amazon. This epistemic violence is understood by Belasteguigoitia (2001: 237), as “...the  
7 amendment, the edition, the blur and even the annulment of both the systems of symbolization,  
8 subjectivation and representation that the other has of himself, as well as the specific forms of  
9 representation and registration.”

10 There are different examples in which it can be concluded that epistemic violence still persists in  
11 those spaces in which the inhabitants of the Amazon interact with their neighbors and with  
12 different institutions in their daily lives. One of them is the imposition of universal development  
13 and learning models for learners in schools with standardized curricula designed under hegemonic  
14 models that do not dialogue with the knowledge systems, practices and resources that the different  
15 groups build in their lives' domains.

16 Some examples of epistemic violence are presented in the framework commonly called capacity  
17 building. According to UNESCO<sup>1</sup>, capacity building takes the form of training, technical  
18 assistance, orientation and preparation through projects adapted to the specific needs of the  
19 beneficiary countries. Some of the priority issues for capacity building in the Amazon are  
20 governance, forest management, implementation of financial mechanisms, project design, climate  
21 change, education, and health, among many others. Community appropriation of these topics and

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from: <https://es.unesco.org/creativity/fortalecimiento-de-capacidades>

1 processes involves the installation of training devices in which the achieved results and indicators  
2 are favored over the pedagogical and participatory processes.

3 Proposals that ignore local practices and knowledge such as business plans, models for project  
4 formulation and entrepreneurship with pre-established formats, are currently being brought to local  
5 communities. The challenge consists of the construction of pedagogical mediations with  
6 contextual relevance that favor the shared construction of meaning. For this, it is necessary to start  
7 with dialogic encounters that allow the identification and exploration of meaning and definitions  
8 that the communities have built regarding the issues that training seeks to address.

### 9 **3. DIVERSITY IN INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

10 Unfortunately, the training frameworks and their daily practices do not always recognize the  
11 knowledge and practices that different social groups, such as indigenous peoples, have built.  
12 Traditional and local knowledge is rarely included in curricular proposals as an opportunity to  
13 strengthen the principle of diversity associated with students' subjective experience.

14 There is a diversity of Amazonian inhabitants that are not included in intercultural education  
15 policies. This demands a shift from the concept that a particular education is required for certain  
16 population groups, to a contextualized education that recognizes the uniqueness and diversity of  
17 each human being and allows the construction of intrinsic knowledge and connotations according  
18 to the experiences of each educational space.

19 Amazonian diversity, rich in cultural expressions, contributes to the development of roots and  
20 identity, which are fundamental principles in the construction of subjectivity mediated by the  
21 educational context. If we start from the fact that diversity configures the social reality in the

1 Amazon to the extent that it is pluricultural, then the educational processes must be developed to  
2 approach diversity as a value and as an educational challenge aimed at expanding and diversifying  
3 the pedagogical aspects and didactics framed in the teaching and learning processes that take place  
4 in the classrooms.

5 The concept of diversity in educational context is occasionally understood from a reductionist lens  
6 associated with extraordinary situations in which students deviate from common standards or from  
7 the socially constructed figure of a “normal” student. This educational context often embodies a  
8 homogenizing educational model that develops strict curricula, identical methodological systems,  
9 and standardized systems of evaluation; all with the objective to train people using predetermined  
10 knowledge and behavioral patterns.

11 Thus, the concept of cultural diversity in the classroom refers to dynamic processes of knowledge  
12 construction that arise from the trajectories and vital frameworks of persons, and from the  
13 interaction between different people in terms of beliefs, values, experiences, cognitive learning  
14 styles and interests, among other aspects. This then refers to the need to work on diversity in the  
15 classroom beyond a differential approach, which reduces the complexity of singularity to a  
16 category of static and crystallized cultural identity, which does not account for the needs of persons  
17 and therefore it does not allow an articulation of their experiences either. (Frieri and Agudelo,  
18 2019, P. 149).

19 From this perspective, diversity is not understood as an exclusive exercise within the processes of  
20 educational inclusion -often assumed for the care of some population groups through what is  
21 known as a differential approach- but rather it is assumed as a human characteristic, regardless of  
22 belonging to an ethnic population or vulnerable population group.



1 “In this sense, diversity resonates with the concept of singularity according to which each person,  
2 by virtue of his or her vital trajectory, constructs the meaning of his or her world, within the  
3 framework of social relations in which the connotations of their daily lives are constantly stressed  
4 and negotiated. Therefore, there are no persons more diverse than others, but rather, we are all  
5 diverse, and it is precisely there where the richness of meeting each other develops. " (Frieri and  
6 Agudelo, 2019, P. 149).

#### 7 **4. RECOGNIZING PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION CONTEXTS TO** 8 **PROMOTE DIVERSITY**

9 In order to recognize and dialogue with students’ previous knowledge and the particularities of  
10 their educational contexts requires a permanent ability to characterize context, that is, the  
11 development of a lens and integral knowledge of the space, and of the people with whom one  
12 interacts in that context. Reading context also requires a lens that acknowledges and respects the  
13 knowledge that students acquire through their day-to-day lives. In this respect, Cole (2003: 81)  
14 states that, “people develop cultural tools and cognitive skills associated with the domains of life  
15 in which these tools and skills are of central importance.” Similarly, Bruner (1990) proposes a  
16 cultural psychology that situates the emergence and functioning of psychological processes within  
17 day-to-day social interactions, and symbolically in the events that people live out in their daily  
18 existence.

19 From these statements, the existence of one cognitive development model, one in which the subject  
20 increments their acquisition and utilization of knowledge as a function of one social and cultural  
21 reference framework (in this case, the Western framework constructed in industrialized societies),  
22 is questioned. Once questioned, the exploration into and openness towards different forms of  
23 knowledge construction becomes fundamental to the educational exercise.

