

# Indigenous women and the International Labour Organization (ILO)

## Latin America

### Education for Work, Employment and Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ETEDPI): Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala

<b>Project title</b>	Education for Work, Employment and Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ETEDPI)
<b>Thematic area/programme</b>	Indigenous education
<b>Project duration</b>	16 June 2004–28 February 2006
<b>Location</b>	Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	A number of indigenous peoples in Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala
<b>Executing agency/agencies</b>	International Labour Organization (ILO)
<b>Implementing agency/agencies</b>	ILO
<b>Source of funds</b>	Netherlands

The ETEDPI project places the greatest importance on the mainstreaming of gender equality, giving priority to the participation of indigenous women in educational projects and addressing their specific needs in all of the processes and activities that have been developed.

## Nicaragua

### *Literacy and basic education for the Chorotega indigenous people in Nicaragua*

The ETEDPI project, through the Programme of Continuous Education for Youth and Adults of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports in Nicaragua, is now undertaking a pilot project in the indigenous communities of San José de Cuzmapa, el Carrizal, San Lucas, Santa Barbara, Litlelpaneca, Totogalpa and San Antonio de Padua in the Department of Madriz, and Mozonte in the Department of Nueva Segovia. Two hun-

dred and twelve Chorotega indigenous persons—91 women and 121 men—are participating in the project.

*Rescue of the historic memory and living abilities  
of the Chorotega population*

The beneficiaries of this project are 779 students (330 women and 449 men), 22 teachers, 400 families, the youths clan (made up of 70 indigenous persons: 55 women and 15 men) and the Monimbó artisans group. The whole community (constituting approximately 6,000 beneficiaries of whom 52 per cent are women and 48 per cent are men) will benefit indirectly. This exercise will be carried out in coordination with the municipality and relevant trade unions.

*Initiative of the adaptation of the model of friendly  
and healthy schools to a model of a  
“Friendly and healthy indigenous school” in Nicaragua*

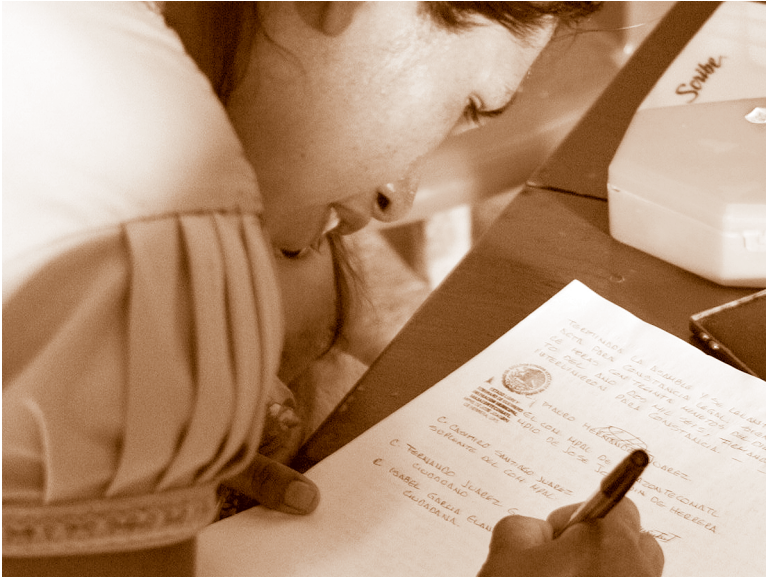
This project is carried out in the Nucleus of Autonomous Rural Schools (NERA), which includes nine multigrade schools and will benefit 844 students and 38 teachers directly. Indirectly, 25 communal leaders will benefit as well—13 men and 12 women—as well as the schools’ consultative councils.

*Occupational strengthening programme in Nicaragua*

- The training of indigenous women is to be given the highest priority.
- The work is carried out in coordination with the women’s programme and the small and medium business enterprise programme which supervise the courses, together with the traditional indigenous councils, adapting programmes to the special characteristics of the population of young people and adults concerned, and assisting the target group in accessing the labour market.

