



IFIP GLOBAL CONFERENCE

FEB 22-24, 2023

**Shifting Power: Indigenous Peoples'
Rights, Leadership and Self-
determination**

Merida, Yucatan, Mexico



Acknowledgments

IFIP acknowledges and thanks the **traditional and ancestral Maya Lands** on which we gathered and learned together.

IFIP would like to express its sincere gratitude and appreciation to the members of the Conference Planning Committee for their outstanding leadership and guidance in designing and shaping the Conference program and agenda. The Planning **Committee Members** included **Alejandra Garduño** representing the IFIP Board, **Kim Langbecker** and **Paloma Abregu** from Seeds of Wisdom, **Katrin Wilde** from Channel Foundation, **Loretta Taylor** from True Costs Initiative, **Millisa Barena** from Claudia and Roberto Hernandez Foundation, **Carola Diez** and **Paulina Gonzalez** from Fundación Haciendas del Mundo Maya (Haciendas Foundation of the Mayan World AC), **Susana Cavazos** from La Vaca Independiente, and **Casey Box** from The Christensen Fund. Their involvement was instrumental in making the Conference a success.

IFIP is also profoundly appreciative to the **W. K. Kellogg Foundation, The Christensen Fund, Channel Foundation, Tamalpais Trust, Lush, and the Climate and Land Use Alliance (CLUA)** for their generous funding and partnership throughout the execution of the Conference.

IFIP offers our gratitude to **Margarita Noh Poot** from Guardianes de las Semillas, and **Marcos Che** from Fundación Haciendas del Mundo Maya, for leading the Opening and Closing ceremonies.

Elder Margarita shared with us that **“(We are grateful) to the sacred fire, which is what inspires us to create new forms of resistance, to transmit the values that we inherited from our grandfathers and grandmothers”**. Marcos Che shared with us that **“A true social change happens when the people freely decide their political condition, their economic, social and cultural development”**.

We acknowledge and thank the **seven Maya youth volunteers** that helped us to make this Conference a success.

Lastly, IFIP appreciates the partnership with [Grupo Amigo Yucatan](#) and [Maaya Kaambal S.C.](#) for their valuable logistical and administrative support, including interpretation services in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mayan, services that helped to accommodate the diverse needs of conference participants. We are grateful to the staff of **Hacienda Misné** for their support and attending to the needs of guests during the global conference. IFIP also extends its thanks to the **SwapCard** technical team for their support in facilitating access to conference-related information.



Lourdes Inga, Marcos Che, and Margarita Noh Poot during the opening ceremony

(In the planning of this Conference) there have been many hours of work with a lot of love, a lot of enthusiasm, and the idea of being able, in this space for dialogue and conversation, to make stronger ties between donors and Indigenous organizations. **Lourdes Inga, IFIP Executive Director**

There are several issues that are becoming central to the global agenda, climate change is one of them... so thinking about resolving these important strategic issues without counting on Indigenous peoples would be collective suicide as humanity. **Dario Mejia, Conference keynote speaker**



Mr. Dario Mejia, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Conference keynote speaker

“The brilliance of indigenous knowledge and wisdom is needed by all peoples, right now!”

Conference Participant



Overview and Key Highlights

IFIP's 2023 Global Conference was built on discussions and conversations from the 2021 Global Funders Retreat with an aim to support Indigenous-led solutions through a curated space for funders and Indigenous partners to co-create next action steps including expanding the sphere of Indigenous Philanthropy and direct access to funding. The conference brought together more than 350 delegates representing funders (private and public foundations), Indigenous-led organizations, and Indigenous Peoples' organizations, including networks from Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Arctic, Europe, and North America through both virtual and in-person engagement.

The following three thematic areas lead the Conference sessions: Shifting power and resources to Indigenous Peoples; ensuring Indigenous Peoples' rights to self-determination: sharing and learning from the ground, and roles of inter-generational Indigenous leadership to promote, protect and revitalize Indigenous knowledge.