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**5. INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN PRACTICE: SIGNIFICANT CASES**

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*Note for public consultancy: If you have (or know about) any Intercultural Education practice with Indigenous People and/or Local Community you would like to suggest to the authors, you please submit it online via the form at [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpOLSftRqe6PZZnBlO21rYjWpZzkrk7eGRo3G3qV539D6eSKRtCSg/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpOLSftRqe6PZZnBlO21rYjWpZzkrk7eGRo3G3qV539D6eSKRtCSg/viewform?usp=sf_link). In this way we can present more successful experiences in the chapter.*

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The following significant cases from distinct Amazonian contexts put in evidence the diversity of existing practices in the construction of intercultural education and capacity building. The cases were sent by different authors, invited to participate in the chapter, who live and / or have experience with indigenous peoples and local communities in the Amazon region. The texts present the contexts in which the initiatives were created and which important results and reflections were achieved.

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**5.1. Pedagogical and intercultural training in SENA, Vaupés: An approximation to cultural knowledges and practices.**

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Gloria Amparo Rivera - SENA (Colombia)

In Colombia there are advancements in national jurisprudence on the recognition of cultural diversity, ancestral knowledge and collective rights. There are also institutional policies that promote access to training in equal opportunities and attention to diversity. However, national

1 administrations face difficulties to recognize and incorporate them into national policies and  
2 programs

3 In this sense, more efforts are needed to systematize, understand, recognize and scale up successful  
4 examples of intercultural higher education. In particular, in the context of technical training, the  
5 conviction that Western technical and scientific knowledge is superior and must be brought to  
6 ethnic communities to help them achieve progress persists.

7 The National Education Service (SENA, acronym in Spanish) is an institution associated with  
8 Colombia's Ministry of Labor that offers technical and technological capacity building. This  
9 institution fulfills the national public function of investing in the social and technical development  
10 of workers, offering and executing vocational training for incorporating Colombians in productive  
11 activities. In fulfilling these functions, it also serves the indigenous communities of the Colombian  
12 Amazon.

13 In this context, the need to develop a differential approach that would address these populations  
14 arose, taking into account their cultural, environmental and territorial features in compliance with  
15 Colombia's existing legal framework of recognizing the territorial, social and cultural rights of  
16 ethnic groups.

17 Practice shows that technical solutions brought to ethnic communities are based on knowledge  
18 developed for certain contexts and conditions that involve developed infrastructure and access to  
19 capital for considerable investments, and generally neglect the great wealth of resources that the  
20 Amazonian indigenous communities that live and depend on the tropical humid forest have.

21 From the practice developed at SENA - Vaupés since 2013, it is important to consider access to  
22 capital, not only specialized human resources but also resources that allow, in a knowledge-based

1 dialogue, the execution of structuring strategies between traditional knowledge and academic  
2 knowledge to achieve concrete actions. These include adjustments to curricular designs that link  
3 the context, the development of themes on collective rights, the revaluation of indigenous  
4 languages and the development of local research projects with a strong foundation in ancestral  
5 knowledge and practices. This makes it possible to link the cultural, environmental and diverse  
6 potential of the Amazon at the local level.

7 Through the following intercultural training roadmap SENA-Vaupés has strengthened its  
8 administrative, formative, and pedagogical capacities with 5 basic steps:

- 9     • An agreement with indigenous communities regarding the necessities for training or other  
10       complementary services.
- 11     • Strengthening of pedagogical capacities of government employees, instructors, and  
12       apprentices through the application of participatory tools, Characterization and  
13       Autodiagnostic, in the training processes.
- 14     • Creation of productive units based on the potential productivity of the environment or  
15       culture of the communities or the participants, according to their ethnicity and culture.
- 16     • Strengthening of cultural knowledge through local research with an intercultural approach.
- 17     • Strengthening of community organizing, derived from the training process and the  
18       planification of activities that promote the development of productive units, or from the  
19       construction projects for training programs.

20 The use of participatory intercultural tools as active didactic tools are applied in the training of the  
21 SENA instructors to sensibelize them to training processes within a differential context.  
22 Pedagogical practices are strengthened in the interaction with Indigenous People, and they thus

1 generate more usefulness in the execution of training that recognizes previous knowledge and  
2 ancestral practices. The following results have been obtained in this process:

- 3 • Strengthened pedagogical capacities of the SENA instructors.
- 4 • Formative planification, where learning objectives were obtained through the  
5 implementation of participatory tools and playful activities.
- 6 • Learning guides with a differential culture focus designed.
- 7 • Linkages between territorial context and the training execution identified and employed.
- 8 • Intercultural participatory tools were adjusted to the pedagogical context as active didactic  
9 tools.
- 10 • Linkages with indigenous instructors.
- 11 • Linkages with one indigenous knowledge holder, strengthening cultural identity in the  
12 training processes.
- 13 • Local research focused on strengthening local and ancestral knowledge.
- 14 • SENA staff trained in the use of participatory tools.

15 One of the most advanced training programs is presented in the following text.

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17 *Complementary training in bird watching in collective territory (300 hours)*

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2 *Rivera, 2016. Encuentro Nacional de Ornitología, Casanare.*

3 This training began with a presentation on the pedagogic use of participatory intercultural tools  
4 and with the strengthening of the didactic capacity of the instructors through the inclusion of  
5 characterization and contextualization that linked local knowledge and practices. During three  
6 years, this training was available to youth and adults belonging to different communities in order  
7 to generate learning practices that were more dynamic and illustrative. This complementary  
8 training paved the path for the SENA - Vaupés - office to incorporate capacity building courses in  
9 tourism guiding a few years later. This training lasted two years and instructors began to  
10 incorporate the cultural, natural, and territorial potential of the Vaupés into their lessons, making  
11 the training locally pertinent. The apprentices, alongside the training instructors, associated  
12 themselves with the SENNOVA program through the seed fund in Ethno-Ornithology, where they  
13 were able to monitor birds in neighboring communities in urban Mitú, to articulate sustainable  
14 tourism initiatives based on birdwatching, and to generate important products such as the basic  
15 birdwatching guide for the Vaupés region, “Vaupés in plumages, sounds, and colors.” The birds’  
16 traditional histories, and a digital museum of bird photographs and sounds allowed them to share  
17 experiences in multiple national and regional events of avitourism and natural sciences.

18 This experience results in lessons learned associated with the significant practical and  
19 knowledge-based potential around the management of the forest, the fauna and the flora that must  
20 be visualized as a potential basis for scientific research. Additionally, they show the importance of  
21 accompaniment to institutional training processes in different Amazonian contexts that allow its  
22 members to resolve doubts, problems, and to jointly think about new dialogical proposals to be  
23 developed.

