



JULY 2021

# Indigenous Navigator:

Innovating Indigenous Education  
through the Small Grants Facility



INDIGENOUS  
NAVIGATOR



Magar community members at a primary school meeting in Naumule, Nepal, deciding on their mother-tongue education.  
CREDIT: LAHURNIP

“The results of the Indigenous Navigator’s community tool that we applied in Capalagan, Davao Oriental, revealed that their language was vulnerable. Based on those results, the leaders decided to revitalise their language to preserve their identity and propagate its use among the children and youth. The Indigenous Navigator allowed us to connect with language experts and development workers to unify one Mandaya orthography for its use in Indigenous Peoples’ education, and to have the Department of Education come on board and adopt the output later.”

**BERNICE SEE - PROJECT COORDINATOR, TEBTEBBA, THE PHILIPPINES.**

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**Cover photograph:** Young Wampis woman writing in Peru's rainforest. Credit: Pablo Lasanky / IWGIA

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# CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	3
<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS</b>	5
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	7
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	7
<b>INTRODUCTION - IS EDUCATION A RELEVANT TOPIC FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES?</b>	8
<b>1. EDUCATION IN THE INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR</b>	12
1.1. What frames education within the Indigenous Navigator?	12
1.2. What do the Indigenous Navigator data say about Indigenous education?	14
1.3. How does the Indigenous Navigator transform the data collected into action?	18
TRENDS: Effects of COVID-19 on Indigenous education and community responses	21
<b>2. INNOVATING INDIGENOUS EDUCATION THROUGH THE SMALL GRANTS FACILITY</b>	22
2.1. Minimising obstacles to quality education access without discrimination	22
2.2. Developing bilingual and intercultural teaching materials and methods based on indigenous knowledge, practices and technologies	24
TRENDS: Intercultural bilingual education in Latin America	28
2.3. Updating the skills and knowledge of Indigenous teachers	28
2.4. Increasing intergenerational knowledge transfer from Indigenous elders to youth	30
TRENDS: Towards the 2022-2032 International Decade of Indigenous Languages	32
2.5. Engaging with governments for recognition and official use of Indigenous languages	33
TRENDS: Towards an “inclusive, sustainable and resilient future”	36
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	37

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>AIPP:</b>	Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact
<b>ALAPA:</b>	Association for Law and Advocacy for Pastoralists
<b>BJHS:</b>	Bangladesh Jatiya Hajong Sangathon (Bangladesh National Hajong Organization)
<b>CAT:</b>	Convention against Torture
<b>CEB:</b>	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
<b>CECOIN:</b>	Centro de Cooperación al Indígena
<b>CEDAW:</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>CEJIS:</b>	Centro de Estudios Jurídicos e Investigación Social
<b>CENDA:</b>	Centro de Comunicación y Desarrollo Andino
<b>CICOL:</b>	Central Indígena de Comunidades Originarias de Lomerío
<b>CIPO:</b>	Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Organisation
<b>CIYA:</b>	Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association
<b>COVID-19:</b>	Corona Virus Disease 19
<b>CRC:</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>DCC-NEFIN:</b>	District Coordination Council of Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities
<b>EC:</b>	European Commission
<b>ECOSOC:</b>	Economic and Social Council
<b>EU:</b>	European Union
<b>FPIC:</b>	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
<b>FPP:</b>	Forest Peoples Programme
<b>GTANW:</b>	Gobierno Territorial Autónomo de la Nación Wampís
<b>HLPF:</b>	High-Level Political Forum
<b>IASG:</b>	Inter-Agency Support Group
<b>ICCPR:</b>	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
<b>ICERD:</b>	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
<b>ICESCR:</b>	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
<b>ILEPA:</b>	Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners
<b>ILO:</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>IPDS:</b>	Indigenous Peoples Development Services
<b>IPELC:</b>	Instituto Plurinacional de Estudio de Lengua y Cultura
<b>IPMG:</b>	Indigenous Peoples Major Group
<b>IWGIA:</b>	International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
<b>LAHURNIP:</b>	Lawyers' Association for Human Rights of Nepalese Indigenous Peoples
<b>LTMKCA:</b>	Limpong na Tutong ng Mandaya na Kabubayan sang Calapagan na Asosasyon (Association of True Mandaya Women of Calapagan)
<b>MPIDO:</b>	Mainyoito Pastoralist Integrated Development Organisation
<b>MDG:</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>NCA:</b>	Nepal Chhantyal Association
<b>OHCHR:</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>ONAMIAP:</b>	Organización Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas Andinas y Amazónicas del Perú
<b>ONIC:</b>	Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia
<b>PINGO's</b>	
<b>Forum:</b>	Pastoralists Indigenous NGO's Forum
<b>PROEIB</b>	
<b>(Andes):</b>	Programa de Formación en Educación Intercultural Bilingüe para los Países Andinos

<b>SDG:</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SOWIP:</b>	State of the World's Indigenous Peoples
<b>SWAP:</b>	System-Wide Action Plan
<b>UDHR:</b>	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
<b>UN:</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDESA:</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UNDRIP:</b>	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
<b>UNESCO:</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNGA:</b>	United Nations General Assembly
<b>UNPFII:</b>	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
<b>VIDS:</b>	Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpshoofden in Suriname (Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname)
<b>WIDE:</b>	World Inequality Database on Education

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>TABLE 1.</b>	Synthesis of the three axes upon which the Indigenous Navigator is based, for education _____	14
<b>TABLE 2.</b>	Results of the Indigenous Navigator's survey question "how accessible are primary school facilities in your community?" _____	17
<b>TABLE 3.</b>	Access per facilities in educational establishments according to the Indigenous Navigator's survey results _____	18
<b>TABLE 4.</b>	Matrix of the Indigenous Navigator's small grants facility pilot projects related to education with the small grants facility's Indigenous priorities in education _____	20
<b>TABLE 5.</b>	Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator's surveys in addressing and minimising obstacles in Indigenous communities' access to quality primary and secondary education, as well as adult literacy programmes, without discrimination _____	23
<b>TABLE 6.</b>	Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator's surveys in developing bilingual and intercultural teaching materials and methods based on Indigenous knowledge, practices and technologies for use in schools and in community training _____	25
<b>TABLE 7.</b>	Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator's surveys in updating the skills and knowledge of Indigenous teachers _____	29
<b>TABLE 8.</b>	Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator's surveys in increasing intergenerational knowledge transfer from Indigenous elders to youth _____	31
<b>TABLE 9.</b>	Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator's surveys in engaging in dialogue with governments for recognition and use of Indigenous languages as official languages in schools and other public institutions _____	33

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>FIGURE 1.</b>	Percentage of completed primary education of the communities that participated in the Indigenous Navigator's survey in comparison with the national average _____	15
<b>FIGURE 2.</b>	Percentage of completed secondary education of the communities that participated in the Indigenous Navigator's survey in comparison with the national average _____	16
<b>FIGURE 3.</b>	Percentage of enrolment in tertiary education of the communities that participated in the Indigenous Navigator's survey in comparison with the national average _____	16



Students and teachers inside a Khasi language centre classroom in Bangladesh.

CREDIT: KAPAEENG FOUNDATION

# INTRODUCTION

## IS EDUCATION A RELEVANT TOPIC FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES?

This report presents the real-life experiences of Indigenous Peoples as they implement pilot projects that address educational needs identified by themselves through the Indigenous Navigator’s small grants facility. It shows how the Indigenous Navigator framework was used to create a data collection tool to monitor progress towards the fulfilment of Indigenous peoples’ rights and the global goals –the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)– and how, based on those data and with financial and technical assistance from the small grants facility, Indigenous communities came up with project proposals that they are carrying out to improve their wellbeing.

The Indigenous Navigator is an initiative founded by an international partner consortium: Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), the Forest Peoples Programme (FPP), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Indigenous Peoples’ International Centre for Policy Research and Education (Tebtebba Foundation), and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA). The Indigenous Navigator is supported by the European Union (EU). Since 2017, the Indigenous Navigator consortium, along with local partners in 11 countries<sup>2</sup> worldwide, have been supporting Indigenous

2. Kapaeeng Foundation, from Bangladesh; Centro de Estudios Jurídicos e Investigación Social (CEJIS), from Bolivia; Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Organization (CIPO), from Cambodia; Association OKANI, from Cameroon; Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia (ONIC) and Centro de Cooperación al Indígena (CECOIN), from Colombia; Mainyito Pastoralists Integrated Development Organization (MPIDO) and Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), from Kenya; Lawyers’ Association for Human Rights of Nepalese Indigenous Peoples (LAHURNIP), from Nepal; Organización Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas Andinas y Amazónicas del Perú (ONAMIAP) and Perú Equidad – Centro de Políticas Públicas y Derechos Humanos, from Peru; Indigenous Peoples’ International Centre for Policy Research and Education (Tebtebba Foundation), from the Philippines; Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname (Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpschoofden in Suriname – VIDS), from Suriname; Association for Law and Advocacy for Pastoralists (ALAPA) and Pastoralists Indigenous Non-Governmental Organization’s Forum (PINGO’s Forum), from Tanzania.

communities' in their struggles to have their rights fully recognized and respected. The Indigenous Navigator comprises an online portal and a set of assessment tools developed for, and by, Indigenous Peoples to aid the monitoring, implementation and realisation of Indigenous peoples' rights. The Indigenous Navigator's tools, developed with Indigenous Peoples, monitor the implementation of their collective rights. The community-generated data are open and available through the Indigenous Navigator's online portal.<sup>3</sup>

Indigenous communities and the Indigenous Navigator's partners were able to analyse the results of 146 validated community surveys (conducted between 2017 and 2019), which led to the creation of 57 data driven, community led pilot projects based on their own priorities and integrated into the small grants facility. Financed by the European Commission (EC), the small grants facility has approved projects that tackle issues ranging from self-determination to citizenship to cultural integrity, among many others.<sup>4</sup>

This report focuses on how the Indigenous Navigator's small grants facility is supporting innovative solutions to improve Indigenous education. Education is the central topic of this work because of the place education holds in the preservation of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, language and culture. These are topics that the Indigenous Navigators' small grants facility helps Indigenous communities tackle, contributing in this way to existing and upcoming Indigenous projects at the local, national, regional and global levels. Out of the 57 pilot projects that the Indigenous Navigator's small grants facility finances, 14 are directly related to education, out of which about two thirds involve language teaching or revitalisation. The pilot projects minimise discrimination by increasing access to education, offer new culturally-relevant teaching materials for bilingual and intercultural teaching, help further the professional development and inclusion of Indigenous teachers, facilitate knowledge transfer between Indigenous elders and their communities, and foster the recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights regarding the use of Indigenous languages in educational systems.

This document is divided into two parts. The information presented in part 1 is based on the results from the Indigenous Navigator's data collection process and contextualises the small grants facility, while the analysis in part 2 draws on inedited pilot project submissions, progress reports and personal communications with partnering organisations about the projects. The document analysis includes 14 pilot projects from 10 out of 11 countries participating in the initiative: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Kenya, Nepal, Peru, the Philippines, Suriname and Tanzania. In addition, this report features four Trends sections, which complement the context(s) of Indigenous education and connect the pilot projects to national, regional and global realities and perspectives. Indigenous Peoples have been involved in planning the 2022-2032 International Decade of Indigenous Languages and in encouraging coherence among international institutions towards the fulfilment of their human rights. The former is at the core of including Indigenous languages in national education systems and studying them at the same level as dominant languages, while the latter is likely to improve Indigenous education policy worldwide.

The Indigenous Navigator's small grants facility pilot phase intended to take place in 2019 and 2020. Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, some of the pilot projects are still in progress in 2021. The existing results, however, indicate that the pilot projects have transformed major educational issues into real local improvements which are making their way to other localities and other levels. Local, regional and national authorities have shown interest in some of them, and milestones for communities have been achieved regarding language revitalisation.

When the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) was created in 2000,<sup>5</sup> Indigenous representatives urged the United Nations (UN) to issue reports that reflected the global situation and

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3. Romina Quezada Morales, *Dialogue and Self-Determination through the Indigenous Navigator* (Copenhagen, DK: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2021), accessed 27 March 2021, <https://www.iwgia.org/en/resources/publications/3990-dialogues-in-iwgia.html>

4. Ena Alvarado Madsen and David Nathaniel Berger, *Implementing the Indigenous Navigator: Experiences Around the Globe* (Copenhagen, DK: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2020), accessed 26 October, 2020, [https://nav.indigenusnavigator.com/images/documents-english/Reports/Reports2020/Implementing\\_the\\_indigenous\\_navigator.pdf](https://nav.indigenusnavigator.com/images/documents-english/Reports/Reports2020/Implementing_the_indigenous_navigator.pdf)

5. Economic and Social Council, "Establishment of a Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues" (New York: United Nations, 2000).

priorities of Indigenous Peoples.<sup>6</sup> With that in mind, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) has been issuing, since 2009, the report *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* (SOWIP). The first issue provided an overall view of selected topics which were considered priorities by Indigenous Peoples. Chapter IV was devoted to education, discussing how it is a human right, and how Indigenous Peoples were not achieving the same access to quality education as their non-Indigenous peers worldwide.<sup>7</sup> This first SOWIP edition was released close to the end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the first global agenda for development issued in 2000 and which foresaw, among others, equal access to primary education by 2015.<sup>8</sup> SOWIP's chapter on education matched the final results of the MDGs in education: while there were huge improvements in access worldwide by 2015, Indigenous Peoples still faced more challenges due to the limitations that national systems had to provide culturally and linguistically relevant basic education for them.<sup>9</sup>

In 2015, the MDGs were replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>10</sup> Among them, SDG 4 aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all".<sup>11</sup> SDG 4 has seven targets, one of which (target 4.5) specifically mentions Indigenous Peoples: "by 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations".<sup>12</sup> Aware of SDG 4 and target 4.5, UNDESA's third edition of SOWIP was completely devoted to education.<sup>13</sup> The third SOWIP report explores each Indigenous region of the world and follows up on what the first SOWIP stated.

