



~BIMONTHLY NEWSPAPER OF PAWANKA FUND~

Kimat Yachay

~NUMBER 5 - March 2024~

ONLINE EDITION
& BLOG

Indigenous women lead initiatives that prioritize culturally relevant healthcare services, recognizing the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Pawanka Fund Team

Pag.3



**Annual Meeting 2024:
Charting a Course for
Indigenous Empowerment
and Sustainability**

Pag. 4

**Celebrating the
Contributions of
Indigenous Women on
International Women's
Day**



Pag.7

**Gurapau Group, Kenya
Reviving a Language**



**Pawanka Fund's
Journey to the
Carnival of
Forgiveness in
Sibundoy, Putumayo**

Pag.6

Embracing Diversity and Cultural Resilience:

Insights from the Latest Issue of Kimat Yachay



In this edition of Kimat Yachay, we embark on a captivating journey through the vibrant tapestry of indigenous experiences, shedding light on pivotal events and initiatives that underscore the resilience and cultural richness of indigenous communities worldwide. From honoring the invaluable contributions of indigenous women on International Women's Day to convening the annual meeting of our esteemed Guiding Committee, each article serves as a testament to our unwavering commitment to amplifying indigenous voices and fostering meaningful dialogue.

Guiding Committee Annual Meeting: Delve into the heart of our organizational endeavors as we convene the annual meeting of our Guiding Committee. Esteemed leaders and advocates gather to reflect on past accomplishments, strategize for the future, and reaffirm our shared commitment to advancing indigenous rights, environmental sustainability, and social justice. Join us as we chart a course towards a more equitable and inclusive world guided by indigenous wisdom and principles.

Honoring Indigenous Women: We continue our exploration by celebrating the unwavering strength, wisdom, and leadership of indigenous women on International Women's Day. Through insightful interviews and compelling narratives, we shine a spotlight on the remarkable achievements and challenges faced by indigenous women, highlighting their pivotal roles in advocating for gender equality, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. Journey to Sibundoy, Putumayo: Our narrative takes a captivating turn as we recount our team's immersive experience at the Carnival of Forgiveness in Sibundoy, Putumayo. Amidst the vibrant colors, rhythmic beats, and infectious

energy of the carnival, we witness the resilience and cultural vibrancy of indigenous communities. Through engaging interviews and captivating imagery, we offer a glimpse into the rich traditions, ancestral practices, and profound spirituality that define this annual celebration.

Reviving a Language - Gurapau Group in Kenya: Turning our attention to Kenya, we delve into the inspiring endeavors of the Gurapau Group in reviving a language on the brink of extinction. Through dedicated efforts in language documentation, cultural preservation, and community engage-

ment, the Gurapau Group exemplifies the transformative power of language revitalization in preserving indigenous identity, fostering intergenerational connections, and reclaiming cultural heritage. Join us as we traverse the globe, celebrating the resilience, wisdom, and contributions of indigenous peoples across diverse landscapes and cultural contexts. Through Kimat Yachay, we endeavor to amplify indigenous voices, elevate their stories, and inspire collective action towards a more just, equitable, and inclusive world.



Pawanka Fund Guiding Committee

Annual Meeting 2024: Charting a Course for Indigenous Empowerment and Sustainability

by Pawanka Fund Team

From February 4th to 8th, 2024, Pawanka Fund convened its highly anticipated Guiding Committee Annual Meeting, marking a pivotal moment in the organization's journey towards advancing indigenous rights, environmental sustainability, and social justice. Hosted by the Cultural Conservancy on the ancestral lands of the Ohlone and Coast Miwok peoples in California, Turtle Island, alongside the Tamalpais Trust and Guiding Committee member Melissa Nelson, the gathering brought together a distinguished cohort of indigenous leaders and advocates from around the world.