1

2 **5.2. Local research to strengthen autonomy and territorial governance**

3 María Clara Van der Hammen and Sandra Frieri (Colombia)

4 *5.2.1. Context*

5 We would like to share the story and analysis of a training experience in territorial governance<sup>2</sup>  
6 with the indigenous communities Koreguaju de Solano, Caquetá, in order to reflect on the  
7 possibilities to construct decolonial practices through dialogue methodologies oriented towards  
8 the symbolic articulation between different ways of signifying the world, and the exploration of  
9 our own environmental, productive, social, and cultural resources.

10 The Koreguaju people, with a population of about 3,700 people belong to the Western Tukano  
11 linguistic family. Their ancestral territory is located in the transition corridor between the Andean  
12 zone—eastern valley of the Andes, contiguous with the Magdalena river—and the Amazon and  
13 its eastern plains, in the department of Caquetá, and part of Putumayo (see Plan de Salvaguarda -  
14 Pueblo Koreguaje, Criomc - Ministerio del Interior).

15 As part of the project developed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Tropenbos from 2018 to  
16 2019, “Strengthening local governments as a strategy to fight against deforestation in the Caquetá  
17 mosaic”, we hoped to create spaces for exchange of experiences in the participatory  
18 implementation of the territorial management plans elaborated by a previous phase with the

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<sup>2</sup> By governance, we understand the interactions and accords between governors and governed, in order to generate opportunities and solve community members’ problems, and to construct the institutions and norms necessary to generate change. In the context of indigenous territory governance, this is associated with aspects such as government autonomy, and the right (and responsibility) to conserve, transmit, and develop their own forms of life and their own culture to future generations.

1 support of TNC<sup>3</sup>, in seven indigenous legally recognized territories of the Koreguaju people, and  
2 one of the Nasa people, all located in the Peneya river basin. In this process, there were 2  
3 participants from each of the 8 legally recognized territories with the idea that all participants have  
4 elements to contribute in the reflections and lessons learned from their respective communities.  
5 The training consisted in combining a series of intra-community activities and inter-community  
6 meetings. The collective encounters were exchanged in three moments, where from the beginning,  
7 it was sought to create a space of conversation and dialogue through the presentation of various  
8 activities that stimulate the participation and connection with the training space.  
9 The participants prioritized, in the implementation of the management plans, the following themes:  
10 cultural materials (textiles, ceramics), strengthening of the *chagra*, the territory and its origin  
11 stories, traditional Koreguaje food, body paint, and dances associated with rituals. From this point,  
12 implementing their own research became the principal mechanism to strengthen their knowledge  
13 as a foundation for environmental management actions, whether productive or educational. Local  
14 research is a strategy that we have promoted for various decades from the perspective of  
15 Tropenbos, as a way to energize the transmission of knowledge in communities, from compiling,  
16 visibilizing, and using it in distinct contexts to the development of productive initiatives, territorial  
17 ordering, education exercises, or political negotiation scenarios. This strategy implies the  
18 definition of a subject matter, an objective, and a methodology by the local communities, either  
19 individually or in a collective. It is facilitated through materials (paper goods, cameras, recorders),  
20 or money to acquire gasoline or food for meetings. There are no pre-established formats and there  
21 is much liberty in the way that these research processes are constructed and used. In some cases,

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<sup>3</sup> The objective of these plans is to strengthen the governance within indigenous legally recognized territories through the reflection on territory, the available resources, and the accordance of a zonification agreement for different uses and prioritization of actions for sustainable development.



1 there is a facilitation of a publication of results if this is the wish of the local researchers and their  
2 communities<sup>4</sup>.

3 Through this training, a pedagogical proposal was designed and implemented based on the  
4 construction of methodological routes for territorial management strengthening. The development  
5 of local research contributed to the departure point for reflection and exploration of diverse forms  
6 of constructing and strengthening knowledge associated to culture, which allowed learning to be  
7 significant and situated within context. The transformations observed in participants, understood  
8 as unfinalized processes in a permanent development, are related to their subjective position in the  
9 role of autonomy and leadership. They do not represent just the strengthening of abilities to  
10 communicate with others methodologies, and accompany their implementation and  
11 systematization, but also the construction of narrative discourses in relation to pride, cultural  
12 identity, and territorial governance in spaces destined for the exchange of experiences and the  
13 socialization of the products of the local research.

14 These products become references of externalization and transmission of knowledge processes  
15 (Bruner, 1997) and they are developed through different strategies of compilation and  
16 documentation, such as written text, illustration, photography, and material culture (baskets,  
17 *matafríos*, sifters, ceramics, necklaces, etc.).

18 This way, the positive connection to local knowledge allowed the discovery of identity  
19 manifestations in the culture, that, as they're recognized, are turned into self-esteem and agency in  
20 order to continue accompanying various participatory processes associated, in this case, to  
21 governance and territorial management.

22

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<sup>4</sup> For examples, see [www.tropenbos.org](http://www.tropenbos.org)

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2 **5.3. Indigenous intercultural education in the Rio Negro**

3 André Fernando Baniwa (Alto Rio Negro – Amazonas – Brasil)

4 *5.3.1. Context*

5 There is perhaps no other place for more intercultural experiences than that of Rio Negro region  
6 between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples: there are 23 different ethnicities, four linguistic  
7 families and 18 languages spoken. In fact, each one, each group of Indigenous People is already  
8 born in the intercultural life environment if we consider that father and mother are different from  
9 each other and that they have become one family. As soon as interculturality is lived, many times  
10 without knowing that it has that name because the experiences of experiences start from weddings.

11 The Indigenous Organization of the Içana Basin (OIBI, acronym in Portuguese), founded in 1992,  
12 mobilized the Baniwa and the Koripako, and has served as a tool for the Baniwa to realize their  
13 rights, leading the way in many initiatives such as traditional medicine and education—which  
14 inspired the unification of spelling of the Baniwa language, the training of teachers, and the  
15 elaboration of the Indigenous School Baniwa and Koripako (BIEK Pamáali). In addition, it  
16 invested in the production and commercialization of basket products from Arumã and the culinary  
17 seasoning Baniwa jiquitaia pepper. The first year of the new millennium was the launch of the  
18 Arte Baniwa brand and the inauguration of the BIEK, which impacted municipal policy by creating  
19 other elementary schools in the Baniwa communities.