At the center of the conference was highlighting, **raising the visibility of Indigenous Peoples and their leadership, and focusing on empowering Indigenous communities, and promoting self-determination** The sessions challenged and questioned the Northern and colonial understandings of funding, philanthropy, knowledge, and wealth by highlighting local examples, traditions, and approaches that truly disrupted and shifted power. The conference emphasized the need to center Indigenous Peoples and their communities to shift power and resources to leverage transformative systems change.

Likewise, Pre-Conference events on February 21, 2023, included **three parallel events**: a day-long Indigenous Led Funds Gathering, a half-day Global Indigenous Community dialogue, and an Indigenous Youth dialogue.

- Establishment of Global Alliance of Indigenous-led funds.
- Global Indigenous Youth Manifesto
- Dedicated sessions for Indigenous Youth and Indigenous Human Rights Defenders.
- Highlighted the unique issues, concerns, and contributions of intersectional groups such as Indigenous Youth, Women, Indigenous Persons with Disabilities, and LGBTQ++ communities.
- 15 IFIP scholarship recipients from across the globe
- Language justice supported with interpretation in Spanish, Portuguese, Maya, and English.

“We need to think about the purpose of philanthropy, I understand that it is about creating better ways of living wherever you are located but we can’t have a better life or live in harmony as human beings if we do not take care for the earth... that means (philanthropy) is about communion... and alliance (and that) is what this space really represents”.

Dario Mejía Montalvo, Chair of UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

“I think it is no secret, we all know that it is a very very important time for global philanthropy and for Indigenous Peoples around the globe and having learning organizations like IFIP and other organizations in the room that center Indigenous voices, knowledge, and self-determination, is and should be the direction needed to shift away from harmful actions that we still see in philanthropy today”.

Tricia Stevens, IFIP Board Member

“Within the philanthropic community... we are in the same boat because we are asking (funders) for support to stand for our rights and improve our rights but at the same time, we are the solution to what is happening, (the solution to) the problems in the world, that is how we are contributing back to what you are contributing to us”.

Naw Ei Ei Min, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues member

“IFIP’s role and strategy build on solidarity, IFIP’s role and vision at this moment are not only bold but necessary within and beyond philanthropy”.

Salote Soqo, IFIP Board Member

97% of survey respondents would encourage other funders to attend future IFIP’s global conferences and/or programs (Conference survey).

IFIP's Vision, Mission, Goals, and Values

During the first day of the Conference IFIP unveiled its new Vision and Mission. The new mission and vision are guided by IFIP's commitment to shift power, mobilize, and advocate for direct access to funding resources to support the aspirations and rights of Indigenous Peoples, their local communities, and territories.

Our Global Why and Unique Role



GOALS



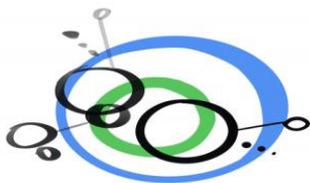
SHIFTING POWER

Amplify and strengthen meaningful and effective Indigenous representation, leadership, and influence to address the imbalance of power.

ACCESSING RESOURCES



Advocate direct access to equitable funding and mobilize resources to Indigenous Peoples' initiatives and organizations across issues and movements.



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Improve and expand funding partnerships and practices in alignment with Indigenous Peoples' rights, aspirations, and self-determined development.

INCREASING CAPACITY



Strengthen IFIP's organizational capacity to effectively implement its goals, track the field, and promote accountability and narrative change in funding.

How We Do Our Work as a Global Community

Indigenous values



Respect: Recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples’ rights, and worldviews. Seek to uphold the principles articulated in the UN Declaration of Rights for Indigenous People (UNDRIP). Work directly with Indigenous communities to advance these principles and to gain understanding about their aspirations, solutions and initiatives.