Guiding Committee members in attendance included Rukka Sombolinggi from Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (AMAN) in Indonesia, Hussein Isack representing the Kivulini Trust in Kenya, Teresa Zapeta of the Foro Internacional de Mujeres Indigenas (FIMI) in Guatemala, Nāmaka Rawlins from the Mokuol Honua Centre for Indigenous Language Excellence in Hawai'i, Vicky Tauli-Corpuz of the Tebtebba Foundation in the Philippines, Joan Carling representing the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) in the Philippines, Gunn-Britt Retter from the Saami Council in Norway, and Melissa Nelson from the Tamalpais Trust in the United States. Despite physical distance, the spirit of collaboration remained strong as Myrna Cunningham Kain from the Centro para la Autonomia y Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indigenas (CADPI) in Nicaragua and Danil Mamyev from Russia joined the meeting remotely.

Facilitated by the Pawanka secretariat led by Carla Bush, Operations and Program Director, and Oscar Aguilar, Development Director, the annual meeting provided a platform for deep reflection, robust discussion, and strategic planning. Throughout the gathering, participants engaged in a series of dialogues centered on key themes and priorities, aiming to address pressing challenges faced by

indigenous communities globally while charting a course for Pawanka Fund's future endeavors.

The meeting delved into critical issues affecting indigenous peoples, including the shrinking democratic space in many countries, ongoing threats to indigenous territories posed by the green economy transition, and the struggle to defend land and territories against encroachment. Participants underscored the importan-

practices, protecting and revitalizing indigenous languages, and supporting just transitions to a low-carbon world.

As the meeting concluded, participants reaffirmed their dedication to advancing indigenous self-determination, environmental stewardship, and social justice, embodying the spirit of collective action and solidarity that defines Pawanka Fund's mission.



ce of amplifying indigenous voices, supporting youth engagement, and working closely with women and marginalized groups to ensure inclusive decision-making processes and holistic development.

Reflecting on Pawanka Fund's impact and legacy from 2014 to 2023, participants highlighted the organization's unique model, deep partnerships, commitment to cultural due diligence, and flexibility in responding to emerging needs. Looking ahead, the Guiding Committee outlined priorities for 2025-2029, including positioning Pawanka as a leading indigenous-led fund, influencing philanthropic

Reflecting on Pawanka Fund's impact and legacy from 2014 to 2023, participants highlighted the organization's unique model, deep partnerships, commitment to cultural due diligence, and flexibility in responding to emerging needs.

Celebrating the Contributions of Indigenous Women on International Women's Day

Indigenous women play vital roles in preserving and promoting their cultures and languages.

In the tapestry of human history, the role of women, particularly indigenous women, remains a vibrant thread woven with resilience, wisdom, and unwavering strength. As the world celebrates International Women's Day, it's imperative to recognize and celebrate the invaluable contributions of indigenous women to our communities, cultures, and societies.

A Legacy of Resilience:

Indigenous women have long been the backbone of their communities, embodying resilience in the face of adversity. From safeguarding traditional knowledge to nurturing future generations, indigenous women play multifaceted roles that are integral to the fabric of indigenous societies. Despite facing intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization, they persist as agents of change, driving social, cultural, and environmental transformation.

Indigenous women are also often the keepers of cultural heritage, passing down languages, rituals, and ancestral practices through storytelling, song, and ceremony. Their role as custodians of cultural knowledge ensures the preservation of indigenous identity and fosters a deep sense of belonging among younger generations.

Moreover, indigenous women demonstrate remarkable resilience in the face of historical trauma and ongoing challenges. Their ability to navigate adversity with grace and strength serves as a source of inspiration for their communities and beyond.

Champions of Environmental Stewardship:

At the forefront of environmental conservation efforts, indigenous women leverage their deep connection to the land and natural resources. They defend ancestral territories against extractive industries and advocate for



sustainable land management practices. With a holistic worldview rooted in respect for all living beings, they lead the fight against climate change and environmental degradation. Moreover, indigenous women often lead grassroots movements to protect sacred lands and waters, organizing protests, petitions, and direct actions to defend their territories. Their tireless efforts to safeguard the environment not only benefit their communities but also contribute to global efforts to address the climate crisis and protect biodiversity. Furthermore, indigenous women actively engage in policy advocacy and international forums to ensure that indigenous perspectives are included in discussions on environmental protection and sustainable development.