1 *5.3.2. Indigenous School Baniwa and Koripako – BIEK Pamáali: infrastructure, organization,*  
2 *students, and teachers, teaching and languages program*

3 When we say that this school is of the Baniwa peoples it is because the school was thought of,  
4 elaborated, constructed, implemented, and managed by the Baniwa people through their  
5 representatives, leaders, and teachers, with the support of partners. This school is recognized by  
6 the Educational System of the São Gabriel da Cachoeira Municipality. The Baniwa people began  
7 their fight for a school in 1984, reaffirming this fight in 1987 through the Rio Negro indigenous  
8 movement. Between 1992 to 1997, there were meetings and discussions on education where the  
9 goal was to seek understanding. In 1998, the school project was proposed in partnership with the  
10 Socioenvironmental Institute (ISA in Portuguese. ISA is a Brazilian NGO founded in 1994, to  
11 propose integrated solutions to social and environmental issues with a central focus on the defense  
12 of social and collective goods and rights related to the environment, cultural heritage, human and  
13 peoples' rights) and the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of Rio Negro (FOIRN), which is  
14 the indigenous organization from Rio Negro region, founded with the goal to articulate actions in  
15 defense of the rights and sustainable development of 750 indigenous communities in the most  
16 preserved region of the Amazon, on the triple border with Venezuela and Colombia. In 1999, the  
17 project was consolidated and the construction of the physical space began. It was with the  
18 partnership of the São Gabriel da Cachoeira municipality, the Rio Negro Regional Office of the  
19 National Foundation of Indigenous People (FUNAI), and the secondary school students of  
20 Noruega, that this project's implementation was possible.

21 The Baniwa and Koripako School promotes their own learning process utilizing the methodology  
22 Teach-by-Research. This methodology facilitates teaching and production of intercultural  
23 knowledge, whether it's cultural, technical or scientific, since 2000. The foundation of this process

1 is the discussions in meetings where the Baniwas, masters in culture and tradition, teach that the  
2 child is born curious. For example, they teach that at birth, the child cries, “where am I?!” We saw  
3 that while the school of the non-indigenous valued curiosity only at higher education levels, our  
4 school could be different, we could value it from the beginning. Thus, the sum of indigenous and  
5 non-indigenous culture that characterize the interculturality of teaching and learning is present at  
6 the school.

7 The school has an infrastructure with a set of houses, including dormitories, classrooms, a library,  
8 a cafeteria, a computer lab, a science lab, a native fish fry production lab, fish farming dams, an  
9 agroforestry system, a kitchen, an administration office, flour mill, a tool deposit, and a fuel  
10 deposit. The number of houses is increased as the number of students increase, and the teaching  
11 space facilities increase according to the quality of the teaching project. It is a school-community  
12 or community-school.

13 During the school period, the teachers and students live at the school for two months and then  
14 return to their communities where they carry out the field research projects. Some classes are  
15 theoretical, some classes are field classes, where students practice field methods.

16 The educational process is realized by instituting learning responsibilities, as well as teaching  
17 theoretical studies and field practices. Students are organized in weekly groups with the end goal  
18 of developing capacities of organization, planification, accompaniment, and supervision of  
19 activities in the school. At the end of each week, there are collective presentations, discussions,  
20 and reflections on accountability with their colleagues.

21 The students in the Indigenous School Baniwa Koripako Pamáali are from the Içana river region  
22 and its tributaries: Ayari and Cuiari. They are all Baniwa or Koripako. The objective of the students

1 in the school is to study, valuing their culture and language in order to gain ancestral knowledge,  
2 Western knowledge, and create new, creative intercultural knowledge for sustainable  
3 environmental and territorial development, always paying attention and adopting new scientific,  
4 technological, and communication practices.

5 Teachers also embody the role of “parent-educators”, since the cohabitation is constant, and in  
6 some moments, students need this sort of accompaniment. In fact, for the Baniwa and the  
7 Koripako, there is no separation between educating youth and teaching in school-- before a teacher  
8 is a school teacher, they must be educated to be an example for the youth during the teaching  
9 process and thus form them civically and culturally.

10 The general themes and objectives of discussions between students and teachers emphasize the  
11 constant relationship between the disciplines of the common core, and the diversified part  
12 (professional practices). This relationship is reinforced through the emphasis on four themes  
13 transversal to all disciplines, theoretical or practical, studied in the School or in the communities  
14 of origin of the students: “Politics, rights and indigenous movements,” “Baniwa Ethics,” “Politics  
15 and Education for Health,” and “Sustainable Development.” The Pedagogical Political Project,  
16 oriented towards training through participatory action-research, is focused on the problems and  
17 potentials for the *buen vivir* (wellfare) of the indigenous communities in the Içana basin, and has  
18 been responsible for the formation of the new social capital responsible for the socioenvironmental  
19 management of the indigenous territory demarcated area, whose extension occupied by the Baniwa  
20 / Koripako comprises an area of ~ 3,487,792 ha, and houses a population of 6,200 people in 93  
21 sites and communities.

1 Research is carried out in the native language, since the indigenous narrative respects the context  
2 and true significance of tradition, and in this way, the work has a compromise to return to the  
3 community.

4 The Baniwa Koripako Pamáali School, although its curriculum is developed from its own practice,  
5 is also part of a curriculum common to non-indigenous schools, so that it's possible for students to  
6 finish their studies in other schools.