Relationships: Engage directly with Indigenous communities by understanding the nature of their relationships with Mother Earth, their culture, traditions and spirituality. Build and nurture relationships based on mutual respect and trust that eliminate the tendency to exert power over another through building long-term commitments and mutual learning

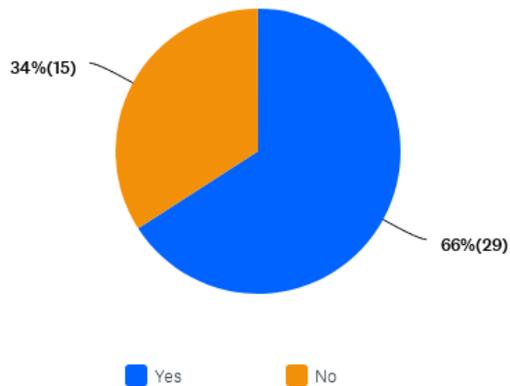
Responsibility: Be accountable and transparent in ensuring the effective, meaningful and intersectional representation and participation of Indigenous Peoples where critical decisions that affect them are made. Use funding processes and approaches that are accessible, adaptable, flexible, transparent, and accountable.

Reciprocity: Practice the essence of Indigenous ways of living, giving and sharing that connects people, their beliefs and actions. Be open to learning, unlearning, and receiving. Giving and receiving from a place of mutual benefit and solidarity is also part of a virtuous circle of healing principles.

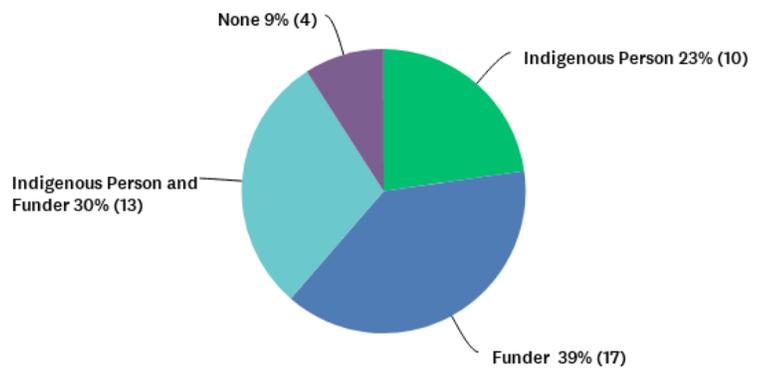
Redistribution: Practice redistribution based on Indigenous Values and ways of living, sharing and giving to shift towards a just and equitable world. Do this through building trust, ensuring Indigenous Peoples are at the decision-making table and directly funding Indigenous-led solutions, initiatives and organizations worldwide.

2023 IFIP Global Conference Survey Results

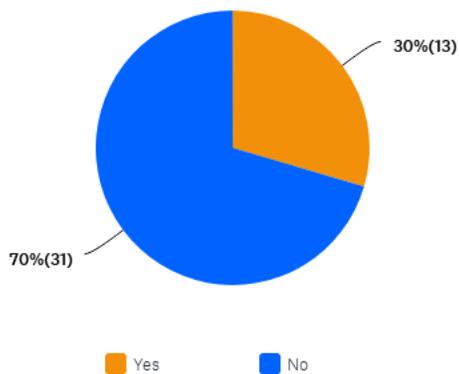
Q1 Is your organization a member of IFIP?



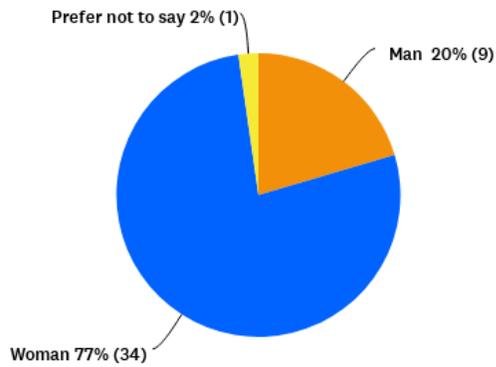
Q2 Which group do you identify with?