Trailblazers in Social Justice:

In addition to their environmental advocacy, indigenous women are trailblazers in the realm of social justice. They challenge patriarchal norms and colonial legacies, amplifying indigenous voices and demanding recognition of their rights. Through grassroots organizing and political activism, they dismantle systemic barriers and work towards a more just and equitable world.

Indigenous women are also leading efforts to address gender-based violence within their communities, establishing support networks, shelters, and advocacy programs to ensure the safety and well-being of women and girls. Their intersectional approach to social justice recognizes the interconnectedness of issues such as gender, race, and class, paving the way for more inclusive and equitable movements.

Moreover, indigenous women are catalysts for positive change, inspiring collective action and fostering solidarity among diverse communities. Their leadership and activism contribute to the advancement of human rights and social justice on both local and global scales.

Cultural Revitalization and Language Preservation:

Indigenous women play a pivotal role in cultural revitalization and language preservation efforts. They serve as educators and language keepers, passing down traditional knowledge and promoting indigenous languages in their communities. By reclaiming and revitalizing cultural practices, they ensure the continuity of indigenous identities and heritage for future generations.

Moreover, indigenous women often lead community-based initiatives focused on cultural revitalization, organizing workshops, festivals, and language immersion programs. Through these efforts, they create spaces for intergenerational learning and celebration, fostering a sense of pride and belonging among community members. Their dedication to preserving indigenous languages not only strengthens cultural identity but also ser-



ves as a powerful tool for decolonization and self-determination.

Additionally, indigenous women collaborate with educational institutions and governmental bodies to develop curricula and policies that support indigenous language revitalization. Their advocacy efforts contribute to the recognition and protection of indigenous languages as vital components of cultural diversity and human heritage.

Health and Well-being Advocates:

Indigenous women are often at the forefront of advocating for the health and well-being of their communities. They address issues such as access to healthcare, maternal and child health, and mental health support, bridging traditional healing practices with modern medical care. Their holistic approach to health empowers communities to thrive physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Furthermore, indigenous women lead initiatives that prioritize culturally relevant healthcare services, recognizing the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. They collaborate with healthcare providers to integrate traditional healing practices into mainstream healthcare systems, ensuring that indigenous communities have access to culturally safe and respectful care. By championing holistic health approaches, indigenous women contribute to the overall resilience and vitality of their communities, fostering a future where all members can thrive in body, mind, and spirit. As we celebrate International Women's Day, let us honor the resilience, wisdom, and contributions of indigenous women, and commit to amplifying their voices for a more inclusive and equitable society.

Pawanka Fund Team

Moreover, indigenous women are catalysts for positive change, inspiring collective action and fostering solidarity among diverse communities

Kimat Yachay

Board of Directors:
Dr. Myrna Cunningham
Carla Bush
Oscar Aguilar

Editorial board:
Oscar Aguilar
Juan David Burbano

Editorial design:
Feeling.com.co

Pawanka Executive Team:
Carla Bush
Maria Jose Salinas
Nidia Bustillos
Emma Pineda
Edna Kaptoyo
Luchie Maranan
Jacque Macharia

You can send us your comments, questions or suggestions to:

Contact:
pawanka@pawankafund.org

Embracing Cultural Vibrancy

Pawanka Fund's Journey to the Carnival of Forgiveness in Sibundoy, Putumayo

In a vibrant display of indigenous culture and tradition, Pawanka Fund's Communication Officer, Juan David Burbano, and Feeling Method's Founder, Javier Arteaga, embarked on a transformative journey to the Carnival of Forgiveness in Sibundoy, Putumayo. This annual celebration, deeply rooted in indigenous spirituality and communal solidarity, holds profound significance for the indigenous people of the region, serving as a testament to their resilience, heritage, and interconnectedness with the natural world.