Global efforts and initiatives on Indigenous education show that education remains a critical priority for Indigenous Peoples. Yet, as SOWIP indicates, there are other more urgent issues that Indigenous Peoples must solve, such as health (SOWIP's second volume), poverty, or the environment, including land rights.<sup>14</sup> To this regard, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) followed up with a report on how Indigenous Peoples have been seeking social justice and equity to be able to become self-sustainable. Although education is not a main topic in the report, the ILO's report is important in relation to the theme, because the path towards social justice, equity, and the full enforcement of the right to education for Indigenous Peoples is marked by these issues.<sup>15</sup>

Indigenous Peoples are actively tracking their situation on education, but more, they are also actively involved in international processes related to education. To name a few examples, the UNPFII supported the issuing of SOWIP and its third volume on education; Indigenous Peoples have continued to advocate and work consistently to successfully achieve their explicit mention in the SDGs; a current point in the Indigenous agenda is to create disaggregated data on education that allow the monitoring of their situation and feed the SDGs. In 2008, Tebtebba Foundation issued a compilation of reports from international meetings where Indigenous Peoples discussed how they envisioned the monitoring of their human rights.

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6. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), "State of the World's Indigenous Peoples, First Volume" (September 8, 2009), accessed 16 January, 2021, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/publications/2009/09/state-of-the-worlds-indigenous-peoples-first-volume/>
  7. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* (New York: United Nations, 2009), accessed 16 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/SOWIP/en/SOWIP\\_web.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/SOWIP/en/SOWIP_web.pdf)
  8. United Nations, "Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education", accessed on 16 January, 2021, <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/education.shtml>
  9. UNESCO, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges* (Paris, France: UNESCO, 2015), accessed 16 January, 2021, <https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/EFA%20Global%20Monitoring%20Report%202015.pdf>
  10. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (2015), accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_70\\_1\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf)
  11. *Idem.*
  12. *Idem.*
  13. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Education*. (New York: United Nations, 2008), accessed 16 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2017/12/State-of-Worlds-Indigenous-Peoples\\_III\\_WEB2018.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2017/12/State-of-Worlds-Indigenous-Peoples_III_WEB2018.pdf)
  14. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* (New York: United Nations, 2009), accessed 16 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/SOWIP/en/SOWIP\\_web.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/SOWIP/en/SOWIP_web.pdf); United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Health*. (New York: United Nations, 2014), accessed January 16, 2021, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/03/The-State-of-The-Worlds-Indigenous-Peoples-WEB.pdf>
  15. International Labour Organisation (ILO), *Implementing the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No. 169. Towards an inclusive, sustainable and just future* (Geneva, Switzerland: ILO, 2019), accessed 17 January, 2021, [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_735607.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_735607.pdf)

Education was a recurrent theme in the discussions, usually accompanied by cultural integrity, as well as language preservation and revitalisation.<sup>16</sup>

More recently, in 2016, the UNPFII issued a Backgrounder on the SDGs which specifies that the 2030 Agenda for Development mentions Indigenous Peoples six times, one of which is SDG 4.<sup>17</sup> However, the Backgrounder also identifies how the Agenda oversees collective Indigenous peoples' rights –especially their right to develop their own educational systems–, cultural sensitivity in education, national data disaggregation, and cooperation with member states to make progress towards achieving SDG 4.<sup>18</sup> In 2019, the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG) issued a position paper for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on the SDGs where discrimination against rural Indigenous children in terms of their access to education, lack of use of Indigenous mother tongues for teaching, devaluation of traditional Indigenous knowledge, lack of culturally sensitive curricula, and geographic and financial challenges to pursue higher education were identified as obstacles to achieve SDG 4.<sup>19</sup> All in all, education is more than a relevant issue to Indigenous Peoples, but they still struggle to improve it.

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16. Tebtebba Foundation, *Indicators Relevant for Indigenous Peoples: A Resource Book* (Manila, Philippines: Tebtebba Foundation, 2008).

17. United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), "Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda Backgrounder" (2016), accessed 12 January, 2021, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2016/08/Indigenous-Peoples-and-the-2030-Agenda.pdf>

18. *Idem*.

19. Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG), "High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development 2019, Statement of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG), GOAL 4: Quality Education for All", accessed 14 January, 2021, <https://www.indigenouspeoples-sdg.org/index.php/english/all-resources/ipmg-position-papers-and-publications/ipmg-statements-and-interventions/120-hlpf2019-statement-of-the-indigenous-peoples-major-group-goal-4-quality-education-for-all/file>



Meeting with community representatives in Hollandse Kamp, Suriname, to discuss the foundations and goals of the pilot projects.  
CREDIT: VIDS

# 1. EDUCATION IN THE INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR

## 1.1 WHAT FRAMES EDUCATION WITHIN THE INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR?

As the Special Rapporteur on the right to education Ms. Koumbou Boly Barry has repeatedly stated, education is a human right.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, several international law documents declare that education is a right for all.<sup>21</sup> Indigenous individuals are entitled to the same human rights and fundamental freedoms as non-Indigenous individuals. However, Indigenous Peoples, when seen as collectives, are holders of rights that apply to their contextual circumstances as peoples who seek to exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms.<sup>22</sup> Indigenous Peoples have thus individual education rights, and collective education rights.

Other international law documents specifically protect Indigenous Peoples' right to education. One of them is the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No. 169, commonly known as the ILO 169, which states in Article 7, paragraph 2, that "the improvement of the conditions of life and work and levels of health and education of the peoples concerned, with their participation and cooperation, shall be a matter of priority in plans for the overall economic development of areas they inhabit".<sup>23</sup> More precisely, Articles 26 to 31 of the ILO 169 go about each right to education as an individual and a collective right: education programmes and services should be created and implemented with Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous children should be

20. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education" (2017), accessed 5 November, 2020, <https://documents-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/303/24/PDF/N1730324.pdf?OpenElement>

21. *Idem*. The Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education mentions the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1993) (Art. 4), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (1948) (Art. 26), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1960) (Art. 13), the Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959) (Art. 29), and the UNESCO Constitution (1945).

22. International Labour Organisation (ILO), *Understanding the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989, No. 169* (Geneva, Switzerland: ILO, 2013), accessed 11 January, 2021, [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---normes/documents/publication/wcms\\_205225.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---normes/documents/publication/wcms_205225.pdf)

23. International Labour Organisation (ILO), "Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)", accessed 19 January, 2021, [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0:NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C169](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0:NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169)

able to learn their own Indigenous language, and national education should be able to provide Indigenous students with educational opportunities similar to those of non-Indigenous students.<sup>24</sup>

The Indigenous Navigator’s framework mobilises the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the SDGs to provide a set of tools and indicators that collect Indigenous data, which in turn monitor the implementation of both the UNDRIP and the SDGs. The UNDRIP, which has the ILO 169 as one of its background documents,<sup>25</sup> talks about the right of Indigenous Peoples to education in Articles 14 and 15.<sup>26</sup> Article 14 protects both the collective right of Indigenous Peoples to create and manage their educational institutions and the methods and languages used in them, as well as the individual right of Indigenous Peoples to access all levels of national education. Article 15 protects Indigenous Peoples’ right to have their cultures reflected in national education.<sup>27</sup>

While the ILO 169 and the UNDRIP foresee that states shall ensure the fulfilment of Indigenous Peoples’ rights related to education, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims at ensuring “inclusive and equitable quality education and promot[ing] lifelong learning opportunities for all”.<sup>28</sup> As mentioned in the introduction, this is SDG 4, one of 17 SDGs that compose the Agenda, and the one specifically related to education.<sup>29</sup> In particular, SDG 4.5 targets Indigenous Peoples by seeking to, “by 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations”.<sup>30</sup> However, the Indigenous Navigator also collects data on proficiency in reading and mathematics (SDG 4.1.1), participation in pre-primary and primary education (SDG 4.2.2), and inclusive and safe schools (SDG 4.A.1).<sup>31</sup>

Last, the Indigenous Navigator helps monitor the outcomes of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP).<sup>32</sup> The Conference took place in 2014, and the outcome document presents the commitments made by states to support and enforce Indigenous peoples’ rights.<sup>33</sup> Paragraph 11 of the document reads: “we commit ourselves to ensuring equal access to high-quality education that recognises the diversity of the cultures of indigenous peoples”.<sup>34</sup> Summarising, the Indigenous Navigator monitors access to education, as well as availability and access to culturally and linguistically relevant education. It is based on the UNDRIP’s Articles 14 and 15, and monitors 3 indicators on SDG 4, as well as WCIP’s paragraph 11.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, within the Indigenous Navigator, SDG 4 frames education as a global goal for sustainable development, the UNDRIP frames Indigenous education as a human right, and the WCIP frames the implementation of both SDG 4 and human rights supported by states.

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24. *Idem.*

25. “What is the Indigenous Navigator?”, accessed 12 January, 2021, <https://indigenousnavigator.org/what-is-the-indigenous-navigator>. The Indigenous Navigator is also directly connected to other international instruments which protect Indigenous Peoples rights, namely, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) and the Convention against Torture (CAT).

26. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” (New York: United Nations, 2007).

27. *Idem.*

28. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), “Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (2015), accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_70\\_1\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf)

29. *Idem.*

30. *Idem.*

31. “What is the Indigenous Navigator?”, accessed 12 January, 2021, <https://indigenousnavigator.org/what-is-the-indigenous-navigator>

32. *Idem.*

33. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), “Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples”, 2014, accessed 12 January, 2021, <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/69/2>

34. *Idem.*

35. The Danish Institute for Human Rights, “The Indigenous Navigator Tools Database”, accessed 12 January, 2021, [https://navigator.humanrights.dk/the-explorer/?d%5B834%5D=834&c=All&u=All&it=All&ic=All&ka=All&i=All&s=s\\_c=1&s\\_u=1&s\\_a=1&s\\_i=1&s\\_g=1&s\\_q=1](https://navigator.humanrights.dk/the-explorer/?d%5B834%5D=834&c=All&u=All&it=All&ic=All&ka=All&i=All&s=s_c=1&s_u=1&s_a=1&s_i=1&s_g=1&s_q=1)

**Table 1:** Synthesis of the three axes upon which the Indigenous Navigator is based, for education

	UNDRIP	SDG 4 indicators	WCIP
<b>INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR'S EDUCATION FRAMEWORK</b>	Article 14.1. Indigenous Peoples' right to control their educational systems	SDG 4.1.1 Proficiency in reading and mathematics	Para. 11. Ensuring equal access to high-quality education while recognising Indigenous Peoples' cultures
	Article 14.2. Indigenous Peoples' right to access all levels of education as provided by the state	SDG 4.2.2 Participation in pre-primary education	
	Article 14.3. States shall support Indigenous Peoples' access to education	SDG 4.A.1 Inclusive and safe schools	
	Article 15.1. Indigenous Peoples' right to be culturally and linguistically represented in education		

## 1.2 WHAT DO THE INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR DATA SAY ABOUT INDIGENOUS EDUCATION?

Data collection through the Indigenous Navigator tool takes place via two questionnaires distributed to Indigenous communities and duty bearers assessing national government actions, respectively. The questionnaires allow stakeholders, including government agents, NGOs, Indigenous Peoples' own organisations and communities to gather both qualitative and quantitative data.<sup>36</sup> In the community survey, 11 questions relate to education, while 17 questions in the national survey gather educational data. Up to this date, the Indigenous Navigator has collected data from 146 questionnaires across communities in 11 countries.<sup>37</sup>

In education, the Indigenous Navigator has facilitated the collection of data on access to education. The results from those communities surveyed showed that, in primary education, Peru and Bolivia present the highest levels of access to primary education, with 90% and about 80% respectively, contrasting with Cameroon's achievement of only 30%. Gender-wise, Kenya and Tanzania show that more boys than girls finish primary education. The situation in secondary education is similar, although the percentage of Indigenous individuals accessing that level is lower in every case. Finally, enrolment in tertiary education is below 40% everywhere with the exception of Tanzania, where it reaches 60% for both boys and girls.