7 The School is multilingual, with five languages: three indigenous and two national languages.  
8 Baniwa language is one of the co-official indigenous languages of the municipality of São Gabriel  
9 da Cachoeira and, along with the Koripako language, is widely spoken throughout this region. The  
10 school also uses the general language, or Nhengatu, which is spoken by many ethnic groups in Rio  
11 Negro, the Spanish language due to neighboring countries Colombia and Venezuela, and the  
12 Portuguese language, the Brazilian national language

13 All disciplines have the objective to facilitate dominance over the portuguese language, verbal  
14 and written, as this is important for comparison, confrontation, and mutual comprehension between  
15 cultures, opening doors for intercultural dialogue. Learning Baniwa and Koripako is also important  
16 and structured, since this is fundamental for not joining other indigenous languages in extinction.  
17 Additionally, by teaching phonetics, phonology, morphology, and grammar of our languages,  
18 others can have access to study and write in our language. Written Baniwa and its study is not just  
19 for us. It is the same with the General Language and the Spanish Language.

20

21

## 1 5.3.3. Results

- 2 1. 86 students graduated from the BIEK between 2000 and 2011(from 148 total students). They  
3 came from 35 different communities in the basin, and from 13 13 different clans from the  
4 main Baniwa and Koripako fraternities (Dzawinai, Walipere, Hohoodene, Kapitiminanai  
5 and Komadaminanai Indigenous groups).
- 6 2. 32 indigenous teachers have taught at the BIEK. They also received training as they worked.
- 7 3. Graduated BIEK students became: teachers (39%), researchers (14%), community leaders  
8 (3%), public health officers (1%), military personnel (8%), students in secondary school in  
9 other Içana communities (21%), students in secondary school in the city (9%), and non-  
10 student wives (6%).
- 11 4. 24 Baniwa/Koripako women were educated between 2000-2011 (28% of total). They are  
12 now teachers (6), researchers (2), students at secondary schools in other Içana communities  
13 (7), students at secondary schools in the city (3), and non-student wives (6).
- 14 5. Staff of indigenous students and professionals at the BIEK: Ideal is between 80 to 100 people  
15 studying and working in education. For example, 07 teachers, 01 cook and 01 general  
16 services that serve 78 primary and secondary school students. The freshman class that  
17 entered elementary school in March 2012 has, for the first time, more girls (7) than boys (5).
- 18 6. Thematic activities for general public education: BIEK also regularly receives 5-20  
19 students/cycle that are teachers, public health officials, and leaders from other schools or  
20 communities in the basin for workshops, courses, and research activities that focus on themes  
21 such as computer science, environmental management (forest and fisheries), aquaculture,

1 indigenou health, rights, project and organization management, economic entrepreneurship,  
2 among others.

3 7. BIEK maintains an average of 40-50 primary school students, and 20-30 secondary school  
4 students, with a total of between 70-80 students.

5 BIEK educated students that will help with the construction of policies and autonomy in the  
6 communities, and will fight for their educational rights. Today, in the Içana basin, there are 25  
7 complete schools, something that would have been thought impossible 18 years ago.

8 The decision of the Baniwa peoples and the Koripako peoples to create their own school impacted  
9 positively various public initiatives, for example, it led to the creation of a Master's degree and  
10 intercultural certifications as a proposal from the Institute for Indigenous Knowledge and Research  
11 of the Rio Negro.

12 The collective school education project of the Baniwa and Koripako peoples is thriving. In the  
13 future, the Baniwa and Koripako peoples hope to create a higher education institution.

14

#### 15 **5.4. The Balcanes Farm in the Universidad de la Amazonia and its role in Intercultural** 16 **Knowledge Mediation (MIC)**

17 Bernardo HERRERA H. (Amazônia Colombiana - Universidad de la Amazonía)

##### 18 *5.4.1. Context*

19 The current case study about the role of intercultural mediation at the university is inspired by two  
20 gaps found by the most recent report on post-conflict Colombia by the Kroc Institute: 1. Absence



1 of the Gender Focus, and 2. Exclusion of Indigenous Peoples; both having a gender focus and  
2 including Indigenous Peoples are crucial for the consolidation and adhesion to the Peace Accords.  
3 Both motivations coincide with prior academic research on the role of intercultural knowledge  
4 mediation, and field research to characterize this role (Herrera, 2020).

5 In this context, the Balcanes case proposes the possibility of an alliance between a university  
6 (Universidad de la Amazonía) and an indigenous communities organization (Agrosolidaria) to lead  
7 a knowledge dialogue about the chagra (agricultural plot). This is an example where the university  
8 became an Intercultural Mediator of Knowledge (MIC for its name in Spanish) with indigenous  
9 women farmers. The knowledge dialogue highlighted and strengthened the role of indigenous  
10 women in securing food security and sovereignty. Women in the Amazon are increasingly  
11 assuming the role of household heads and leaders of agricultural production. This case study  
12 invites us to reclaim the role of universities and indigenous or community organizations to  
13 recognize the indigenous chagra and to mediate in a productive knowledge dialogue.

14 Between 2019 and 2020, multi-situated ethnographies were carried out with the populations and  
15 riverine territories of the Guaviare and Caguán, and in the Orteguaza basin, where the current case  
16 study is situated. Together, these rivers contribute 40% of the Amazonas flow, and, of the 400,000  
17 ha deforested a year in Colombian territory, more than half of it is in the upper basin of the  
18 Amazonian region.

19 The “farmer-professor”, as Orlando Alzate is known, is a farmer in the high Caguán, where he  
20 went after being displaced from the río Pato valley for claiming the land as his right. In 2000, when  
21 he was already 60 years old, he decided to study agroecological engineering, a study offered by  
22 the Universidad de la Amazonía. There, he was made charge of the Balcanes Farm. Orlando began

1 a dialogue process with ancestral knowledge which gave fruit after two decades of lessons learned  
2 in community ([click here to access video](#)).

3 Twenty years later, a generation of youth lead Balcanes Farm. Graduates of the agroecology  
4 program coordinate the Balcanes Farmer School of Amazonian Knowledges. The coordinator of  
5 the farm, along with their partner, center work with the farming community, and as a couple  
6 cultivate, in their own lot, various non-timber Amazon species. But, in order to produce species in  
7 the Amazon forest, one must dialogue with the knowledge of the indigenous *chagra*.

8 “...The thesis of the knowledge dialogue with indigenous communities...is an understanding of  
9 their worldview and beliefs in their nature, and, in this spirituality, understanding the magic of the  
10 plant, which is also the magic of the knowledge... from this tradition through... their... plants,  
11 their medicine... One asks themselves, how is it that they’ve achieved this through time, and how  
12 is it that they can continue with food security and sovereignty, while taking care of our Amazon?”  
13 Conversation between Farm Coordinator and the Directors of Agrosolidaria. (Herrera, 2020:118).