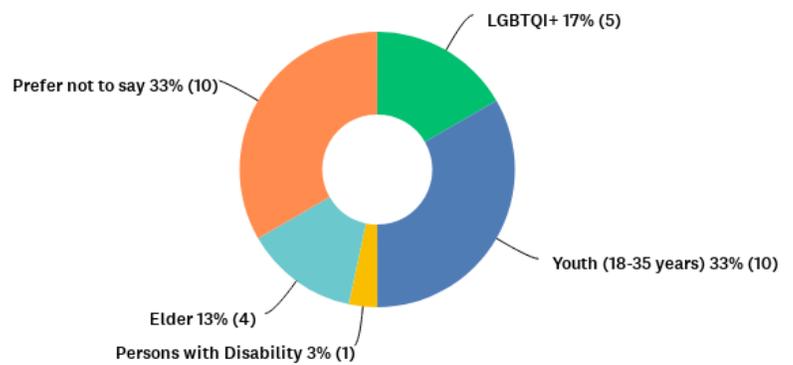
Q3 Have you attended an IFIP conference before?



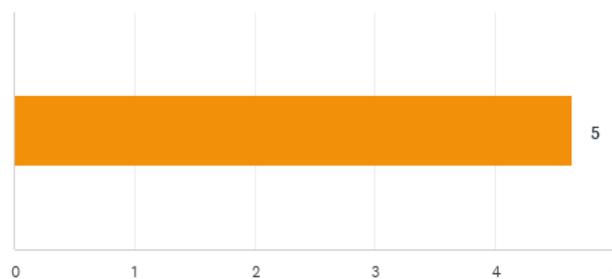
Q4 Gender



Q5 Which Intersectional group do you represent?



Q6 Relevance of the Conference to your current work or functions. (Five being the highest)



Average 4.64
33 Responses

Shifting Power and Resources to Indigenous Peoples

The sessions within this thematic area challenged and questioned the Northern and colonial understandings of funding, philanthropy, knowledge, and wealth. Panelists and organizers shared traditions and approaches that truly disrupted and shifted power among their local communities. These sessions provided a round-up of the latest research and insights on how recent major pledges addressing climate breakdown and mass extinction were being or would be put into practice and explored the need to shift power and resources to Indigenous Peoples and communities to leverage transformative systems change.



Lessons Learned

The limited availability of resources also endures several rigid funding criteria. In addition to that, funding opportunities are often developed without understanding the local context, hence disconnected from holistic and intersectional communities' needs and priorities.

Sharing power also means listening deeply, creating safe spaces, acknowledging Indigenous intersectionality, and redirecting resources so that Indigenous Peoples can express self-determination.

The importance of collective safety and protection as mechanisms of equipping Indigenous WHRDs with the tools and support needed to defend their lands and territories safely and sustainably over the long haul, and subsequent implications for funding and resourcing strategies.



Ensuring Indigenous Peoples' Rights to Self-Determination: sharing and learning from the ground

IFIP defines self-determined development as the ability of Indigenous communities to preserve, evolve and transform social, political, economic, and cultural systems in line with their priorities. This track addressed how to bolster self-determination and Indigenous Peoples' rights by sharing outcomes and lessons learned from these efforts. The track included sessions exploring important issues and challenges that are central to the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples such as land and territory rights and protection, Indigenous women's rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and political and economic leadership.



Lessons learned

Self-determination of Indigenous Peoples can be supported through avenues like impact investment, supporting Indigenous leadership, policy, and advocacy efforts, among others.

Financial support for a meeting on the gender identity of Indigenous Peoples worldwide was highly mentioned. The creation of ethnic geography of gender identities in the Indigenous world will provide funders with a better understanding of how to support these initiatives.

Underscored the importance of Indigenous self-determination in climate solutions and the need to invest in Indigenous-controlled infrastructure.