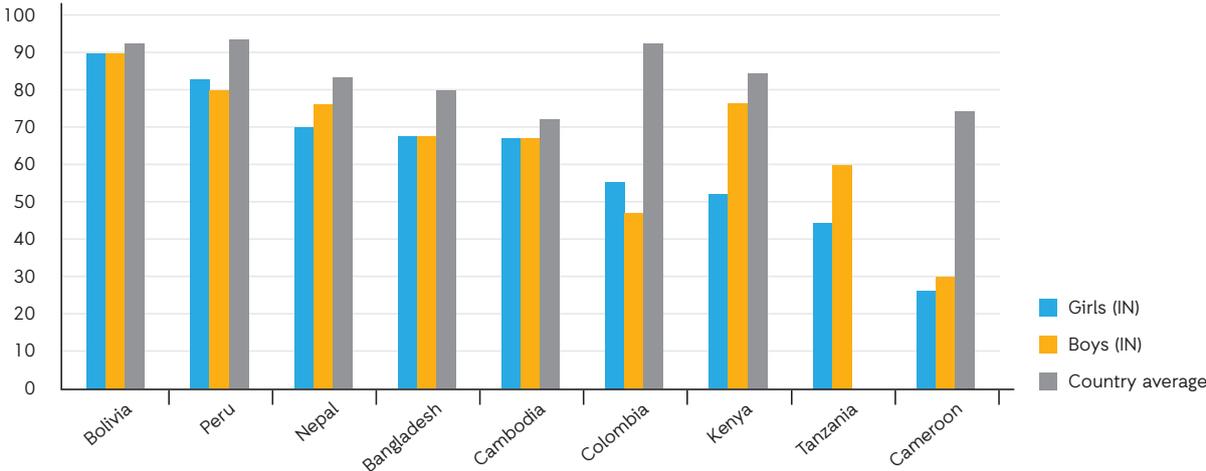
The Indigenous Navigator's data are not only useful to show how the Indigenous communities in the surveys are not finishing their education, but also provide with level and gender disaggregated data that correspond to the realities of specific communities that can be then compared with the respective country's overall situation. For instance, according to the World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE), Peru's primary completion rate shows in average that 84% of the country's poorest completes primary education.<sup>38</sup> That figure indicates that Indigenous Peoples finishing primary education are below the average poorest people in Peru. Further, in Cameroon, according to the national average, 14% of girls and 18% of boys finish secondary education, but these percentages are still above the Indigenous Navigator's data percentages.<sup>39</sup>

36. *Idem*.  
 37. Indigenous Navigator, "Data from community surveys (2017-2020)" (n.d.), unpublished. The countries are: Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Suriname, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, the Philippines, Cameroon, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania.  
 38. According to the 2012 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) for ages 15-24. World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE), "Peru", accessed 14 January, 2021, <https://www.education-inequalities.org/countries/peru/#?dimension=all&group=all&year=latest>  
 39. According to UNICEF's 2014 Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) for ages 20-29. World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE), "Cameroon", accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.education-inequalities.org/countries/cameroon/indicators/comp\\_upsec\\_v2#?dimension=all&group=all&age\\_group=lcomp\\_upsec\\_v2&year=l2014](https://www.education-inequalities.org/countries/cameroon/indicators/comp_upsec_v2#?dimension=all&group=all&age_group=lcomp_upsec_v2&year=l2014)

Tanzania does not appear in the WIDE database,<sup>40</sup> so the data retrieved by the Indigenous Navigator are valuable indicators of Indigenous education in the country.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 below show the percentages of completed primary and secondary education, and enrolment in tertiary education, by gender, according to the self-perception and self-reporting from the Indigenous communities that answered the questionnaire, next to the country average.<sup>41</sup>

**FIGURE 1.** Percentage of completed primary education of the communities that participated in the Indigenous Navigator’s survey in comparison with the national average

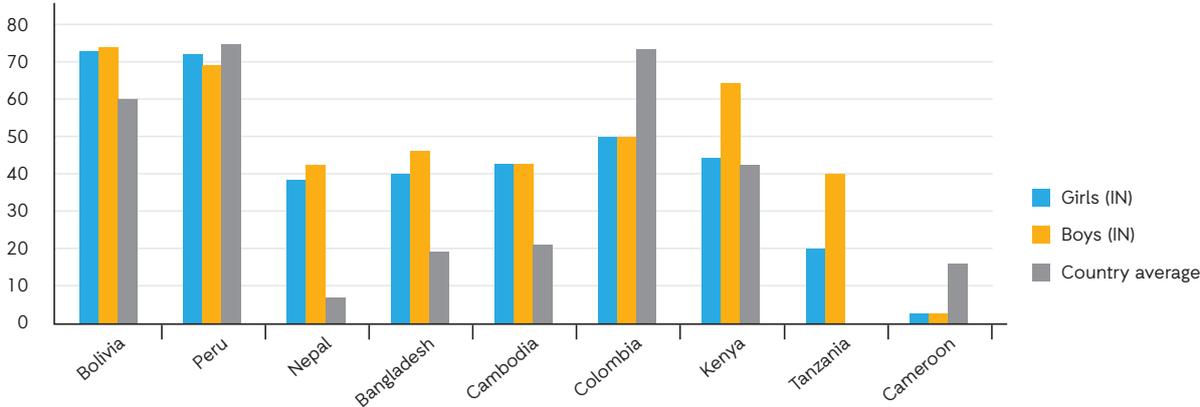


Notes: The data for the Indigenous Navigator were taken from the community surveys, question T2-V101. The country data were taken from the World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE), “Primary completion rate”, accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.education-inequalities.org/indicators/comp\\_prim\\_v2#?sort=mean&dimension=all&group=all&age\\_group=comp\\_prim\\_v2&countries=all](https://www.education-inequalities.org/indicators/comp_prim_v2#?sort=mean&dimension=all&group=all&age_group=comp_prim_v2&countries=all)

**Figure 1:** The chart shows that Colombia reports the highest percentage of completed primary education at the national level according to the WIDE database, but not within the communities that implemented the Indigenous Navigator’s survey. Bolivia and Peru report results that are more balanced with the national average, followed by Nepal, Bangladesh and Cambodia. Kenya shows significant inequality in the education of Indigenous girls, while Cameroon shows a similar gap to that of Colombia in primary education completion between the people in the survey and the country average, but with lower completion percentages.

40. World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE), accessed 14 January, 2021, <https://www.education-inequalities.org/>; data for Tanzania are not available.  
 41. *Idem*.

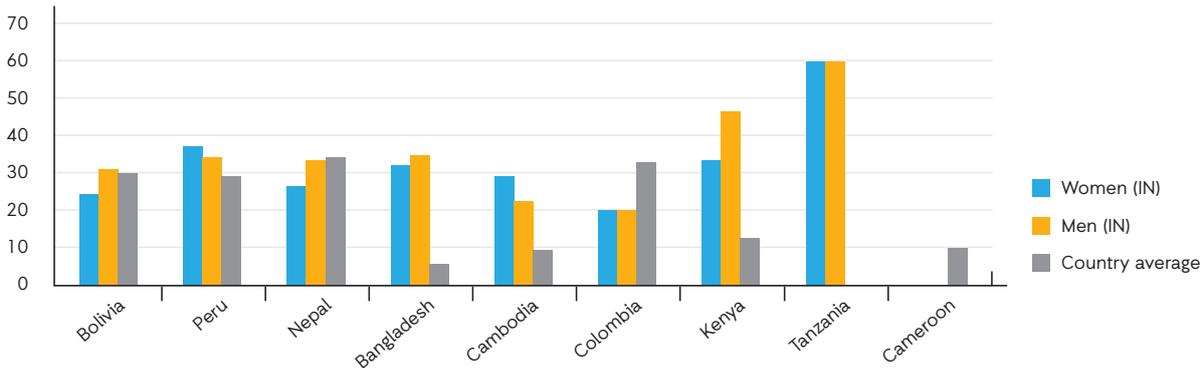
**FIGURE 2.** Percentage of completed secondary education of the communities that participated in the Indigenous Navigator’s survey in comparison with the national average



Notes: The data for the Indigenous Navigator were taken from the community surveys, question T2-V102. The country data were taken from the World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE), “Upper secondary completion rate”, accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.education-inequalities.org/indicators/comp\\_upsec\\_v2#?sort=mean&dimension=all&group=all&age\\_group=comp\\_upsec\\_v2&countries=all](https://www.education-inequalities.org/indicators/comp_upsec_v2#?sort=mean&dimension=all&group=all&age_group=comp_upsec_v2&countries=all)

**Figure 2:** The chart presents improvements for Indigenous communities when compared to primary education. Bolivia and Peru still have the highest percentages of secondary education graduates among the communities that took the survey, followed by Colombia, Cambodia, Bangladesh and Nepal, while Kenya and Tanzania show stark completion differences between boys and girls. Cameroon’s completion rate is well below the country average. Interestingly enough, the national average is below the communities’ completion rates in Bolivia and Kenya, and far below in Cambodia, Bangladesh and Nepal.

**FIGURE 3.** Percentage of enrolment in tertiary education of the communities that participated in the Indigenous Navigator’s survey in comparison with the national average



Notes: The data for the Indigenous Navigator were taken from the community surveys, question T2-V103. The country data were taken from the World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE), “Higher education attendance”, accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.education-inequalities.org/indicators/higher\\_1822#?sort=mean&dimension=all&group=all&age\\_group=attend\\_higher\\_1822&countries=all](https://www.education-inequalities.org/indicators/higher_1822#?sort=mean&dimension=all&group=all&age_group=attend_higher_1822&countries=all)

**Figure 3.** Overall, enrolment is lower in all cases, but Tanzania stands out with 60% for both women and men in the communities that took the Indigenous Navigator’s survey, while Cameroon’s enrolment is non-existent. Bangladesh, Cambodia and Kenya continue being below their national averages, while the situation in the other cases seems to be more equal to that of the national mean. The exception is Colombia, where the national average is above 30%, and that of the communities in the surveys is 20%.

The data on education from the Indigenous Navigator also monitor school facilities, in particular access to basic services. Table 2 below shows the degree of accessibility of primary school facilities among the communities that answered the questionnaires. As can be seen, results go from 100% accessibility in the Philippines, to most schools in Kenya being moderately inaccessible.<sup>42</sup> Further, Table 3 displays the percentages of access to specific facilities: electricity, internet, computers, separate toilets, handwashing, infrastructure for disabled students, or none of the above. As observed, results vary greatly, with Kenya and Tanzania having no access to the internet or computers, to the almost absence of very essential needs like drinking water in Bolivia or Cambodia.<sup>43</sup>

**Table 2:** Results of the Indigenous Navigator’s survey question “how accessible are primary school facilities in your community?”

Country	Highly Accessible	Accessible	Moderately Inaccessible	Inaccessible	Highly Inaccessible
Bangladesh	12	36	32	4	16
Bolivia	50	22	22	6	0
Cambodia	0	27	45	27	0
Cameroon	34	29	14	11	11
Colombia	50	0	0	25	25
Kenya	0	0	67	33	0
Nepal	30	10	60	0	0
Peru	29	47	24	0	0
Philippines	100	0	0	0	0
Suriname	58	33	0	0	8
Tanzania	0	0	0	100	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>

Note: Data correspond to the percentage of communities reporting different levels of accessibility by country. Table created using question T2-V107

**Table 2.** In comparison with the national average, 56% of the communities that answered the question reported that facilities are highly accessible or accessible. Kenya and Tanzania show the greatest degree of inaccessibility, while Peru and Bolivia display the highest degrees of accessibility. Once again, Colombia shows different results among communities.

42. Indigenous Navigator, “Data from community surveys (2017-2020)” (n.d.), unpublished.

43. *Idem*.

**Table 3:** Access per facilities in educational establishments according to the Indigenous Navigator’s survey results

Country	Electricity	Internet (Teaching)	Computer (Teaching)	Handicap infrastructure	Separate toilets	Handwashing facilities	Drinking water	None of those
Bangladesh	36	0	4	8	48	64	88	4
Bolivia	94	12	18	12	35	18	6	0
Cambodia	18	9	0	9	9	27	18	64
Colombia	50	50	25	50	25	25	25	50
Kenya	100	0	0	0	83	0	17	0
Nepal	50	0	30	0	10	50	90	0
Peru	88	13	0	0	75	75	25	13
Philippines	50	0	50	0	50	100	50	0
Suriname	60	40	20	0	80	40	40	20
Tanzania	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>13</b>

Note: Data correspond to the percentage of communities reporting access to facilities. Table created using question T2-V108

**Table 3.** Notably in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Tanzania, lack of electricity is considerably higher than for other countries. Other issues are access to the internet and computers in most countries, as well as infrastructure for disabled students. On the other hand, separate toilets, handwashing facilities and drinking water present discrepancies, but percentages tend to be higher. Still, in Cambodia and Colombia, 65% and 50% of the communities that answered the questionnaires say they do not have access to any of the facilities mentioned.