*Initiative to train for the creation of tourism  
microenterprises in Nicaragua*

This initiative will benefit 50 indigenous people, 25 men and 25 women, who aspire to the creation of microenterprises for communal tourism. The indigenous communities benefited will be: Matagalpa, of the Caacopera people; Sebaco, San Juan de Oriente, Monimbó and Nindirí, of the Chorotega people; and Nancimi and Salinas de Nagualapa, of the Nahoa people.



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### *“The women’s economic agenda” in Nicaragua*

The ETEDPI project has actively participated in the United Nations Development Fund for Women–United Nations Development Programme (UNIFEM-UNDP) project entitled “The women’s economic agenda”, specifically to incorporate consideration of the needs and particular characteristics of indigenous women in matters of education and employment.

### **Honduras**

In Honduras, the project’s representatives are the Honduran National Indigenous Women’s Coordinating Organization (Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas de Honduras (CONAMINH)) and the Honduran Indigenous Peoples Federation (Confederación de Pueblos Autóctonos de Honduras (CONPAH)), which groups the nine federations representing the nine indigenous peoples in the country.

### *Methodology of education for working with indigenous peoples*

*Communal development planning.* A process of evaluation of former processes and projects in which pilot communities had participated was initiated in order to ensure that the planning process would be sustained by the communities’ own experiences and needs, which can be immediate or longer term. Special consideration was given to the handling of the time frame of the planning process so that it would be in accordance with the

communities' own timing patterns and their own socio-organizational dynamics. The Honduran National Indigenous Women's Coordinating Organization has also participated in developing self-esteem and motivational dialogues to promote the participation of indigenous women. The participants have the capacity to develop and demonstrate aptitude for collective endeavour. The outcome has been a communal development plan that includes ideas for productive and social projects for each of the participating communities.

The National Institute for Women has helped initiate joint action to benefit a greater number of indigenous women more effectively.

## Guatemala

### *Literacy training*

The literacy training process benefits nine communities from five Departments in the country, inhabited by the two most numerous peoples in the country: the Q'eqchi' and the K'iche'. Even though it had been expected that 75 per cent of the beneficiaries would be women, the data indicate that female participation was approximately 60 per cent of a total population of 180 persons. Access to literacy training in remote communities is essential if they are to attain an educational level that will allow them to access other capacity-building courses in tourism, comprehend basic aspects of administration, and ultimately carry out their projects in order to become sustainable.

### *Support through Ak' Tenamit for the development of tourist services through a career as an expert in sustainable tourism*

Beneficiaries are students from 10 Q'eqchi' communities in the Departments of Izabal, Alta Verapaz and Petén. Forty-seven per cent of these students are women.

### *Creation of the National Federation of Communal Tourism in Guatemala (FENATUCGUA)*

The National Federation of Communal Tourism in Guatemala has adopted a policy of mainstreaming decent work, especially its aspects that concern gender equity and specific support to the prevention of child labour, into the participating projects on communal tourism.

## Achievements

- Active participation of indigenous women in education processes and in the productive projects was achieved.
- The project has involved and benefited indigenous peoples across the full spectrum of age groups.

## Challenges

- Systematic long-term action is required to achieve the results we seek with regard to the participation of indigenous women.

## Factors that contributed to success

- Consultation with the representative indigenous organizations.
- A relationship based on trust, mutual respect and reciprocity among the indigenous beneficiaries was the basis for the implementation of the activities.

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## Legal Empowerment of the Indigenous Peoples in Central America

<b>Project title</b>	Legal Empowerment of the Indigenous Peoples in Central America
<b>Thematic area/programme</b>	Rights promotion
<b>Location</b>	Central America
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Indigenous women in Central America
<b>Executing agency/agencies</b>	International Labour Organization Subregional Office in San José, Costa Rica
<b>Implementing agency/agencies</b>	Enlace Continental de Mujeres Indígenas (Continental Network of Indigenous Women), Proyecto "Mujer y Acuerdo de Paz" (Project "Woman and Peace Agreement"), of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Guatemala
<b>Source of funds</b>	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)

### Overview

There still exists a considerable need to build the awareness and capacity of indigenous peoples with respect to learning about and protecting their rights as outlined in various international instruments, most significantly ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, 1989.