Funding strategies towards a direct funding model are needed to support Indigenous rights to self-determination.

Overall, the sessions demonstrated the importance of supporting Indigenous communities and their autonomy through various means such as economic development, advocacy, documentation, and institutional support. There is a need to recognize and support Indigenous leadership in creating sustainable solutions for the future.



Roles of Inter-generational Indigenous Leadership to promote, protect, and revitalize Indigenous knowledge

Indigenous Knowledge and practices provide an important framework for solutions to both local issues as well as many of the global earth's systemic crises. But Indigenous knowledge has been compromised through the historical and ongoing instruments of colonization, including the loss of traditional lands. The continuation of intergenerational sharing and transfer of knowledge between the Indigenous elders and the youth is crucial.

Hence, there is a need for attention to support Indigenous intergenerational leadership. This track included sessions exploring the importance of inter-generational knowledge transfer within Indigenous communities and the role this plays in the protection, promotion, preservation, and revitalization of Indigenous knowledge, traditional practices, languages, and cultural identity.

Lessons learned

Language is a powerful tool that connects all aspects of Indigenous Peoples' lives, and its preservation is crucial for the future of Indigenous communities.

By hearing from successful language advocates and understanding the existing trends for funding, Indigenous Peoples' language and knowledge revitalization can be better supported.

Understanding and supporting the impact of shifting power and resources to young leaders in philanthropy is crucial.

Funders are encouraged to break down silos and support Indigenous-led movements that are driving long-term systemic change and healing practices for people and the planet.

“Funders need to understand the diversity within all the movements and across all the identities”.

Pratima Gurung, Chairperson, National Indigenous Disabled Women's Association, Nepal (NIDWAN)

It is important to support healing processes that include building a change of narrative and re-signifying the need of children and youth to speak their language.

Support Indigenous leadership by leveraging Indigenous knowledge to address climate resilience and adaptation, protection of biodiversity, language and cultural revitalization, and spirituality, such as knowledge around food systems, healing, health, and others at both the local and global levels.



“It’s just awesome to connect with people, especially from the Amazon who also help our climate by being the earth’s lungs and just to connect and I hope this (connection) keeps up growing because it is so important for future generations...”

Verner Wilson, Advisor, Artic Indigenous Fund



Indigenous Film Festival

DAUGHTERS OF MOTHER EARTH

Voices and Images for Healing

CHIRAPAQ Center for Indigenous Cultures of Peru organized the Indigenous Film Festival. Short films made by indigenous women and youth were presented. This cinematic journey took Conference participants to Central and South America, the Arctic, Eastern Europe, North America, and the Pacific, giving a broad representation of Indigenous Peoples around the world. These short films evoked the connection with grandmothers, reverse stereotypes of all kinds, explore the human connection with Mother Earth, and denounce the violence exercised against Indigenous women and girls around the globe.

Indigenous storytellers play a critical role in transmitting the experiences, realities, and views of Indigenous communities to ultimately reclaim the narrative of Indigenous Peoples.



Taily Terena and Nelaydith Intokiro Sofia Chapay Marcos of CHIRAPAQ presenting the Indigenous Film Festival

Site Visits

The conference participants' experience was enriched by the following site visits.

Indigenous Women's Leadership

IFIP in collaboration with [Fundación de Haciendas del Mundo Maya](#) organized a site visit to social enterprises led by women, one from agro-diversity and the other from artisans, both from the community of Granada, in the municipality of Maxcanú, half an hour from Merida. The site visits showcased how Indigenous Women at the community level are being economically empowered and using their agency in the decision-making process through social entrepreneurship. They are also playing key roles in protecting, preserving, and transferring Indigenous and traditional knowledge and skills to younger generations.