### 1.3 HOW DOES THE INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR TRANSFORM THE DATA COLLECTED INTO ACTION?

One of the takeaways from the questionnaire results is that the reality of Indigenous Peoples varies greatly. With these varied contexts in mind, in 2019, the Indigenous Navigator began offering the possibility to carry out small scale pilot projects from which Indigenous communities benefit, based on the needs identified by communities themselves through the questionnaires. These projects operate through a small grants facility, that is, a fund managed in such a flexible way as to respond to Indigenous needs as they express them.<sup>44</sup> The Indigenous Navigator’s small grants facility is financed by the European Commission and administered by IWGIA,<sup>45</sup> but the management of the projects that receive funding follows a bottom-up structure and is cemented by direct partnerships with communities and national partners.<sup>46</sup> More specifically, the small grants facility supports original, pilot projects that present innovative solutions to economic and social issues in order to enhance equality, justice and the political participation of Indigenous communities;<sup>47</sup> these pilot projects seek to become examples of further policy implementation with help from other state and non-state actors.<sup>48</sup> As the introduction mentions, so far there have been 57 approved

44. IWGIA, “Focus Areas – Cross-cutting methodologies”, accessed 25 April, 2021, <https://www.iwgia.org/en/focus>

45. Personal communications with IWGIA (2020).

46. IWGIA, “Focus Areas – Cross-cutting methodologies”, accessed 25 April, 2021, <https://www.iwgia.org/en/focus>

47. Indigenous Navigator, “Small Grants Scheme - Guidelines for project proposals” (n.d.), unpublished.

48. *Idem*.

community-led pilot projects<sup>49</sup> targeting the priorities identified by Indigenous communities through the Indigenous Navigator’s monitoring tools: legal recognition; health and wellbeing; education, language and culture; income, production and food sovereignty; governance, leadership, and institutions; land tenure, environmental protection and access to natural resources; and empowerment of women and youth.<sup>50</sup> The grants, which range between 10,000 and 60,000 Euro, contribute directly to ensuring that community-led projects can be implemented.<sup>51</sup>

When applying for a grant to finance a pilot project, organisations are required to indicate the SDGs and Indigenous peoples’ rights that the initiative addresses.<sup>52</sup> That process ensures that the approved pilot projects operate under the Indigenous Navigator framework. The Indigenous Navigator’s partners play an essential role in relation to the administration of the grants as well. These partners manage the grants and are able to support Indigenous communities and other related organisations at the national and local levels –enhancing their capacity when necessary.<sup>53</sup> In addition, the small grants have the option to re-allocate previous or supplementary budgets to expand the scope of the project during the implementation phase if necessary. This feature has proved extremely useful during the COVID-19 pandemic, as many communities had the flexibility to adjust their planned initiatives to face other more impending needs.<sup>54</sup>

Education usually emerges at the crossroads of several priorities in the small grants pilot project proposals, as it is linked to other SDGs such as SDG 3 on wellbeing, SDG 5 on gender equality, or SDG 8 on decent work and sustainable growth.<sup>55</sup> By the same token, education within the small grants facility often goes hand in hand with language and culture, a connection also often made in the UNDRIP. Because education is at the centre of several goals and rights, it is a pivotal priority within the pilot projects.

So far, the small grants facility has financed 14 education or education-related projects that address five Indigenous priorities, summarized in Table 4.<sup>56</sup> The projects will be presented in detail in the next part.

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49. Ena Alvarado Madsen and David Nathaniel Berger, *Implementing the Indigenous Navigator: Experiences Around the Globe* (Copenhagen, DK: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2020), accessed 26 October, 2020, [https://nav.indigenousnavigator.com/images/documents-english/Reports/Reports2020/Implementing\\_the\\_indigenous\\_navigator.pdf](https://nav.indigenousnavigator.com/images/documents-english/Reports/Reports2020/Implementing_the_indigenous_navigator.pdf)

50. Indigenous Navigator, “Small Grants Scheme - Guidelines for project proposals” (n.d.), unpublished.

51. *Idem*.

52. Indigenous Navigator, “Grant proposal template” (n.d.), unpublished.

53. Personal communications with IWGIA (2020).

54. The impact of COVID-19 on indigenous communities: Insights from the Indigenous Navigator (The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2020), accessed 7 February, 2021, [https://indigenousnavigator.org/sites/indigenousnavigator.org/files/media/document/The\\_impact\\_of\\_COVID-19\\_on\\_indigenous\\_communities\\_-\\_Insights\\_from\\_the\\_Indigenous\\_Navigator.pdf](https://indigenousnavigator.org/sites/indigenousnavigator.org/files/media/document/The_impact_of_COVID-19_on_indigenous_communities_-_Insights_from_the_Indigenous_Navigator.pdf)

55. “Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4)”, accessed 18 January, 2021, [Sdg4education2030.org/the-goal](https://sdg4education2030.org/the-goal)

56. Indigenous Navigator, “Small Grants Scheme - Guidelines for project proposals” (n.d.), unpublished.

**Table 4:** Matrix of the Indigenous Navigator’s small grants facility pilot projects related to education with the small grants facility’s Indigenous priorities in education

Pilot project by area and country	Priority				
	Address and minimise obstacles in Indigenous communities’ access to quality primary and secondary education as well as adult literacy programmes without discrimination	Develop bilingual and intercultural teaching materials and methods based on Indigenous knowledge, practices and technologies for use in schools and in community training	Update the skills and knowledge of Indigenous teachers to provide adequate and engaging intercultural education	Increase intergenerational knowledge transfer from Indigenous elders to youth	Engage in dialogue with governments for recognition and use of Indigenous languages as official languages in schools and other public institutions
<b>Africa</b>					
Improving the citizenship of Indigenous forest peoples (Cameroon)	✓	-	-	-	-
Supplementary Budgets - E-learning in Response to COVID-19 (Kenya)	✓	-	-	-	-
Access to safe and clean water and improvement of school facilities in Terrat (Tanzania)	✓	-	-	-	-
<b>Asia</b>					
Ensuring inclusive quality education and revitalisation and integration of Indigenous Hajong language and culture in Durgapur, Nekrotona (Bangladesh)	-	✓	✓	-	✓
Language, Education and Cultural Development for the Khasi Indigenous Community in Moulvibazar (Bangladesh)	-	-	✓	✓	-
Empowering Indigenous men and women youth in preserving and developing natural resources in order to improve their livelihoods and management system (Cambodia)	-	-	-	-	✓
Promoting Inclusive Development of Chhantyal Indigenous Peoples (Nepal)	-	-	-	-	✓
Promoting Indigenous peoples’ rights and Social Inclusion of the Magar Community in Western Nepal	-	-	-	-	✓
Our Language, Our Identity (Philippines)	-	✓	-	✓	-
<b>Latin America</b>					
Revalorisation and practice of the native language among the youth of Jach’a Marka Tapacarí Cándor Apacheta (Bolivia)	-	✓	-	-	✓
Revitalisation and vitalisation of the Bésiro Language of the Monkox Nation of Lomerío (Bolivia)	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Intercultural academy for Wampis leaders “Sharian” (Peru)	-	-	-	-	✓
Preservation and transfer of the language & traditional knowledge and practice of the Arowak people in Hollandse Kamp (Suriname)	-	✓	✓	-	-
Preservation and transfer of the language of the Arowak people in Marijke Dorp (Suriname)	-	✓	✓	-	-

**Table 4.** The pilot projects appear alphabetically according to their country and are divided by geographic area. Thanks to the matrix, the priorities of the Indigenous communities where the pilot projects were developed unveil that priorities correspond to different geopolitical circumstances.

# Trends

## Effects of COVID-19 on Indigenous education and community responses

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic brought about additional challenges to Indigenous Peoples' education. One of the greatest difficulties to overcome was the digital divide, in particular internet access but, for some Indigenous communities, the issue began with electricity access. As seen in Table 2, internet circumstances in schools vary across the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator's survey. During the pandemic and because of school closures, having little or no access to the Internet made it impossible for children to log on to the national education platforms that many governments offered.<sup>57</sup> At the tertiary level, many students were compelled to return to their communities when lockdowns began because they could not afford university life.<sup>58</sup> In Kenya, as will be explored in the following section, the Indigenous Navigator's small grant facility could be adapted to address the lack of connectivity in Maji Moto so students could prepare for nationally standardised exams.<sup>59</sup> In other cases, Indigenous Peoples proved to be resilient and resourceful on their own. That was the case of Bolivia, where the political crisis that the country experienced between 2019 and 2020 aggravated the provision of goods by the state, to the extent that education stopped being offered and all students were said to pass the school year automatically. Aware of the loss of knowledge caused by such measures, some teachers in the communities where the Indigenous Navigator works went from home to home handing in and picking up study booklets and homework.<sup>60</sup> In sum, the experiences of Indigenous Peoples during the COVID-19 pandemic showed that, while education remains a priority to them, support in times of crisis coming from initiatives such as the Indigenous Navigator offer a helping hand, which in times of crisis can make a considerable difference for the uninterrupted provision of education and the pursuit of SDG 4.

57. ILEPA, interview, 5 August, 2020; Kapaeeng Foundation, interview, 6 August, 2020.

58. ONIC, interview, 19 August 2020; Tebtebba Foundation, interview, 28 August, 2020.

59. ILEPA and Maji Moto Group Ranch, "Supplementary Budgets - E-learning in Response to COVID-19" (2020), unpublished.

60. CEJIS, interview, 7 August, 2020.



Primary school children dancing to the rhythm of traditional Indigenous songs in Lomerío, Bolivia.  
CREDIT: IWGIA

## 2. INNOVATING INDIGENOUS EDUCATION THROUGH THE SMALL GRANTS FACILITY

Part 1 of this report illustrated how the Indigenous Navigator’s data collection tool served as basis for the creation of pilot projects that tackle Indigenous priorities according to what the Indigenous communities that participated in the surveys expressed. Out of the 57 existing pilot projects, 14 or about 25% are education-related. This chapter presents the 14 education or education-related pilot projects financed by the Indigenous Navigator’s small grants facility and implemented since January 2019.<sup>61</sup> Instead of being introduced one by one, or by geographical area, they are presented in accordance with the priorities identified by Indigenous communities through the Indigenous Navigator’s questionnaires.

### 2.1 MINIMISING OBSTACLES TO QUALITY EDUCATION ACCESS WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION

Access to quality education is at the core of SDG 4 and, more specifically target 4.1: “by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes”.<sup>62</sup> This target refers to the provision of publicly funded education for twelve years.<sup>63</sup> As observed in the previous chapter (see Figures 1 and 2), Indigenous communities’ access

61. Personal communications with IWGIA (2020).  
62. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), “Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (2015), accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_70\\_1\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf)  
63. SDG4education, “Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4)”, accessed 18 January, 2021, [Sdg4education2030.org/the-goal](http://Sdg4education2030.org/the-goal)

to primary and secondary education varies by level, country, and even community. Quality education is likely to vary as well since access to tertiary education oftentimes depends on the knowledge and skills students acquire through their primary and secondary education. Based on Figure 3, those realities are mixed.

An important feature to highlight in the Indigenous Navigator’s pilot projects that address access to quality education obstacles is that these are all located on the African continent. Three pilot projects, one in each of the African countries where the Indigenous Navigator operates, seek to improve access to e-learning, school facilities, and national education systems (Table 5).

**Table 5:** Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator’s surveys in addressing and minimising obstacles in Indigenous communities’ access to quality primary and secondary education, as well as adult literacy programmes, without discrimination

Country	Pilot project	Priority to Address
Cameroon	Improving the citizenship of Indigenous forest peoples	To provide citizenship to Indigenous individuals to access national education systems
Kenya	Supplementary Budgets - E-learning in Response to COVID-19	To improve e-learning facilities to be able to catch up with national education standards
Tanzania	Access to safe and clean water and improvement of school facilities in Terrat	To improve school facilities to have a place to study

To begin with, Kenya presents moderate primary and secondary education completion rates, with about 60% of boys finishing both levels, and about 40% of girls finishing both levels (see Figures 2 and 3) in those communities implementing the Indigenous Navigator’s survey. Primary education facility accessibility varies from moderately accessible (67%) to inaccessible (33%), and schools do not have internet or computers (see Tables 2 and 3). While those students who manage to complete primary education do travel to school, when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, they could not continue studying through online learning. In particular, the Maasai pastoralist Indigenous communities in Maji Moto, southern Kenya, were carrying out a pilot project that targets health and wellbeing, access to water, and access to lands and protection to natural resources. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maasai noticed that their youth were being left behind in education –the Kenyan Ministry of Education encouraged learning and tutorship online, as well as internet-based platforms, so that students across the country could graduate from primary and secondary education. This situation struck the Maji Moto students particularly hard, as they do not have electricity, let alone internet access, and neither do their schools. To solve the issue, the Indigenous Livelihood Enhancement Partners (ILEPA) – the Indigenous Navigator’s partner in the country– explored the possibility to expand the scope of the original project. They requested a supplementary budget from the small grants facility on behalf of the communities to install an internet modem, provide subscription for three months, purchase a printer, and obtain the necessary revision material for 100 students from Maji Moto, Enkutoto and Ololoipangi.<sup>64</sup>

Another project of the Maasai, this time in Tanzania, reflects how access to education is conditioned by facilities. The project is called “Access to safe and clean water, enhanced livelihood, and improvement of school facilities in Terrat”.<sup>65</sup> As the Pastoralist Indigenous Non-Governmental Organisation (PINGO’s Forum)

64. ILEPA and Maji Moto Group Ranch, “Supplementary Budgets - E-learning in Response to COVID-19” (2020), unpublished.  
 65. PINGO’s Forum, “Access to safe and clean water, enhanced livelihood, and improvement of school facilities in Terrat - Pilot project, progress report” (2020), unpublished.