14 In this context, the Balcanes case proposes the possibility of an alliance between the university  
15 and indigenous communities for a dialogue of knowledge oriented towards the *chagra*. ¿Could  
16 university farms mediate and resist biopiracy in the commerce of seeds created through the  
17 accumulated knowledge of farmer and indigenous communities?

18 We propose an affirmative answer to the question, taking the experience of the Universidad de la  
19 Amazonía as an example of a Intercultural Mediator of Knowledge (MIC, acronym in Spanish),  
20 as long as women farmers are included. This requirement is important for their role in sovereignty  
21 vigilance and food security in the Amazonian context. Not only does the woman replace the role  
22 of head of family, but also leads each day more the agricultural production of the region. This case

1 study invites us to reclaim the role of the University, as well as those of community organizations,  
2 such as Agrosolidaria, in order to recognize the indigenous *chagra*, and to mediate in a knowledge  
3 dialogue.

4 The Intercultural Mediation (MIC) is a resistance against the hegemony, and a route to food  
5 security and sovereignty. It's important to interculturally mediate the search for governance over  
6 nature, including the role of care by women. This happens, for example, in the recognition of the  
7 leadership of women leaders in Nükak villages in the Colombian Guaviare.

8 At the center of these recognitions, the river is an obligatory step. The river has been a vehicle of  
9 exploitation of timber within the forest. It has always connected the upper reaches of the river to  
10 lower, and with the highway system, it entwines the market towards urban centers. In the river's  
11 commercial flows, one can track the absence of recognition of ancestral knowledge. Not only can  
12 we track where this absence begins, but we can also enlighten as a way for intercultural mediation  
13 in an anti-hegemonic perspective.

#### 14 5.4.2. Results

15 The experience of Agrosolidaria grounds the academic discourse, "it's lowered from the sky to the  
16 ground", as a leader from the Association of Economic Solidarity shared. In order to not exclude  
17 women, maintenance dues were lowered from 10,000 to 5,000 (from USD\$3, dues are cut in half).  
18 This change in prices gives more access to women, because they are paid less in the labor market.  
19 These processes extend beyond the familial scale. In terms of empowerment and governance,  
20 reclaiming the territory has to happen at a national and multi local scale. In this governance, there  
21 is co-production (Miller and Wyborn, 2018) of knowledge. At a distance from the Western

1 anthropocentrism, one has to contemplate the rights of nature, the principle of intellectual property,  
2 recognizing at a constitutional level, the knowledge of ‘native’ communities in the “*buen vivir*,”  
3 which originates in the Amazonian peoples.

## 4 **5.5. Climate change as a strengthening theme and struggle for the Indigenous peoples of the** 5 **Amazon**

6 Fernanda Bortolotto and Paulo Moutinho (Brazilian Amazon)

### 7 *5.5.1. Context*

8 This case study presents how leaders of Indigenous Peoples in the Brazilian Amazon incorporate  
9 climate change into their agenda as a guideline for the fight for their territories. By strengthening  
10 the capacities of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, Indigenous Peoples are constructing  
11 their own narratives, based on their knowledge and their life experiences, to incorporate into  
12 national climatic policies. As an example, the National Plan of Adaptation in Brazil acknowledged  
13 Indigenous and local knowledge as an important tool for adaptation. Also, after multiple  
14 workshops with Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC), the Plan included results of  
15 their local studies about climate impacts on their lives.

16 Indigenous Peoples possess multiple different types of knowledge related to climate due to their  
17 dependency on natural resources, in particular knowledge on seasonality for harvest seasons and  
18 rituals. With this, they know what to wait for and what anomalies exist (Turner; Clifton, 2009).  
19 Their deep understanding of variability allows them to easily distinguish normal delays from the  
20 impacts of climate change.

1 In the last 20 years, Indigenous leaders and representatives to the Coordination of Indigenous  
2 Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB, acronym in Portuguese) participate in meetings  
3 and discussions about climate change, organized and promoted by NGO partners, such as the  
4 Amazon Environmental Research Institute (IPAM), the Socioenvironmental Institute (ISA),  
5 Greenpeace, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Education Institute of Brazil (IEB), among others.  
6 In these meetings, Indigenous leaders are introduced to technical concepts about climate change,  
7 concepts established by non-Indigenous researchers who rarely consider the perspective of  
8 Indigenous Peoples in the elaboration of their studies or concepts.

9 Indigenous leaders have more comprehensive reflections about climate change, framing it as an  
10 axis of fight for territorial rights. According to Sonia Guajajara<sup>5</sup>: “Today, you can’t just fight for  
11 climate change without considering Indigenous Peoples or the role of indigenous territories. For  
12 all this, to confront climate change, you have to make necessary the fight for territorial rights,  
13 human rights, and specific rights.”

14 This comprehension is notable because the demands that the Indigenous leaders have brought to  
15 the UNFCCC most recently, between 2016 and 2018, presented in an institutional space<sup>6</sup>, consider  
16 national climatic policies and strategies. Territorial demarcation, strengthening of indigenous  
17 organizations and activities of environmental and territorial management are the principal issues  
18 in their demands (Bortolotto, 2020). By strengthening their territorial fight, they also reaffirm their

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<sup>5</sup> Information collected via interview with Sonia Guajajara, realized on March 12th, 2020 (BORTOLOTTI, 2020).

<sup>6</sup> In 2016, the Climate Change Technical Office of the National Environmental and Territorial Management Policy for Indigenous Lands was established. This space was intended to strengthen indigenous participation in national climate policies that were under preparation and implementation in Brazil, in addition to strengthening the discussion on the topic among Indigenous leaders.

1 links and connections with nature, connecting the climatic agenda with the other priorities of the  
2 indigenous movement.