Youth Leadership and Transformation

IFIP in collaboration with [Baktún Pueblo Maya](#) organized a site visit to Xcanchakán, a community where representatives of different youth initiatives that promote the revitalization of Indigenous language and culture within the Yucatan peninsula, shared and made visible the diversity of youth actors in the region.

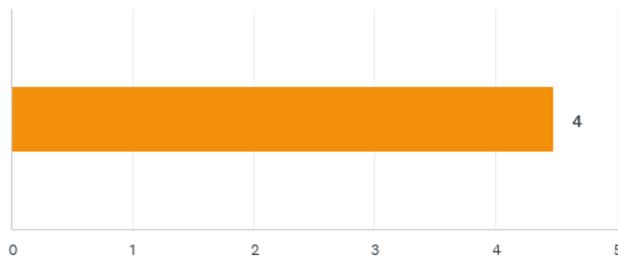
Mayan community Initiatives funded by the Agroecology Fund of the Yucatan Peninsula (FAPY)

This field visit to community initiatives supported through the [Agroecology Fund for the Yucatan Peninsula \(FAPY\)](#) provided an opportunity to learn about local Indigenous food systems. These conversations were led by representatives of grassroots organizations, producers, and actors of the territory that are part of these projects.

Indigenous Entrepreneurship

[EDUCE Cooperative](#) allowed Conference participants to taste honey and see where honey is processed for export and packaging. A group of Mayan cooperative members met participants for cultural exchange and described their cooperative organization as a powerful tool for sustaining Indigenous livelihoods.

Q8 How would you rate the conference overall?



Average 4.48

32 Responses

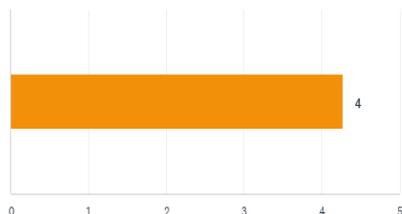
Q9 Rate the value of the topics during the parallel sessions.

Average 4.38

32 Responses



Q10 Rate the value of the presentations and conversations during the opening and closing plenary session.



Average 4.27

33 Responses



Looking Forward: Recommended Actions to be taken by IFIP

The IFIP team will work on the key recommendations shared during the Conference that include:

- Continue advocating for the increased understanding, interest, and commitment to supporting the work of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous-led organizations across the globe.
- Host discussions to address issues and challenges central to the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples, such as land and territory rights and protection, Indigenous women's LGBTQ+ rights, and political and economic leadership.
- Facilitate sharing and storytelling from Indigenous Peoples and funders to share challenges and successes in their work.
- Continue emphasizing the importance of flexibility, collaboration, intersectionality, and intercultural philanthropy, where we embrace respectful and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities.
- Provide a comprehensive analysis of funding for Indigenous Peoples across the globe to identify philanthropic and other sources of funding, assess the level of funding awarded to Indigenous-led organizations in comparison to non-Indigenous-led organizations, and provide insights into the nature of funding for Indigenous Peoples.
- Continue to strengthen the Global Alliance of Indigenous-led Funds to share ideas, collaborate, and address challenging questions,
- Raise awareness of the work of Indigenous Led Funds **and influence funders for direct funding**
- Facilitate regional connections and forums to share policies, frameworks, terms of reference, and knowledge hubs.



As we advance as a global community, IFIP looks forward to working with members to make all these recommendations a reality.

Third Global Gathering of Indigenous-Led Funds

IFIP hosted the Third Global Gathering of Indigenous-Led Funds as a pre-conference program. Three years have passed since IFIP hosted the first two global gatherings bringing together for the first time Indigenous organizations who are leading the way in Indigenous-led giving and philanthropy. The first two gatherings were historic in marking the first-time

representatives of ILFs met to build relationships leading to the creation of the IFIP Indigenous Led Funds Working Group. The Third Global Gathering brought together 23 Indigenous-Led Funds from different regions. The Gathering was organized into three sessions: Managing Donor Relations, Changing the Narrative, and Building an Alliance of Indigenous-led Funds.