describes it, the project addresses exclusion and seeks equality, justice and political participation. The project intersects with SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities, and SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.<sup>66</sup> However, SDG 4 and SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure are also addressed as the project seeks to build a dining hall in the Terrat High School.<sup>67</sup> The project for the Terrat high school is innovative and sustainable because it will lead other communities to do the same, improving thus the sanitary and safety conditions of more students in Tanzania.<sup>68</sup> As of September, 2020, the construction of the dining hall was at the rooftop of the building.<sup>69</sup> When it is finished, it will address the lack of washing facilities and drinking water reported in the questionnaires (see Table 3); it will also be addressing target 4.A in SDG 4, which looks to build and upgrade inclusive and safe schools.<sup>70</sup>

In many cases, the distance between schools and communities is an obstacle for Indigenous Peoples to access education but, for Cameroon's Indigenous forest peoples, another challenge comes before distance: having an identification document to enrol in school. "Improving the citizenship of Indigenous forest peoples" is the pilot project that the Indigenous Navigator's partner Okani is carrying out along with the Indigenous platform Gbabandi and Indigenous communities that took part in the survey, and that identified the need to have birth certificates to gain full access to the country's public life, including education.<sup>71</sup> While all of Cameroon's Indigenous forest peoples face this issue, it is more common among the Baka and Bagyéli Indigenous communities living in the East and South of the country, an estimated total of 10, 739 people.<sup>72</sup> Among the challenges in education due to a lack of identification documents are: 1) outdated data on school enrolment, 2) school dropouts at the time of taking national examinations,<sup>73</sup> and 3) access to quality education. To address these, Okani partnered with Gbabandi to establish contact with all the communities concerned and accompany them through the process of obtaining a birth certificate.<sup>74</sup> One of the first outcomes of the project, and one that supports its sustainability, is the issuing of the "Guide communautaire pour l'établissement de l'acte de naissance" (Community Guide to Obtain a Birth Certificate), a step-by-step booklet to register newborns, babies, children and adults.<sup>75</sup> Through the citizenship project, the Indigenous Navigator's pilot projects are advancing target 4.2.2 (access to pre-primary and primary education), but also SDGs 10 (reduced inequalities) and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).<sup>76</sup>

## 2.2 DEVELOPING BILINGUAL AND INTERCULTURAL TEACHING MATERIALS AND METHODS BASED ON INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICES AND TECHNOLOGIES

The UNDRIP's Article 14.1 foresees the right of Indigenous Peoples to study in their mother languages, while Article 13.1 talks about their right "to revitalise, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures".<sup>77</sup> While the national

66. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (2015), accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_70\\_1\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf)

67. PINGO's Forum, "Access to safe and clean water, enhanced livelihood, and improvement of school facilities in Terrat - Pilot project, progress report" (2020), unpublished.

68. *Idem*.

69. *Idem*.

70. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (2015), accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_70\\_1\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf)

71. To find out more about the Indigenous Navigator's pilot project in Cameroon, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flaPrVSeHY4>

72. Okani and Gbabandi, "Amélioration de la citoyenneté des Peuples Autochtones des forêts - Formulaire de demande pour les micro-projets pilotes" (2019), unpublished.

73. Okani, "Explanatory note on the urgent activities to be implemented within the Gbabandi micro-project" (2020), unpublished.

74. Okani and Gbabandi, "Amélioration de la citoyenneté des Peuples Autochtones des forêts - Formulaire de demande pour les micro-projets pilotes" (2019), unpublished.

75. Okani and Forest Peoples Programme, *Guide communautaire pour l'établissement de l'acte de naissance*, accessed 3 February, 2021, <https://indigenounavigator.org/sites/indigenounavigator.org/files/media/document/Legal%20Guide%20-%20Citizenship%20project%20-A5%20OKANI-1.pdf>

76. *Idem*.

77. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (New York: United Nations, 2007).

realities of the Indigenous communities that participate in the Indigenous Navigator’s surveys differ, they all coincide in the importance to make language, culture, and knowledge sustainable. The Indigenous Navigator’s six pilot projects that are producing teaching material in an Indigenous language approach schooling from an intercultural perspective, envisioning a bilingual model that renders education opportunities more equal. The outcomes, however, are remarkably varied, and range from text books and manuals, to dictionaries and orthographies, to material for the radio and even apps (Table 6). The pilot projects to be described below reflect in this way both the immediate need to revitalise languages in daily life, and the long-term goal of making Indigenous language, culture and knowledge teaching in schools sustainable.

**Table 6:** Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator’s surveys in developing bilingual and intercultural teaching materials and methods based on Indigenous knowledge, practices and technologies for use in schools and in community training

Country	Pilot project	Priority to Address
Bangladesh	Ensuring inclusive quality education and revitalisation and integration of Indigenous Hajong language and culture in Durgapur, Nekrotona	To produce a Hajong Language Dictionary and Hajong Language Books to ensure the use of Hajong in schools and reduce drop-outs due to language barriers
Bolivia	Revalorisation and practice of the native language among the youth of Jach’a Marka Tapacarí Cándor Apacheta	To produce audio teaching material in Quechua that reaches out to the youth, especially 5th and 6th graders, so they learn their language
Bolivia	Revitalisation and vitalisation of the Bésiro Language of the Monkox Nation of Lomerío	To print bilingual textbooks that ensure the teaching of the national curriculum in Bésiro, the local language
Philippines	Our Language, Our Identity	To produce an orthography of the Mandaya language to encourage intercultural teaching in schools and community trainings
Suriname	Preservation and transfer of the language & traditional knowledge and practice of the Arowak people in Hollandse Kamp	To develop manuals, books and apps to teach the Arowak language
Suriname	Preservation and transfer of the language of the Arowak people in Marijke Dorp	To develop manuals, books and apps to teach the Arowak language

**Table 6.** The communities identified the need to develop teaching material to preserve their language, culture and knowledges, and submitted innovative solutions to the small grants facility. Those innovative proposals range from the most basic production of material to reach out to a wide audience, as in Jach’a Marka Tapacarí Cándor Apacheta territory in Bolivia’s highlands, to complex linguistic products such as a Hajong Dictionary in Bangladesh, and a Mandaya orthography in the Philippines.

In Bolivia, the existence of laws that encourage plurilingualism<sup>78</sup> facilitates the implementation of educational pilot projects with the specific aim to develop teaching materials in Indigenous languages. One of those projects is the “Revalorisation and practice of the native language among the youth of Jach’a Marka Tapacarí Cándor Apacheta”.<sup>79</sup> The Indigenous territory of Jach’a Marka Tapacarí Cándor Apacheta, in Pazña

78. Bolivia’s Political Constitution of the State provides that education shall be intercultural, intracultural, and plurilingual. In other words, the state recognises that it is formed of many nations, each one with their own cultural and linguistic traits, and that they have the right to practise them and receive education according to their ancestral practices and in their languages. See Constitución Política del Estado (La Paz: Gaceta Oficial de Bolivia, 2009). See also the Avelino Siñani-Elizardo Pérez Law on Education (La Paz: Gaceta Oficial de Bolivia, 2010), devoted to reinforcing the Constitution’s cultural and linguistic rights in education in further detail.

79. CEJIS, “Revalorisation and practice of the native language among the youth of Jach’a Marka Tapacarí Cándor Apacheta” (2018), unpublished.

and Antequera, Oruro Department, is in Bolivia's highlands and is home to 39 Quechua communities. The centre of the community is a town called Peñas, which has a school that teaches to children and youth at the primary and secondary levels. However, Spanish has been the language of instruction, a characteristic of the national school system which has severely affected the use of local languages, to the extent that 99% of the youth do not speak their traditional Quechua language.<sup>80</sup> This situation has been affecting a population of about 10,500 people in 56 communities.<sup>81</sup> Thanks to the Indigenous Navigator's surveys and questionnaires, the Centro de Estudios Jurídicos e Investigación Social (CEJIS) took note of the situation and presented a pilot project to revitalise Quechua among the youth on behalf of the communities.<sup>82</sup> CEJIS, the Indigenous Navigator's national partner organisation in Bolivia and the beneficiary communities, settled as one of the goals of the project the production of an educational strategy of revalorisation of the Quechua language among 5th and 6th graders in both primary and secondary schools.<sup>83</sup> As of October, 2020, the radio stations in Peña were already broadcasting the audio material that was produced through this pilot project to teach Quechua.<sup>84</sup> The Quechua language project is in line with intercultural practices of knowledge exchange thanks to the participation of technical staff and specialised consultants who are working on the production of educational material in Peña.<sup>85</sup>

While the pilot project on the revalorisation of the Quechua language is taking place in the highlands, Bolivia's lowlands are also implementing a pilot project to revitalise Bésiro, the language of the Monkox nation.<sup>86</sup> Once again, the creation of this pilot project finds its basis in the results from the Indigenous Navigator's surveys. The pilot project in the lowlands also has local support from the Central Indígena de Comunidades Originarias de Lomerío (CICOL).<sup>87</sup> While the pilot project in the highlands seeks the fulfilment of the UNDRIP's Article 14 to study in the mother language,<sup>88</sup> this pilot project tackles the UNDRIP's Article 13 on culture and language revitalisation and sustainability for future generations through the use of a specialised curriculum to teach bilingual education.<sup>89</sup> The primary beneficiaries of the project are students from grades 1 to 7 in two schools in Lomerío, Santa Cruz Department.<sup>90</sup> Among the activities of the project are the printing of educational material in Bésiro language, and the teaching of the school curriculum by teachers who also speak the language.<sup>91</sup> As of October 2020, more than 1,000 bilingual text books had been printed out to initially serve 70 students, but which expect to be used by the estimate Lomerío population of 1,720 students.<sup>92</sup> The project expects to become sustainable thanks to the renewal of the agreement to teach in Bésiro between CEJIS, CICOL and Bolivia's Instituto Plurinacional de Estudio de Lengua y Cultura (Plurinational Institute for the Study of Language and Culture, IPELC) in December, 2020, when the pilot project concluded.<sup>93</sup>

In line with the UNDRIP's Articles 13 and 14,<sup>94</sup> the Indigenous villages of Hollandse Kamp and Marijke Dorp in Suriname designed and are implementing education projects to revitalise their Arowak language.<sup>95</sup> Both projects highlight the negative impact of the national Dutch speaking educational system on the learning and use of Arowak among the last two generations. In Hollandse Kamp, the elders still speak Arowak but,

80. *Idem.*

81. *Idem.*

82. *Idem.*

83. *Idem.*

84. CEJIS, "Navegador Indígena - Pilar 3: Facilitando la implementación de los ODS para los pueblos indígenas. Informe narrativo" (2020), unpublished.

85. To find out more about the Indigenous Navigator's Pilot Project in Jach'a Marka Tapacarí Cándor Apacheta, Bolivia, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAOAPf8VKMQ>

86. To find out more about the Indigenous Navigator's pilot project in Lomerío, Bolivia, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2Mrh5xWEgc>

87. CEJIS, "Revitalisation and vitalisation of the Bésiro Language of the Monkox Nation of Lomerío" (2019), unpublished.

88. CEJIS, "Revalorisation and practice of the native language among the youth of Jach'a Marka Tapacarí Cándor Apacheta" (2018), unpublished.

89. CEJIS, "Revitalisation and vitalisation of the Bésiro Language of the Monkox Nation of Lomerío" (2019), unpublished.

90. *Idem.*

91. *Idem.*

92. *Idem.* CEJIS, "Navegador Indígena - Pilar 3: Facilitando la implementación de los ODS para los pueblos indígenas. Informe narrativo" (2020), unpublished.

93. CEJIS, "La CICOL, el CEJIS y el IPELC renuevan el convenio para la enseñanza del idioma Bésiro" (2020), accessed 17 February 2020, <https://www.cejis.org/la-cicol-el-cejis-y-el-ipelc-renuevan-el-convenio-para-la-ensenanza-del-idioma-besiro/>

94. See beginning of section 2.2.

95. VIDS, "Preservation and transfer of the language & traditional knowledge and practice of the Arowak people in Hollandse Kamp" (2019), unpublished; VIDS, "Preservation and transfer of the language of the Arowak people in Marijke Dorp" (2019), unpublished.

in Marijke, the language is seldom used because parents see the need for their children to learn Dutch and be able to attend all levels of schooling. However, after implementing the Indigenous Navigator's surveys, both communities concluded that they need to prioritise and keep their language and culture alive to reaffirm their Indigenous identities, both nationally and internationally. The revitalisation of Arowak as a pilot project became their priority. The educational strategy takes place at the community level through awareness raising and language teaching, but it is innovative in that Hollandse Kamp is developing manuals, booklets and even apps to teach basic Arowak to its community. This strategy tackles the project's goal to transfer traditional knowledge to the youth, who are influenced by the use of English throughout the Internet. The project began in late 2019 and, by late 2020, the mid-term report in Hollandse indicated that surrounding communities had become interested in using Arowak again.<sup>96</sup> The Marijke community intends to be involved in the material production process and to use the same material in their village, so its scope of use is ample, and it reaffirms their right to the dignity of their traditions and aspirations.<sup>97</sup>

Another language revitalisation project that is producing Indigenous teaching material is that in Durgapur, Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Jatiya Hajong Sangathon (Bangladesh National Hajong Organisation, BJHS) is a national platform of the Hajong people, which are about 13,000 and are spread among four districts in the North-East of the country.<sup>98</sup> The Indigenous Navigator's survey revealed that about 40% of Hajong children cannot read and write properly in Hajong, a figure that communities identified as an indicator of early language loss, culture and identity loss, and which encouraged them to prioritise the teaching of Hajong among the young.<sup>99</sup> The project by BJHS<sup>100</sup> aims at helping children and students in primary, secondary, and tertiary education in hopes to reduce education dropout rates due to language barriers, and to reproduce the teaching of Hajong among the community. BJHS's project's originality lies in the production of a Hajong Language Dictionary and Hajong Language Books. These resources will be completed by experts and expect to remain useful resources for Hajong teaching and learning. In addition to targeting SDG 4 through the improvement of early literacy and numeracy skills, the closing of gender gaps, and the inclusion of vulnerable populations, the production of teaching material contributes to the integration of the teaching of Hajong language to Bangladesh's national curriculum through memoranda with the local government, simultaneously achieving this way SDG 17 on partnerships.