The Carnival of Forgiveness, known locally as "Carnaval del Perdón," is a sacred event that honors the ancestral wisdom and spiritual practices of the Inga, Kamentsa, and Kichwa indigenous peoples of Sibundoy. Held during the Lenten season, the carnival symbolizes a time of collective reflection, purification, and renewal, where communities come together to seek forgiveness, reconcile differences, and reaffirm their bonds of kinship and solidarity.

At the heart of the Carnival of Forgiveness is the belief in the transformative power of forgiveness and reconciliation, essential virtues deeply ingrained in indigenous cosmology and worldview. Through colorful processions, traditional dances, and ceremonial rituals, participants engage in acts of healing and communal prayer, seeking harmony with themselves, their communities, and the natural world.

For the indigenous peoples of Sibundoy, the Carnival of Forgiveness is not merely a cultural event but a sacred pilgrimage—a spiritual journey that connects them to their ancestors, their land, and the cosmic forces that govern the universe. It is a time to honor the wisdom of their elders, celebrate the resilience of their communities, and reaffirm their commitment to living in harmony with nature and each other.

Pawanka Fund's presence at the Carnival of Forgiveness underscores our organization's deep respect for indigenous traditions, cultures, and spiritual practices. It is a testament to our commitment to amplifying indigenous voices, preserving cultural heritage, and fostering meaningful partnerships based on mutual respect and solidarity.

As Juan David Burbano and Javier

Arteaga immersed themselves in the vibrant tapestry of the carnival, they were profoundly moved by the warmth, hospitality, and resilience of the indigenous communities of Sibundoy. Their experience serves as a reminder of the enduring power of indigenous traditions to heal, unite, and inspire positive change in the world.

In the spirit of the Carnival of Forgiveness, let us embrace the values of forgiveness, reconciliation, and communal harmony, honoring the wisdom of indigenous peoples and working together towards a more just, equitable, and sustainable future for all.



Colombia

En Colombia viven 87 pueblos indígenas, los cuales hablan 64 lenguas amerindias y están distribuidos, según el censo 2005, en 710 resguardos ubicados a lo largo de 27 departamentos del país. Los indígenas representan el 3.4% del total de la población colombiana.



Tara Bandu regulations which include the list of prohibited materials are distributed to each clan leader, with a parcel of meat and rice.

Gurapau Group, Kenya Reviving a Language



(The project "On the Trails of Vanishing El-molo Language" was implemented by the Gurapau Group in 2018 in Marsabit County, Kenya with the support of PAWANKA Fund.)

What would a community do if one day realized that their language might vanish forever and with it the memory and history of their tribe?

This was the challenge that the Gurapau Group in Marsabit County, Kenya, took on in order to keep their language, El-molo, from fading into oblivion. The group commenced with community meetings in El-molo Bay and Arbore land to introduce the project's goal of reviving their language.

Whom could they consult and interview who had familiarity and knowledge of the language to be passed on? Thus were men and women elders in El-molo villages who still had the grasp of their language identified. Knowledge and skills-sharing and transmission began between the elders and teachers through focused group discussions. El-molo language adept Elder Lentoo Losigakwe said, "I understand the language as taught by my mother, and I'll undertake to teach our people what I know."

A competition was held at the village level to choose competent male and female individuals dedicated to teach the language. Among them, two were hired as language

teachers. Next, a language expert was hired to gather more information and collect data from fluent elders and other community members with the basic knowledge of El-molo vocabulary and syntax needed to improve the dictionary. The same linguist trained the teachers on curriculum development, teaching aids, and guide book design. These learning tools and the dictionary were all printed and distributed.

Lomalumalu Lekapana, one of the trained teachers, expressed her enthusiasm. "It is my first time being involved in such a project. I am very excited about the revival of my language and as a teacher I'll offer my services to ensure that our children learn and speak our language."