A further challenge entails the tensions that arise as indigenous women seek to claim both their collective rights as indigenous peoples and their individual rights as women. By pressing for separate rights and equal treatment by gender, indigenous women activists are often accused of undermining the unity of indigenous movements that are advocating for collective rights. Furthermore, there is uncertainty over the extent to which the right to gender equality infringes upon indigenous cultural traditions and customs. Hence, there is also a need to translate the rights of women as outlined in international treaties into culturally relevant concepts and priorities.

### What was planned

- The ILO project entitled "Legal Empowerment of the Indigenous Peoples in Central America" was created to improve the capacity of indigenous peoples and their organizations to learn about and defend their legitimate rights at the national and international levels. It was also intended to stimulate discussion regarding the specific challenges to indigenous women and the resolution of the above-mentioned tensions arising from their efforts to claim both their collective and their individual rights.

- The project grants maximum importance to the full and equitable participation of indigenous women in all due activities. Special and constant efforts will be made to ensure that this target is achieved.
- Indigenous women will need to identify and develop contexts such as those of indigenous persons and women, within which to define and explore the characteristic features peculiar to and inherent in this dual identity. The project will help them to define their aspirations, especially in relation to the fundamental principle defined by Convention No. 169, which gives priority to recognized international human rights.
- Public entities such as ombudsman's offices (involving attorneys, commissioners or ombudsmen) will incorporate more effectively in their specific programmes on gender and training the most important topics for indigenous women.

### Workshops/meetings/demonstrations conducted

#### *Third Continental Meeting of Indigenous Women*

The project aided and financially supported this event, where 72 indigenous women from 17 countries on the American continent participated in the Continental Network of the Americas. The overall objectives of the meeting encompassed empowering the participation of indigenous women at community, national and international levels, and providing at each level the unique perspective of indigenous women.

Further objectives were strengthening organizational and leadership know-how among indigenous women and strengthening communications within the Continental Network of Indigenous Women.

The issues that were discussed were the Beijing Declaration<sup>1</sup> and Platform for Action,<sup>2</sup> confronting the outcome of the five-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2000 World March of Women. Owing to the interest expressed by the participants themselves, a space was dedicated to a discussion on ILO Convention No. 169.

The Continental Demonstration of Indigenous Women was held at the end of this event. Indigenous women marched through the principal streets of Panama protesting against poverty and the violence inflicted on indigenous women and indigenous peoples, as well as demanding the ratification of ILO Convention No. 169 by the countries that had not yet done so.

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, annex.

### Achievements

At the Third Continental Meeting of Indigenous Women, the participants spoke of the difficulties involved in carrying out the mandate of the Commission for Training of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women. This first step concluded with the Regional Training Programme, which was the direct outcome of a response to the request.

#### *Workshop entitled “Negociando nuestra autonomía” (“Negotiating our autonomy”)*

The Workshop, held in Coronado, San José, Costa Rica, and organized by the National Association of Indigenous Peoples and Rural Women (Asociación Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas y Campesinas (ACONAMIC)), was aimed at indigenous women of the Ngöbe Buglé people.

### Achievements

Twenty-six women, representing the communities of Alto San Antonio, Río Claro, Punta Burica, Alto Abrojo Montezuma, Compte Burica and Guatuso, were trained and will replicate the workshop experience through sharing the knowledge acquired with their communities.

#### *Workshop entitled “Pregnancy among Adolescents and Convention 169”*

The Workshop was held in the community of Narasgandup Bipi, in the Autonomous Territory of Kuna Yala, Panama, within the context of the Regional Meeting of the Kuna Women (Encuentro Sectorial de Mujeres Kunas (OLOWAILI)).