To "develop bilingual and intercultural teaching materials and methods based on Indigenous knowledge, practices and technologies for use in schools and in community training activities" is an upfront goal of the project "Our Language, Our Identity" of the Mandaya community in the Philippines.<sup>101</sup> The innovative side of the project is that Mandaya women in Calapagan, Davao Oriental, are at the origin of suggesting the production of an orthography in Mandaya that helps them and schools to teach and speak to their children in Mandaya. In Calapagan, most schools use Bisaya to teach their children, which is creating concern among Mandaya mothers. These concerns came out during the Indigenous Navigator's partner Tebtebba's talks with the community. As a result, the Limpong na Tutong ng Mandaya na Kabubayan sang Calapagan na Asosasyon (Association of True Mandaya Women of Calapagan, LTMKCA) took up on the challenge of assisting the Mandaya community in the production of an orthography of the Mandaya language, and its distribution to schools. A very positive aspect of the project is that the Department of Education of the Philippines was involved at the early stage of the project, a sign that the orthography is likely to be adopted more broadly in schools.

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96. VIDS, "Preservation and transfer of the language & traditional knowledge and practice of the Arowak people in Hollandse Kamp - progress report" (2020), unpublished.

97. UNDRIP, Article 15.

98. Kapaeeng Foundation and BJHS, "Ensuring inclusive quality education and revitalisation and integration of Indigenous Hajong language and culture in Durgapur, Nekrotona – Evaluation grid for review of grant proposals" (2019), unpublished.

99. *Idem*.

100. Kapaeeng Foundation and BJHS, "Ensuring inclusive quality education and revitalisation and integration of Indigenous Hajong language and culture in Durgapur, Nekrotona" (2019), unpublished.

101. Tebtebba Foundation and LTMKCA, "Our Language, Our Identity" (2019), unpublished.

# Trends

## Intercultural Bilingual Education in Latin America

Educación Intercultural Bilingüe or EIB (Intercultural Bilingual Education, IBE) in Latin America arose in the 1980s as a social need from Indigenous communities to see their cultures reflected in national education systems, and to be able to learn in their own languages (López & Küper, 1999).<sup>102</sup> Ever since, the region has been striving to establish schools where Indigenous knowledge, language and culture reassert Indigenous contributions to national curricula, identities and societies. EIB establishments exist at all levels of education in several Latin American states like Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru or Venezuela.<sup>103</sup> Although challenges to carry out the educational projects exist in every case, EIB remains strong and contributes to the fulfillment of Indigenous Peoples' rights to receive and create education programmes according to their cultural and development needs.<sup>104</sup> The Indigenous Navigator supports pilot projects that propose new paths towards interculturality, that is, the equal exchange of education views and practices between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The Indigenous Navigator's pilot projects that target interculturality are also in line with target 4.5 of the SDGs, which aims at providing access to quality education to Indigenous Peoples along with states' recognition and support.

## 2.3 UPDATING THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE OF INDIGENOUS TEACHERS

The Indigenous Navigator's education framework monitors closely the fulfilment of Indigenous Peoples' rights to control their educational systems and to be culturally and linguistically represented in education. Whether in national education systems or in informal learning, teachers play an essential role in ensuring the transmission of Indigenous culture, knowledge and traditions, especially to younger generations. Although the Indigenous Navigator's surveys do not centre their attention on teachers, the small grants facility emerges as a way to complement the surveys through further SDG 4 target coverage. In the case of teachers, the small grants facility contributes to the achievement of target 4.5, which aims at ensuring inclusive education for Indigenous populations, and of target 4.C, which seeks to increase the number of qualified teachers with a focus on developing countries.<sup>105</sup>

The Indigenous Navigator's small grants facility has funded five pilot projects that actively seek to train teachers (Table 7). Four of those five projects focus on language teacher training, which is telling of the need of the communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator's survey to revitalise and upgrade the use of their language, with the ultimate goal to use it in formal schooling. The only exception is Bésiro language teachers in Bolivia's lowlands, where training focuses on integrating the regionalised curriculum to Indigenous language practices. However, teacher training has only been made a priority in three countries –two in Latin America and one in Asia.

102. Luis E. López and Wolfgang Küper, "La educación intercultural bilingüe en América Latina: balances y perspectivas", *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación* 20 (1999).

103. Geraldine Abarca Carimán, "Educación Intercultural Bilingüe: Educación y Diversidad" (Santiago, Chile: UNESCO), accessed 3 February, 2021, <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Santiago/pdf/APUNTE09-ESP.pdf>

104. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (New York: United Nations, 2007).

105. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (2015), accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_70\\_1\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf)

**Table 7:** Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator’s surveys in updating the skills and knowledge of Indigenous teachers

Country	Pilot project	Priority to Address
Bangladesh	Ensuring inclusive quality education and revitalisation and integration of Indigenous Hajong language and culture in Durgapur, Nekrotona	To train Hajong language teachers to use level 2 teaching material
Bangladesh	Language, Education and Cultural Development for the Khasi Indigenous Community in Moulvibazar	To train Khasi language teachers
Bolivia	Revitalisation and vitalisation of the Bésiro Language of the Monkox Nation of Lomerío	To update Bésiro language teachers so these can use the regionalised curriculum with an intercultural approach
Suriname	Preservation and transfer of the language & traditional knowledge and practice of the Arowak people in Hollandse Kamp	To increase the number of qualified Arowak teachers
Suriname	Preservation and transfer of the language of the Arowak people in Marijke Dorp	To increase the number of qualified Arowak teachers

**Table 7.** Teachers are mostly trained in language teaching, but objectives vary: in Moulvibazar, Bangladesh, and in Suriname, there is a lack of teachers, while in Nekrotona, Bangladesh, teachers are upgrading their teaching skills. Exceptionally, teachers in Lomerío, Bolivia, are being trained to adopt an intercultural approach to the education curriculum.

Suriname’s projects on the revitalisation of the Arowak people’s language seek to increase the number of qualified teachers of the Arowak language. The initiatives in Hollandse Kamp and Marijke Dorp proposed to train six village people in teaching basic Arowak as a training of trainers, so that, in turn, these could train 10 more community members each in the span of one year. As the project has not come to an end, the teaching of Arowak to community members continues and is ensured by a signed commitment by those who receive training. This “Training the Trainers” step is in line with the Education Department’s second step of their plan to mobilise communities and enhance capacity building.<sup>106</sup>

In North-East Bangladesh, teachers are being trained to teach Khasi in five new language centres. The pilot project is called “Language, Education and Cultural Development for the Khasi Indigenous Community in Moulvibazar”, and aims to promote the teaching of Khasi among the several Punjees of the Khasi community.<sup>107</sup> The project was proposed following a discussion between the Indigenous Navigator’s national partner Kapaeeng Foundation and the communities in Jhimai Punjee in Kulaura upzila.<sup>108</sup> The discussion left it clear that youth were having difficulties to finish high school education due to the lack of education in the Khasi language, but teaching in Khasi needed teaching Khasi to youth at the basic level, as well as training community-based teachers.<sup>109</sup> In Kulaura, the pupil/teacher ratio was inadequate and teachers with native Khasi skills were scarce.<sup>110</sup> As a solution, the pilot project moved forward with the construction of the language centres, and focused on building teachers’ capacity.<sup>111</sup> Five teachers were trained accordingly through a two-day workshop to update their language teaching skills. As a follow-up, the

106. VIDS, “Preservation and transfer of the language of the Arowak People in Marijkedorp - Evaluation grid for grant proposals” (2019), unpublished.  
 107. Kapaeeng Foundation, KUBORAJ and IPDS, “Language, Education and Cultural Development for the Khasi Indigenous Community in Moulvibazar” (2020), unpublished.  
 108. *Idem.*  
 109. *Idem.*  
 110. *Idem.*  
 111. *Idem.*

centres organise monthly planning meetings with teachers to discuss their challenges and achievements.<sup>112</sup> Now, the centres are running, and the average pupil/teacher ratio is 25:1.<sup>113</sup>

While some projects like the Arowak and Khasi ones above focus on training teachers on new skills, other projects seek to deepen the knowledge that teachers have on the subjects they teach to ensure sustainability. Through the Indigenous Navigator's surveys and workshops, communities expressed their desire to keep and practise their languages and knowledge, but finding enough teaching staff to carry out the task is never easy, let alone at more advanced stages. Some of the Indigenous Navigator's projects address that need. In Asia, the Hajong language teaching project in Bangladesh foresees the training of teachers in how to use level 2 books to allow students to go beyond very basic language learning.<sup>114</sup> Meanwhile, in Bolivia, the Bésiro language project began with a knowledge update to teachers, both of the Bésiro language and of intercultural strategies so that children up until grade 7 receive bilingual education according to the regionalised curriculum.<sup>115</sup> Spreading the teaching of Indigenous knowledge to teachers at multiple levels and in different teaching modalities –formal, informal or both– contributes to ensuring the sustainability of teaching practices.

## 2.4 INCREASING INTERGENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER FROM INDIGENOUS ELDERS TO YOUTH

Just as important as ensuring teacher training sustainability is increasing intergenerational knowledge transfer from Indigenous elders to youth. This component of the Indigenous Navigator's projects on education is key to ensuring target 4.7, which aims to achieve the "appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development".<sup>116</sup> Most of the teaching concerns located by communities throughout the Indigenous Navigator's surveys related to the intergenerational loss of Indigenous knowledge due to the acceleration of globalisation policies and practices towards the end of the past century.<sup>117</sup> Although the advent of the UNDRIP and, more recently, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, have enormously contributed to the eradication of those policies and practices, the consequences of globalisation are visible in the loss of Indigenous knowledge among younger generations. This situation places the elderly as unique knowledge bearers, and presents the urgency to pass on their knowledge to their communities to avoid irreparable losses.

Although any language revitalisation initiative may benefit from the wisdom of the elders, there are three pilot projects within the Indigenous Navigator's small grants facility that stand out in that regard, placing elders either as heads of cultural development, or as teachers interacting directly with the youth (Table 8).

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112. Personal communication with Kapaeeng Foundation (2021).

113. *Idem*.

114. Kapaeeng Foundation and BJHS, "Ensuring inclusive quality education and revitalisation and integration of Indigenous Hajong language and culture in Durgapur, Nekrotona – Evaluation grid for review of grant proposals" (2019), unpublished.

115. CEJIS, "Revitalisation and vitalisation of the Bésiro Language of the Monkox Nation of Lomerio" (2019), unpublished.

116. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (2015), accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_70\\_1\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf)

117. Salomón Nahmad, "Nido de lengua, un diálogo sobre educación indígena intercultural entre Chomsky, antropólogos y educadores," *Desacatos* 38 (2012): 207-210.

**Table 8:** Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator’s surveys in increasing intergenerational knowledge transfer from Indigenous elders to youth

Country	Pilot project	Priority to Address
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Language, Education and Cultural Development for the Khasi Indigenous Community in Moulvibazar	To place elders as leaders of the language centres, both in the development of the curriculum and in the management of the centres
<b>Bolivia</b>	Revitalisation and vitalisation of the Bésiro Language of the Monkox Nation of Lomerío	To ensure intergenerational language, culture and knowledge transfer from early childhood (0-5)
<b>Philippines</b>	Our Language, Our Identity	To value and retrieve the linguistic knowledge borne by elders through the making of an intergenerational orthography of the local language

**Table 8.** In each case, elders play a different role: heads of cultural centres in Bangladesh; language, culture and knowledge teachers in Bolivia; and language experts in the Philippines. Despite the differences in roles, all pilot projects underscore the importance and tremendous potential of Indigenous elders in contributing to the development of their communities.