The El-molo language project used community meetings to raise awareness of the need to revive their language. Both young and old El-molo community members expressed great interest and openness to learning, and they understood that these efforts were geared towards this goal.

They realized and were inspired by the great expertise among their elders who were fully supportive of the project. Community members reciprocated the elders' efforts with their preparedness to learn the language. In addition, they worked on improving classroom facilities, specifically constructing a language

classroom to provide a teaching and learning environment to El-molo children. Village children must learn, use and practice El-molu in order to perpetuate the language's use. For this reason, language class enrollment was opened to all ages, including pre-school children and the larger community.

The initiative undertook research and interaction with the Arbore community to enhance the revival of EL-molo language. A liaison team of eight individuals from Gurapau and Hor Malbasa Association from Arbore was formed for the purposes of information sharing and visits by EL-molo representatives to Arbore land. The team, which included a linguist, visited the Arbore community to trace the vanishing EL-molo language and they identified pronounced language and cultural similarities and historical ties. They also discovered a language pattern and structure previously unknown to EL-molo community speakers, and they regarded this as an important aspect for future interactions, information sharing, and dissemination of research findings.

El-molo Elder Lempirias Lekulo made a fitting statement of commitment, "This project is a wakeup call to us as a community to discover our self-identity. Let us be proud of our language and strive to learn, both young and old. I will volunteer to teach the young generation a hippo song." They had indeed rediscovered themselves.

Know the initiatives we support

North America

YAKANAL Indigenous Youth Cultural Exchange

YAKANAL: Mother Moon

We propose to continue Mother Moon, an Indigenous-led efforts to research, protect, and share traditional knowledge of the Moon to animate ancestral wisdom and practice related to women's/ non-binary and community wellbeing. Through intercultural collaborations including Maya/ Zapotec/Mixtec//Pueblo young adults and elders, we hope to nourish unique attributes connected to the Moon in the context of fertility, midwifery, weaving, natural pigments, native foods, plant medicine, and cultural astronomy. Project Goals: Connect with land and sky—by animating the importance of place. Honor the source—by recognizing, respecting, and sustaining elder knowledge. Share knowledge and practice—through cultural exchange and by anchoring the work in local projects of global impact.



Asia

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) is a regional organization founded in 1992 by indigenous peoples' movements. AIPP is committed to the cause of promoting and defending indigenous peoples' rights and human rights and articulating issues of relevance to indigenous peoples. At present, AIPP has 46 members from 14 countries in Asia with 18 indigenous peoples' national alliances/networks (national formations), 30 local and sub-national organizations. Of this number, 16 are ethnic based organizations, six (6) indigenous women and four (4) are indigenous youth organizations and one (1) organization of indigenous persons with disabilities.



Africa

Strategies for Northern Development

Strategies for Northern Development

Planetary Health is intertwined with climate change. As the health of the planet declines, Indigenous Peoples must find new ways to adapt to their surroundings.

Indigenous knowledge provides a crucial foundation for community-based adaptation and mitigation actions that sustain resilience of social-ecological systems at the interconnected local, regional, and global scales.



Latin America

Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil

Strengthening the Protagonism of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil for Advocacy in the Defense of Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Climate

Apib representatives from the Amazon and Northeast want to reinforce the importance of indigenous land demarcation in the fight against climate change.



The Arctic

Arctic Indigenous Youth Leaders' Summit

Arctic Indigenous Youth Leaders' Summit

Saami Council is hosting the 6th Arctic Leaders' Summit (ALS6) for Arctic Indigenous Leaders in November 2019. Arctic Indigenous Peoples Leaders will meet and discuss common concerns such as environmental and socio-economic impacts of the rapid environmental and climate changes in the Arctic, most of which are considered fragile ecosystems. Youth Leaders will gather for a Arctic Indigenous Youth Leaders' Summit, where youth from the circumpolar region for 1,5 day will discuss the ALS6 agenda and share ideas and dreams for their future and prepare for the out come with ALS6. This project proposal is to support the Youth Summit event.