3 The development of Indigenous People demands illustrate how the production of ideas and  
4 concepts by actors, on the one hand, the institutionalization of agreements and practices on the  
5 other, are mutually constitutive (Willem et al., 2013). The combination of indigenous claims and  
6 themes on the world agenda, such as climate change, is a political strategy capable of guaranteeing  
7 the recognition or even appreciation of ethnicity and indigenous organizations and peoples as  
8 legitimate political subjects that can, thus, influence decision-making processes beyond their  
9 territories (Doolittle, 2011; Bortolotto, 2020).

#### 10 *5.5.2. Results*

11 Capacity-building processes on climate change, alongside the leadership of Brazilian Amazonian  
12 Indigenous Peoples, resulted in the creation of an institutional space in 2016, within the National  
13 Foundation of Indigenous Peoples (FUNAI). FUNAI is the official indigenous organization in  
14 Brazil responsible for the protection of indigenous rights and assuring ethnic plurality.

15 From this space, Indigenous representatives from their community organizations influenced public  
16 policy on climate change elaborated in the 2016-2018 period. Both in policies of mitigation, such  
17 as the REDD+ National Strategy and the Determined National Contribution, and policies of  
18 adaptation, such as the National Plan for Adaptation, the greatest demand from Indigenous  
19 organizations was the guarantee of their territories, with all due demarcation processes completed.

**1 6. EMERGING REFLECTIONS AND IDENTIFIED NEEDS**

2 The significant cases presented put in evidence the diversity of contexts in which intercultural  
3 education can be constructed. These include intercultural education in community schools that  
4 offer elementary education, in schools that offer secondary and technical school, in institutions  
5 that offer post-secondary technical education, and in universities. At the same time, there are  
6 experiences of capacity building with Indigenous Peoples in the framework of climate change  
7 projects and the construction of governance and leadership processes.

8 Some cases demonstrate interesting alternatives to the increasing integration of the Indigenous  
9 population and other actors in the Amazon into the national economies under standardized  
10 programs, technologic packets, and poor recognition of local economic systems. In contrast, there  
11 are experiences like the one carried out in the SENA - Vaupés in Colombia, which depart from  
12 Indigenous and local knowledge to design and implement projects on alternative sustainable  
13 products. This case shows an important post-secondary training experience in which a  
14 governmental institution includes an intercultural education policy. At the same time, the  
15 intercultural mediation and the dialogue of knowledges between Indigenous and community  
16 members around agricultural practices and the important role of the woman in the construction of  
17 these knowledges, are part of the experience of the Balcanes farm in the Universidad de la  
18 Amazonia in Colombia.

19 When higher education involves Indigenous Peoples, it's worth noting affirmative actions have  
20 been in elaboration in Brazil over the past 15 years, such as the quota law in Brazil, which  
21 incentivized the matriculation of Indigenous students in universities (Dal Bó, 2018). The law, n.  
22 12.711 from 29 of august 2012, is titled the Quota Law, stipulates that all federal universities must  
23 use a percentage of their scholarships for Black and Indigenous students. After the law was passed,

1 there were an estimated 8000 Indigenous students from multiple peoples, matriculated in higher  
2 ed, in contrast with 1300 students in 2004 (Bergamaschi et al 2018). The law was a great  
3 achievement for Indigenous peoples and other social movements, who had been fighting for the  
4 democratization of higher education for all Brazilians, considering the sociocultural diversity,  
5 since the Federal Constitution of 1988 (Baniwa, 2013).

6 The Indigenous presence in universities offers possibilities for self-reflection on the university's  
7 pedagogical practices and its social role. However, there are still major challenges to be faced,  
8 such as the Indigenous long permanence in the university, which depends on financial resources,  
9 the financing of research in their communities and the complementation of the quota system with  
10 projects and programs that enable support to Indigenous scholars throughout their training  
11 (Baniwa, 2013).

12 The case study presented by André Baniwa, from the upper Rio Negro, in Brazil, allows the  
13 appreciation of the construction of an intercultural education project in Indigenous schools in a  
14 context where there is great diversity of Indigenous Peoples. The possibility to construct their own  
15 curriculum with a strong emphasis in language, strengthens autonomy in this context. Additionally,  
16 the importance of local research, focused on Indigenous and local knowledge, is a way to  
17 strengthen the Baniwa peoples. The research produced locally by them on sustainability projects  
18 in the region is also a way of communicating with the non-indigenous public, with funding  
19 agencies and other partners, fitting not only as an educational model, but also as a strategy for  
20 organizational strengthening and expansion of relationships (Dal Bó, 2018). From this process of  
21 construction, fight, and experience, Indigenous autonomy is important in the political and the  
22 economic realm, as well as with partners and supporters. The government question is  
23 complemented with recognition and training for the Indigenous People.



1 Cases that demonstrate important experiences in capacity building associated with climate change  
2 in Brazil, and the strengthening of leadership and governance in Colombia put into evidence the  
3 significant lessons and the individual and collective transformations of those who participate in  
4 these spaces when training is a dialogic act that allows connection with the previous knowledge of  
5 the participants.

6 This diversity of cases allows us to conclude that when the curriculum and the training plans are  
7 in dialogue with the day-to-day experiences, the sociocultural context, and Indigenous and local  
8 knowledge, subjectivity takes its place in institutions and new forms of relation with each other  
9 and the territory are created, giving way for the construction of interculturality.

10 Some of the identified needs for the strengthening of intercultural education are: - The valuing of  
11 indigenous languages in intercultural education policies. - The strengthening of indigenous  
12 organizations and local communities, towards the support of intercultural education processes, as  
13 well as the education councils, differentiating them at the local, regional, and national scale. The  
14 creation of intersector policies that connect educational processes developed in multiple  
15 institutions and multiple population groups with cultural, economic, and productive sectors. -The  
16 funding of intercultural education processes at the medium- and long-term.

17 Also the use of participatory curricular models and methodologies that allow those who design  
18 and implement intercultural education and capacity building to create spaces of dialogic learning,  
19 connected with the territory and with the possibility for technological innovation and the creation  
20 of intercultural education proposals in the urban Amazon and bridges that facilitate continuity to  
21 reach higher education.

1 Given these needs, a first recommendation is the construction of platforms for knowledge  
2 dialogues and decision-making which involves the participation of actors-- local, private, public,  
3 and academic-- that could come together to think through education and pedagogy in the Amazon.  
4 These platforms oriented towards knowledge dialogues can be nourished with different  
5 methodological proposals developed by local communities that allow the recuperation of  
6 knowledge and experiences, which can be put to service for educational projects and capacity  
7 building.