The Indigenous Navigator’s pilot project in Lomerío, Bolivia, presents an additional feature to incorporate intergenerational knowledge transfer to the teaching of Bésiro besides school teaching –linguistic nests. Linguistic nests are immersion experiences to help the youngest ones learn a language, culture and values within a linguistically different context.<sup>118</sup> In other words, Indigenous children learn their language as a second language at the same level as they learn –or learned– their first language. The pilot project in Bolivia’s lowlands<sup>119</sup> is implementing linguistic nests among children ages 0-5 in parallel with the formal teaching of Bésiro in schools. Within the linguistic nests, elders not only speak in Bésiro, but they also teach children traditional livelihood techniques. That way, children are ready to begin first grade speaking Bésiro and with a feeling of identification with their own culture.

The Khasi revitalisation pilot project in Bangladesh is another initiative where elders have been leading the functioning of Khasi language teaching and training. In Bangladesh, the 2010 National Education Policy encourages learning not only in Bangla, but also in other languages, as well as the development of Indigenous languages.<sup>120</sup> As a result, the government has published textbooks in several Indigenous languages, but Khasi has not been one of them.<sup>121</sup> In that context, knowledge from the elders is essential in revitalising the language because only they know how to teach oral and written Khasi.<sup>122</sup> The elders have thus been key in the development of the language centres. In fact, all members of the Language Centre Managing Committee are elders.<sup>123</sup> As such, they recruit and train teachers, organise regular meetings to ensure the centres are operating as planned, and sometimes approach youth to discuss and explain how intergenerational knowledge transfer is occurring through the project.<sup>124</sup> In Kulaura upzali, the elders are the educational leaders of their communities.

118. Alison Yaunches, “Native People revitalize their languages using a proven approach from across the globe”. *Rural Roots* 5, 3 (2004) Instituto lingüístico de invierno, “Revitalización lingüística: enseñanza de lengua indígena como segunda lengua” (2007), accessed 16 March, 2021, <https://nilavigil.com/2007/10/22/revitalizacion-de-una-lengua-ensenanza-de-lengua-indigena-como-segunda-lengua/>

119. CEJIS, “Revitalisation and vitalisation of the Bésiro Language of the Monkox Nation of Lomerío” (2019), unpublished.

120. Ministry of Education, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, “National Education Policy 2010” (2010), accessed 11 April, 2021, [http://ecd-bangladesh.net/document/documents/National\\_Education\\_Policy\\_2010\\_English.pdf](http://ecd-bangladesh.net/document/documents/National_Education_Policy_2010_English.pdf)

121. Kapaeeng Foundation, KUBORAJ and IPDS, “Language, Education and Cultural Development for the Khasi Indigenous Community in Moulvibazar” (2019), unpublished.

122. *Idem.*

123. Personal communication with Kapaeeng Foundation (2021).

124. *Idem.*

Finally, the orthography project of the Mandaya community in Calapagan, Philippines,<sup>125</sup> approaches intergenerational knowledge transfer through the involvement of elders in language-related activities, as well as through the (trans)formation of Indigenous knowledge bearers as resource people in their own language. Indigenous community members knowledgeable in Mandaya are welcome to contribute to the creation of the orthography. This approach not only sees the elderly as sources of linguistic wisdom, but turns them into experts by encouraging them to leave their imprint on a resource that will be used in future generations. In addition, the making of the orthography involves participation from linguists, so this project is both intergenerational and intercultural.

## Trends

### Towards the 2022-2032 International Decade of Indigenous Languages

International year topics are selected based on their global relevance.<sup>126</sup> The fact that 2019 became the International Year of Indigenous Languages testifies of the importance of Indigenous languages to the world, not only linguistically, but also historically and even epistemologically.<sup>127</sup> For the purposes of this report, Indigenous languages matter because they allow Indigenous Peoples to teach about themselves to other educational communities. Most importantly, Indigenous Peoples interpret the world through their language, which translates into Indigenous languages becoming the most effective channel for Indigenous Peoples to access education. The International Year of Indigenous Languages' results are positive indicators of how much education stakeholders and policymakers –and even those in other areas– have come to care about keeping and promoting the use of Indigenous languages. In 2019, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolved to establish the 2022-2032 period as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.<sup>128</sup>

As a follow-up, in early 2020, the Los Pinos Declaration was released as a set of guidelines towards the objectives of the decade.<sup>129</sup> The Indigenous Navigator's small grants facility is aligned with those objectives. One of the thematic considerations of the Los Pinos Declaration is the creation of inclusive and equal environments to promote Indigenous languages in education.<sup>130</sup> The document calls for interdisciplinary efforts to further develop language use as object of research and method of instruction, the creation of curricula that respond to the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages, and the teaching of Indigenous languages itself, with a focus on financial and technical support to keep oral traditions alive and promote basic education among adults.<sup>131</sup> Other areas that plan to be addressed between 2022 and 2032 are: the promotion of Indigenous languages at all education levels, the production of educational material in Indigenous languages, the production of linguistic policies that support Indigenous languages, and the promotion of bilingual, multilingual, mother tongue-based, and sustainable education.<sup>132</sup> Out of the 14 education-related pilot projects of the Indigenous Navigator, 10 target language teaching or revitalisation as a core objective.<sup>133</sup>

125. Tebtebba Foundation and LTMKCA, "Our Language, Our Identity", 2019, unpublished.

126. 2019, International Year of Indigenous Languages, accessed 27 March, 2021, <https://en.iyil2019.org/about/>

127. *Idem.*

128. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "Rights of indigenous peoples. Report of the Third Committee" (2019), accessed 27 March 2021, <https://undocs.org/en/A/74/396>

129. "Declaración de los Pinos (Chapoltepek) –Construyendo un Decenio de Acciones para las Lenguas Indígenas" (Mexico City: 2020), accessed 27 March, 2021, [https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/los\\_pinos\\_declaration\\_july2020.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/los_pinos_declaration_july2020.pdf)

130. *Idem.*

131. *Idem.*

132. *Idem.*

133. Personal Communication with IWGIA (2020).

## 2.5 ENGAGING WITH GOVERNMENTS FOR RECOGNITION AND OFFICIAL USE OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

Advocacy is one of the most salient features of the Indigenous Navigator.<sup>134</sup> The reason for advocacy to occupy a central place in Indigenous activities is that it is the means through which Indigenous Peoples can engage in dialogue with authorities at all levels for the respect of their rights. All throughout its body, the UNDRIP foresees the support of states in fulfilling Indigenous peoples' rights.<sup>135</sup> Likewise, SDG 17 promotes the creation of partnerships to achieve the SDGs.<sup>136</sup> Sometimes, however, engaging in dialogue is difficult because there is no evidence of a specific need, or because Indigenous Peoples do not know how to advocate for their rights. The Indigenous Navigator's monitoring tool aims at providing evidence for a specific issue as identified by communities themselves, while the Indigenous Navigator's workshops inform Indigenous communities about their rights.<sup>137</sup> The small grants facility contributes to dialogue engagement with governments and duty bearers by allowing Indigenous Peoples to design projects that create engagement.

Six pilot projects of the Indigenous Navigator respond to the need for engagement through education –four in Asia and two in Latin America (Table 9). Their ways of engaging with authorities vary, and go from formal training in law, as in Peru, to advocacy by the youth, as in Cambodia. Likewise, the level of engagement goes from the local to the international. The broad spectrum covered by these pilot projects reflects the will of the Indigenous communities involved to recognise and respect existing governments and institutions, but also to have their Indigenous identity recognised and respected in education.

**Table 9:** Pilot project priorities of the Indigenous communities that took part in the Indigenous Navigator's surveys in engaging in dialogue with governments for recognition and use of Indigenous languages as official languages in schools and other public institutions

Country	Pilot project	Priority to Address
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Ensuring inclusive quality education and revitalisation and integration of Indigenous Hajong language and culture in Durgapur, Nekrotona	To raise local awareness on the project to improve support from government at higher policy levels
<b>Bolivia</b>	Revalorisation and practice of the native language among the youth of Jach'a Marka Tapacarí Cónдор Apacheta	Through partnerships, to engage with governments and institutions both at the local and national levels so these support the pilot project's initiative
<b>Cambodia</b>	Empowering Indigenous men and women youth in preserving and developing natural resources in order to improve their livelihoods and management system	To engage with civil society to create an Indigenous knowledge-based curriculum that ensures educational achievement in the future
<b>Nepal</b>	Promoting Inclusive Development of Chhantyal Indigenous Peoples	To empower Indigenous communities to actively participate in government decision-making processes regarding Chhantyal language teaching and education for their communities at large
<b>Nepal</b>	Promoting Indigenous peoples' rights and Social Inclusion of the Magar Community in Western Nepal	Through partnerships, to engage at all levels and with all sectors of government and society to ensure language teaching and project funding
<b>Peru</b>	Intercultural academy for Wampis leaders "Sharian"	To teach Wampis youth how to become leaders in government and institution engagement from a legal lens

*Table 9. Among the priorities are: increasing the participation of Indigenous communities in education-related matters, engaging with governments at all levels to advocate for the recognition of their rights, as well as to ensure the use of Indigenous languages in schools, and raising awareness at the local level to reinforce Indigenous educational institutions.*

134. "What is the Indigenous Navigator?", accessed 12 January, 2021, <https://indigenousnavigator.org/what-is-the-indigenous-navigator>

135. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (New York: United Nations, 2007).

136. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (2015), accessed 14 January, 2021, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_70\\_1\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf)

137. "What is the Indigenous Navigator?", accessed 12 January, 2021, <https://indigenousnavigator.org/what-is-the-indigenous-navigator>

In Peru, the Indigenous Navigator supports the Intercultural Academy for Wampis Leaders Sharian, led by the Gobierno Territorial Autónomo de la Nación Wampis (Autonomous Territorial Government of the Wampis Nation), and which teaches Wampis youth to become leaders in engaging with governmental authorities and other institutions. This project's focus is not SDG 4, but SDG 1 (to end poverty), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 10 (reduction of inequalities), and SDG 17 (partnerships to achieve the SDGs).<sup>138</sup> The Sharian school's pioneering model aims to promote the SDGs in classes through curricula focused on the study of Indigenous peoples' rights such as self-determination and autonomy.<sup>139</sup> By the end of 2020, the Sharian school had recruited 37 Wampis students, among whom 9 women, to attend intercultural courses –led by Indigenous and non-Indigenous experts– on leadership, authority, Indigenous justice and writing.<sup>140</sup> The pilot project also led to the design of an observatory of Indigenous peoples' rights in partnership with the provincial county of Condorcanqui, and which will be implemented by graduate leaders from the School in 2021.<sup>141</sup> Through education, the Wampis Nation is working towards the recognition of their rights and engaging with local authorities in mutually beneficial projects.

The flexibility of the small grants facility also promotes engagement with other institutions to use Indigenous languages as official languages in public institutions. The Indigenous Navigator's pilot project on the revalorisation and teaching of Quechua in the Jach'a Marka Tapacarí Córdor Apacheta territory in Bolivia, mentioned in section 2.2, is an example of the efforts currently being carried out to achieve the inclusion of Indigenous languages as official languages in public institutions. In Bolivia, one of the Quechua pilot project's main objectives is to develop educational material to be used by children in the Educational Unit of Peñas.<sup>142</sup> This objective does not only meet the goals set by the SDGs to achieve local knowledge based sustainable education, but also the goals set by Bolivia's national 2025 agenda to promote bilingual education.<sup>143</sup> Relevant in the pilot project is the approach to cooperate to achieve the teaching of Quechua in schools: while Indigenous leaders are engaging with local governments in the promotion of Indigenous peoples' rights, other organisations that are highly experienced in education promotion and engagement – CEJIS, CENDA, PROEIB Andes<sup>144</sup>– are looking to involve municipal authorities and other relevant institutions to support the initiative.<sup>145</sup> All in all, the pilot project developed by the communities in Jach'a Marka Tapacarí Córdor Apacheta works through advocacy at different levels and aims at meeting local, national and international priorities through the teaching of Quechua in schools.

A series of similar joint efforts are taking place in all the South East Asian countries where the Indigenous Navigator currently operates. In Nepal, unlike in Bolivia, the government has not implemented any measures related to achieving the SDGs for Indigenous Peoples.<sup>146</sup> The Chhantyal community in the West of the country, however, identified several needs related to the SDGs, among which accessing free, equitable and quality education as well as early childhood development (targets 4.1 and 4.2), increasing the number of adults with relevant skills for employment (target 4.4), preventing gender violence (target 5.2), empowering the overall population to promote inclusion (target 10.2), ensuring participatory and representative decision making at all levels (target 16.7), and enforcing non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development (16.b).<sup>147</sup> All in all, the needs above found common ground in the promotion of inclusive development of the Chhantyal communities. The pilot project, led by the Chhantyal community through the Nepal Chhantyal Association (NCA) in cooperation with the Indigenous Navigator's partner Lawyers' Association for Human Rights of Nepalese Indigenous Peoples (LAHURNHIP), seeks to empower Indigenous Peoples to participate in decision-making processes at the local level, and to access and secure public funds for their projects. One of the biggest priorities of the Chhantyal is the use of their mother tongue in schools because there are no schools that teach or use the Chhantyal language.<sup>148</sup> To

138. Perú Equidad and GTANW, "Escuela de líderes Wampis intercultural 'Sharian'" (2019), unpublished.

139. *Idem*.

140. Personal communication with Wampis leaders, 2021; GTANW, "Informe Narrativo 2020 – Escuela de líderes Wampis intercultural" (2020), unpublished.