An exciting outcome of this gathering is the **launch of The Global Alliance of Indigenous-Led Funds on February 21, 2023**. Myrna Cunningham (Pawanka Fund) and Jim Enote (Colorado Plateau Foundation) have been serving as the Co-Chairs of the Indigenous Led Funds Working group. At the Third Gathering the mantle and responsibility were passed on to Galina Angarova (Cultural Survival) and Teresa Zapeta (International Indigenous Women’s Fund (FIMI) as the new co-chairs to coordinate with Lourdes Inga (IFIP) as the Secretariat of the newly formed Global Alliance. The Global Alliance of Indigenous Led Funds seeks to bring together ILFs globally to promote, empower and advance Indigenous Peoples' priorities and rights through forming and strengthening philanthropic partnerships and moving towards “The Five R’s of Indigenous Philanthropy” —Respect, Relationships, Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Redistribution as a giving practice.



IFIP's First Global Indigenous Youth Dialogue

IFIP's team in partnership with **Baktum Pueblo Maya** met with Indigenous networks in the lead-up to the IFIP Conference to plan IFIP's First Global Indigenous Youth Dialogue, which was attended by 48 representing most socio-cultural regions of the world. IFIP also supported youth participation with scholarships to 10 youths. Additionally, we were humbled to welcome 16 local youths from the Yucatan Peninsula. IFIP will continue to create spaces for Indigenous youth to gather to share their experiences and discuss how to transform philanthropy.



An outcome of this collaboration is the **Global Indigenous Youth Manifesto**:

Indigenous youth from various regions of the planet gathered in the Yucatan Peninsula, Mayan territory, and declared that Indigenous participation is limited by economic, social, cultural, and political aspects.

Limited access to education and opportunities for youth reduces their capacity. Therefore, their political participation in decision-making is reduced. By youth being excluded, voices of gender diversity are also silenced and those who think differently are stigmatized. Consequently, actions must be taken to **mitigate adult centrism** and **create spaces for intergenerational and intercultural dialogue**.

From the institutional framework, policies and programs that advise on the **current situation of Indigenous youth** and the **strengthening of their leadership capacities** should be promoted. The representation of Indigenous youth in **public policy** must be ensured, their access to **comprehensive physical, mental, and spiritual health**, and their **access to lands without fear of defending** must also be guaranteed. The voice of youth must be **transversal in all spaces**, only then will we build a **just world**.

Learnings or Takeaways from the Conference

- Indigenous Peoples need to have direct conversations with funders frequently and directly. Global convenings serve as a healing space for Indigenous Peoples.
- The need for more funding to Indigenous women-led organizations. The advances we have made in even ensuring Indigenous women are holding, leading this space, and making inroads with other movements. The progress that is yet to be made on funding Indigenous women beyond just climate and environment.
- Indigenous-led funds facing the same challenges globally. Initiatives/funds to advance economic self-determination require a different fund model.
- Redistribution - a real call to action around the repatriation of funds to Indigenous people.
- Realizing that there are still a great number of Westernized donor practices. So, we still have a lot of room to improve it.
- Many Indigenous Peoples worldwide doing good work and facing similar systemic problems need general support funds over 5 to 10-year periods to support building up self-determination work.
- Transparency of the funders and the objective of the support, intensive hands-on support for IPs to be ready to strengthen IPs power, recover from the trauma of colonialization, conduct IPs program driven by the indigenous knowledge, system, and practices, and adopt more approaches to support IPs with disability.
- Loved the Indigenous Climate Action panel. They did a great job explaining how colonialism, patriarchy, capitalism, white supremacy, and extraction were linked to climate change AND explaining why Indigenous knowledge, and ways of knowing, being, and doing are critical to generating systems change.



IFIP GLOBAL CONFERENCE 2023
22-24TH FEBRUARY
MÉRIDA, YUCATÁN, MÉXICO