8 Local investigation is part of the recognition that communities are particular universes, with their  
9 own histories that have implicated an accumulation of knowledge of the surroundings, constructed  
10 through their interactions. To promote local research, it is necessary to generate a debate regarding  
11 the local knowledge that could enrich the training project to be implemented, and who are the  
12 knowledge holders (Van der Hammen et. al, 2012).

13 The systematization is oriented towards the identification of emergent learning in the experiences  
14 of teachers and students. This type of systematization establishes the reconstruction and recovery  
15 of experiences for the purpose of critically interpreting occurrences. As well as obtaining these,  
16 these lessons learned and understandings will allow the improvement of practices; to propose the  
17 possibility of learning from the actions implemented implies a potential to transform and share  
18 them (Jara, 2012). The systematization supposes an active linkage of people that develops  
19 intercultural education and that the protagonists of the experience give meaning.

20 The systematization of important experiences of intercultural education and capacity-building, as  
21 described in this text, make possible the design of different curricular models in which daily  
22 educational experience can strengthen official proposals.

1 In the same way, the design of training-the-trainer workshops, and the development of pedagogical  
2 guides and materials based on significant experiences from the perspectives of teachers and  
3 appendices are important opportunities to include diversity and strengthen the formative processes.  
4 While teachers and technicians who tend to lead training processes have a solid disciplinary  
5 training, under this proposal, it is necessary to have tools that allow an integrative and  
6 interdisciplinary view of reality, including social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental  
7 aspects.

8 Exploring distinct pedagogic and didactic proposals allow the trainer the elements to attempt new  
9 forms of teaching, the ability to reflect on their own practice and transform it, the ability to value  
10 differences as enriching opportunities, the ability to get to know the students, diversify, and adapt  
11 the curriculum, and the ability to propose learning experience pertinent to the context. All these  
12 elements are configured in the possibilities for education within diversity, assuming that these  
13 differences are opportunities to create culturally pertinent and relevant education.

## 14 **7. CONCLUSION**

15 The Indigenous and local knowledge of the Amazonian populations is little recognized in formal  
16 education processes and capacity building in the Amazon. Such knowledge is not only  
17 systematically ignored, but there is also epistemic violence. Through the standardization of  
18 curricula and courses required of Indigenous Peoples, local, traditional and rural communities can  
19 lead to the erasure and even extinction of a diversity of knowledge, so fundamental for the  
20 permanence and survival of these peoples.

21 With this problem in mind, we present in this chapter important case studies from different  
22 countries with different authors, representing regional and sociocultural diversity in the Amazon

1 basin. We hope that these cases contribute to a greater reflection about the incorporation of  
2 Indigenous and local knowledge in the construction of a locally-appropriate education, and that  
3 the recognition of the knowledge held by Amazonian peoples is a potent tool for the maintenance  
4 of sociobiodiversity in the region.

5 However, we recognize that there are a number of successful experiences in the region, involving  
6 the specificities of Indigenous peoples and local communities that we were not able to include in  
7 this chapter. The inclusion of more representative cases from the region was a barrier in the  
8 elaboration of the document. Some workshops were held with stakeholders from the region, in  
9 addition to direct invitations for authors, to contribute with cases that presented models for  
10 implementing intercultural education in local contexts. Unfortunately, we did not have the  
11 expected response within the given time for writing and one of the recommendations for the next  
12 version of this chapter would be the inclusion of more authors representing Indigenous Peoples  
13 and local communities who can bring more reflections on the implementation of appropriate  
14 educational practices.

15 There is also a gap in the academic literature on the state of the art of intercultural education in the  
16 countries of the Amazon Basin and the involvement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities,  
17 both in the development of specific programs and policies as well as in the monitoring of the  
18 implementation of such actions. Further research, as well as the contribution of more authors,  
19 mainly Indigenous and from local communities, would be necessary to represent the challenges of  
20 implementing intercultural education and strengthening adequate capacities for Amazonian  
21 diversity.

22

1

2 **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3 • Create participatory intercultural education and linguistic policies
- 4 • Create intercultural education proposals in the urban Amazon and bridges that facilitate  
5 continuity to reach higher education
- 6 • Strengthen local governance and political-administrative autonomy for the development of  
7 education programs.
- 8 • Design participatory curricular models, with the possibility for technological innovation

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## 6 **CORE GLOSSARY**

7 **Intercultural education:** the construction of spaces for dialogue between different cultures and  
8 their equitable interaction to generate shared cultural expressions. This dialogue implies that the  
9 parties involved not only have the possibility to express their visions, but also have an openness to  
10 other perspectives and types of knowledge and practices (Van der Hammen et al., 2012).

11 **Capacity building:** According to UNESCO, capacity building takes the form of training, technical  
12 assistance, orientation and preparation through projects adapted to the specific needs of the  
13 beneficiary countries.

14 **Epistemic violence:** is understood by Belasteguigoitia (2001: 237), as “...the amendment, the  
15 edition, the blur and even the annulment of both the systems of symbolization, subjectivation and  
16 representation that the other has of himself, as well as the specific forms of representation and  
17 registration.”

18 **Amazonian Diversity:** rich in cultural expressions, contributes to the development of roots and  
19 identity, which are fundamental principles in the construction of subjectivity mediated by the  
20 educational context. If we start from the fact that diversity configures the social reality in the  
21 Amazon to the extent that it is pluricultural, then the educational processes must be developed to  
22 approach diversity as a value and as an educational challenge.

23 **Knowledge dialogue:** the exploration into and openness towards different forms of knowledge  
24 construction becomes fundamental to the educational exercise.

25 **Intercultural Knowledge Mediation:** The Intercultural Mediation (MIC) is a resistance against  
26 the hegemony, and a route to food security and sovereignty. It's important to interculturally  
27 mediate the search for governance over nature, including the role of care by women.

28 **Participatory curricular models:** the collective creation of formal and daily life experiencias of  
29 dialogic learning, connected with the territory and with the possibility for technological innovation

30