141. GTANW, "Informe Narrativo 2020 - Escuela de líderes Wampis intercultural" (2020), unpublished.

142. CEJIS, "Revalorisation and practice of the native language among the youth of Jach'a Marka Tapacarí Córdor Apacheta" (2018), unpublished.

143. *Idem*.

144. Centro de Comunicación y de Desarrollo Andino, [www.cenda.org](http://www.cenda.org); Programa de Formación en Educación Intercultural Bilingüe para los Países Andinos, [www.proeibandes.org](http://www.proeibandes.org)

145. CEJIS, "Revalorisation and practice of the native language among the youth of Jach'a Marka Tapacarí Córdor Apacheta" (2018), unpublished.

146. LAHURNIP and NCA, "Promoting Inclusive Development of Chhantyal Indigenous Peoples" (2019), unpublished.

147. *Idem*.

148. *Idem*.

achieve the inclusion of mother tongue in schools, the pilot project foresaw advocacy with political parties and non-Indigenous government authorities, cooperation with the Ministry of Education at both provincial and federal levels, and collaboration with international institutions.<sup>149</sup> The project began in July, 2019 and, by August, 2020, the Chhantyal had already participated in local development planning processes, which allowed them to secure funding for language and culture teaching.<sup>150</sup> Further, the Chhantyal engaged with local governments and school management committees, achieving a commitment from teachers to conduct multilingual education in schools in the near future.<sup>151</sup>

The Magar community, also in Western Nepal, is carrying out a similar project to that of the Chhantyal community. The Magar account for 1,887,733 or 7.12% of the country's population, which is ten times more than the Chhantyal community, yet 31.69% of Nepal's poor are Magar.<sup>152</sup> Ending poverty (SDG 1) is the Magars' priority, but that includes accessing better jobs for which quality education is required.<sup>153</sup> Therefore, the Indigenous Navigator's pilot project in Karnali, Nepal, works towards the same educational objectives as the project of the Chhantyal community.<sup>154</sup> To achieve social inclusion in decision making and securing funding for their projects, the pilot project is led by the District Coordination Council of the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (DCC-NEFIN), but borrows widely from the expertise of LAHURNIP to engage with other Indigenous Peoples organisations, youth clubs, women organisations, leaders, different political parties and local governments.<sup>155</sup> As with the Chhantyal, building awareness and advocacy about mother tongue-based education led to securing budget for multilingual education.<sup>156</sup> Between July 2019, and August, 2020, the pilot project led the Magar to engage with local governments, which created a task force to implement the Magar language in schools.<sup>157</sup> The triumphant result of the engagement process was the implementation of mother tongue-based education in 7 schools that receive children classified as marginalised, highly marginalised, and endangered.<sup>158</sup>

Meanwhile, the pilot project on the revitalisation and integration of Hajong language and culture in Nekrotona, Bangladesh,<sup>159</sup> is a good example of the educational results achieved through engaging with the government. The Hajong-led Indigenous Navigator pilot project in Eastern Bangladesh<sup>160</sup> explicitly tackles SDG 4 on education and SDG 17 on partnerships, in particular target 17.9, which aims at enhancing international support, target 17.16 to create multi-stakeholder partnerships at the global level to mobilise resources, and target 17.17 to encourage and promote partnerships between the public and private sections along with civil society. To achieve those goals, the Hajong language and culture pilot project fosters interaction between BJHS and the locals by creating a Community Mobilise Officer position, and aims at signing a memorandum of understanding with the national government to start offering mother tongue-based pre-primary education for Hajong children.

Last, the Indigenous Navigator, through its national partner Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Organisation (CIPO), is supporting the pilot project led by a Kui youth group in Kampong Thom, northern Cambodia,<sup>161</sup> to prioritise the provision of quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for Indigenous Peoples (SDG 4).<sup>162</sup> The Indigenous Navigator's surveys allowed the villages of Talek, Andas, Phum Srae, O Kroch and

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149. *Idem.*

150. LAHURNIP and NCA, "Implementation of Making the SDGs Work for Indigenous Peoples under the Indigenous Navigator" - Progress report (2020), unpublished.

151. *Idem.*

152. Central Bureau of Statistics - National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal, "National Population and Housing Census 2011, Marks 100 years of census taking in Nepal", accessed 27 March 2021, <https://nada.cbs.gov.np/index.php/catalog/54>; Chaitanya Subba, Bishwamber Pyakuryal, Tunga Shiromani Bastola, Mohan Khajum Subba, Nirmal Kumar Raut and Baburam Karki, *A Study on the Socio-Economic Status of Indigenous Peoples in Nepal* (LAHURNIP and IWGIA, 2014), accessed 29 April, 2021, [final-book-nlss.pdf](#) (lahurnip.org)

153. LAHURNIP and DCC-NEFIN, "Promoting Indigenous peoples' rights and Social Inclusion of the Magar Community in Western Nepal" (2019), unpublished.

154. *Idem.*

155. *Idem.*

156. LAHURNIP and NCA, "Implementation of Making the SDGs Work for Indigenous Peoples under the Indigenous Navigator Initiative" - Progress report (2020), unpublished.

157. *Idem.*

158. *Idem.*

159. See section 2.2.

160. Kapaeeng Foundation and BJHS, "Ensuring inclusive quality education and revitalisation and integration of Indigenous Hajong language and culture in Durgapur, Nekrotona" (2019), unpublished.

161. For more information about the Kui Tak, see <https://www.facebook.com/kuitakpage>

162. CIPO and the Kui Youth in the Kui youth's area, Salavisai commune, Prasatballang district and Kampong Thom province, "Empowering Indigenous men and women youth in preserving and developing natural resources in order to improve their livelihoods and management system" (2020), unpublished.

Korki to notice that there are only 50 Kui students in upper secondary school –out of which 11 dropped out–, and 77 in lower secondary school, with a dropout rate of 18.18%.<sup>163</sup> Those figures pushed the Kui youth to create an informal curriculum based on Indigenous traditional knowledge and culture in hopes that it becomes part of the formal education system. This pilot project is innovative in that it is being led by a highly motivated and skillful group of young Kui, in partnership with CIPO, as well as with the Women Group, the Choam Marick Protected Area Committee, and the Youth Saving Group; they have also received training courses from CIPO and the Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association (CIYA).<sup>164</sup> The Kui project only began in late 2020, but it already acquired land for a cultural centre and equipment to teach education, and it is engaging with communities, especially elders, to bring traditional teaching to the classroom.<sup>165</sup> This pilot project aims at materialising the priorities of the Kui youth thanks civil society cooperation, and the reflects the promise of the youth to future generations of Indigenous peoples to achieve the inclusion of Indigenous language and culture taught in formal education through friendly and peaceful engagement with Indigenous and non-Indigenous actors.

## Trends

### Towards an “Inclusive, Sustainable, and Resilient Future”<sup>166</sup>

In 1994, the Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG) was created to help connect different UN system agencies, funds and programmes which were working on Indigenous issues.<sup>167</sup> After the creation of the UNPFII in 2000, the IASG continued facilitating communication within the UN.<sup>168</sup> More recently, in late 2015, the IASG created a System-Wide Action Plan (SWAP) to respond to the communication concerns expressed by states in the 2014 WCIP.<sup>169</sup> The SWAP system responds thus to the need of states, UN agencies, other stakeholders, and Indigenous Peoples themselves, to work in a coordinate fashion towards the fulfilment of the UNDRIP.<sup>170</sup> In late 2020, with the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the SWAP system, the UNPFII made a global call to continue working with Indigenous Peoples not only towards the respect of their human rights, but also towards an “inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future”.<sup>171</sup> UNESCO is also part of IASG and has incorporated the use of SWAP in its UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples,<sup>172</sup> an important step towards Indigenous peoples’ rights on education. Initiatives like this SWAP can greatly benefit from the Indigenous Navigator. Because the Indigenous Navigator’s pilot projects allow Indigenous Peoples to achieve tangible results thanks to a human rights-based framework, the Indigenous Navigator’s innovative solutions to Indigenous education are already working towards achieving the goals of the IASG and promise, along with the monitoring tool, to provide solid data and experiences that can be shared and used within the SWAP.

163. *Idem*.

164. *Idem*; CIYA specialises in offering opportunities in higher education. See [www.ciyonet.org](http://www.ciyonet.org)

165. CIPO and the Kui Youth in the Kui youth’s area, Salavisai commune, Prasatballang district and Kampong Thom province, “Empowering Indigenous men and women youth in preserving and developing natural resources in order to improve their livelihoods and management system –progress report” (2020), unpublished.

166. Title inspired in United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), “Building and Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Future with Indigenous Peoples: A Call to Action” (2020), accessed 27 March 2021, <https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/CEB-Call-to-Action-Indigenous-2020-WEB%20%281%29.pdf>

167. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), “Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG)”, accessed 27 March, 2021, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us/inter-agency-support-group.html>

168. *Idem*.

169. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), “System-Wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” (2016), accessed 27 March, 2021, [https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=E/C.19/2016/5](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/C.19/2016/5)

170. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), “Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG)”, accessed 27 March, 2021, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us/inter-agency-support-group.html>

171. United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), “Building and Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Future with Indigenous Peoples: A Call to Action” (2020), accessed 27 March 2021, <https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/CEB-Call-to-Action-Indigenous-2020-WEB%20%281%29.pdf>

172. UNESCO, “UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples”, accessed 27 March, 2021, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000262748>



Construction of the dining hall of the Terrat high school in Tanzania.  
CREDIT: PINGO'S FORUM

## CONCLUSION

It is worth highlighting that the vast majority of the countries where the Indigenous Navigator operates have at least one pilot project that seeks to improve education. In the results of the Indigenous Navigator's surveys, the scope and priorities of the pilot projects vary across communities. In Africa, the needs are more oriented towards basic infrastructure and education facilities, while the pilot projects in Asia prioritise engagement with local and national governments to respect Indigenous self-determination in education, oftentimes with the goal of salvaging traditional languages and cultures. In Latin America,<sup>173</sup> the pilot projects seek to advance and to put into practice legal frameworks that recognise and protect the educational rights of Indigenous peoples, while also putting more emphasis on the pedagogical aspects of quality education.

The proposals presented by Indigenous communities to the Indigenous Navigator see the teaching of language and culture as a priority for several reasons. First, Indigenous languages and cultures contain the accumulated knowledge and world vision of Indigenous Peoples throughout time.<sup>174</sup> Losing that knowledge does not only harm them, but also impoverishes the depository of wisdom of all of humanity. Second, teaching in mother tongues is considered to be beneficial to students' learning, and the absence of it creates difficulties in further learning,<sup>175</sup> for the same reason that students do not recognise their own reality within second or foreign languages and cultures as well as they do within their own. Providing education in Indigenous languages is thus helpful for the development of Indigenous Peoples and for national and global development. Third, the identification of Indigenous Peoples varies across contexts, particularly in regard to data sources and designations from national governments. In some of these cases, Indigenous Peoples are only considered Indigenous if they speak an Indigenous language. As a result,

173. VIDS, interview, 11 August, 2020, unpublished.

174. These arguments have existed since the 18th century in Europe through Wilhelm von Humboldt's vision of the world, which describes how each language reflects the single understanding of the environment by a particular language user. For more information, see James W. Underhill, Humboldt, *Worldview and Language* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

175. UNESCO, *Mother Tongue Matters: Local Language as a Key to Effective Learning* (Paris: UNESCO, 2008).

losing their language and culture poses a fundamental risk in that it prevents Indigenous Peoples from not only keeping their identity, but also from accessing opportunities and exercising rights only available to them.

The small grants pilot projects that the Indigenous Navigator has been financing allow Indigenous Peoples to begin addressing their educational priorities according to the needs identified by themselves. At the same time, the pilot projects encourage self-determination in education by the communities and peoples themselves, and encourage state involvement in these processes as provided by the UNDRIP, while striving to meet SDG 4 and other sustainable development goals. Among the chief achievements of the Indigenous Navigator's small grants facility in education are the inclusion of some Indigenous languages in national curricula, the building of educational facilities and the provision of internet access for learning, the involvement of authorities to secure funding for Indigenous language and culture teaching, and an increase of interest among communities –especially among the elder and the young– to revitalise and sustain Indigenous knowledge.

Because Indigenous realities are so different, improving Indigenous education demands localised programs to understand the realities of communities very well, so the Indigenous Navigator's small grants pilot projects are first and foremost innovative in that they allow Indigenous communities to propose and carry out their projects and ambitions, thereby yielding tangible results and empowering communities. However, these pilot projects have shown time and again that joint efforts between Indigenous and non-Indigenous actors at all levels result in enhanced cooperation and better outcomes. Therefore, further support from states and other actors is necessary to carry on with these initiatives. Putting prejudices aside and transforming the view that Indigenous Peoples do not seek development are key points to be addressed. The Indigenous Navigator's pilot projects are incipient, but latent proof of what Indigenous Peoples can achieve to enforce the UNDRIP, the WCIP and the SDGs. If education is the way to ensure knowledge transfer and make this world sustainable, it is everyone's responsibility to work towards that end.



Wampis woman on her way to a community meeting.  
CREDIT: PABLO LASANSKY / IWGIA



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