### Achievements

Forty-four indigenous women from the Kunas attended the Workshop. They analysed the social problem of the high incidence of adolescent pregnancy in their State (*comarca*) from their own cultural and political cosmovision, establishing a relationship with the lack of acknowledgement of their legal rights as part of an indigenous group of people, and rallied for a quick ratification of ILO Convention No. 169.

#### *Workshop on Legal Training intended for indigenous women belonging to the Tolupan people in Honduras*

The Workshop, held in the community of El Siriano, in the department of Yoro, Honduras, from 16 to 18 May 2000, was co-organized by Akistimiura kep and the Unidad de la Mujer Tolupán de Yoro Francisco Morazán–AKTYFM (Unit of the Tolupan Woman of Yoro and Francisco Morazán). The training centred on the following subjects:





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- (a) The rights of indigenous peoples: ILO and indigenous peoples: its competence, past record and the rights proclaimed by Convention No. 169 and the mechanisms for its implementation;
- (b) The rights of indigenous women:
  - (i) Traditions and customs and our rights as indigenous women;
  - (ii) The human rights of indigenous women;
  - (iii) The law on domestic violence and equal opportunity in Honduras;
  - (iv) The Beijing Platform for Action, especially in regard to indigenous women.

#### Achievements

Fifty-six women from 24 indigenous peoples were trained. They will be multipliers of the knowledge acquired within their communities.

#### *Legal Workshop entitled "Conozcamos nuestros derechos" ("Let's know our rights")*

The Workshop, aimed at indigenous women, was held in the city of Bilwi, in the Autonomous Region of the North Atlantic, with the objective of training indigenous women of the Miskito people from the communities of Sandy Bay, Pahra, Awastara, Krukira, Tuapi, Wawa Bar, Karata and Haulover.

Issues addressed were awareness on the issue of gender and gender violence; psychosocial analysis of gender violence; socio-legal analysis of

gender violence; and analysis of ILO Convention No. 169. The Workshop was carried out with simultaneous translation into the Miskito language. Distributed and also translated into Miskito were learning materials about indigenous women's rights, namely, "Nosotras y nuestras identidades" ("We women and our identities"), "Nosotras y nuestros liderazgos" ("We women and our leadership") and the text and explanation of Law No. 230, on reforms and additions made to criminal law to prevent and punish violence within the family.

#### Achievements

Eighty-six community leaders and women were organized as the Indigenous Women's Association of the Atlantic Coast (Asociación de Mujeres Indígenas de la Costa Atlántica (AMICA)) and will replicate the experience and share the knowledge acquired within their 43 communities.

#### *Workshop on Discrimination towards Indigenous Women*

The Workshop was held in Guatemala in the four linguistic regions.

#### Achievements

As a result of the Workshop, a popular notebook was produced entitled "Using the Maya dress is a right", available on the Internet from [www.oit.or.cr/unfip](http://www.oit.or.cr/unfip).

#### *Workshop with Indigenous Organizations*

The Workshop, with its emphasis on the indigenous woman's rights, was organized by the Ministry of Labour.

#### Achievements

Thirty women from the Patzún community are now informed with regard to a series of laws that recognize the rights of women.

#### *Specialization Course for Women and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples within the Inter-American System*

Technical assistance for the course was organized by the Centro de Estudios e Información de la Mujer Multiétnica (CEIMM) (Centre for Studies and Information on the Multi-ethnic Woman) of the Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense (URACCAN) (University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua) (CEIMM-URACCAN).

#### Achievements

Forty-five indigenous women from 12 Latin American countries are now knowledgeable on the Inter-American System for the Protection of Human Rights, as well as existing ILO mechanisms, conventions and recommendations.



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### Learning materials that specifically target indigenous women

The project, carried out in conjunction with indigenous women themselves, has been developing its own conceptualization of the specific rights of indigenous women.

Furthermore, aware of the inequalities that occur in respect of the exercise by indigenous women of their individual rights, especially economic, social and cultural rights, the project has created guides, manuals and videos, especially aimed at women who are not organized and who live in communities where they do not have access to the information, on their own due rights. These materials include:

- Gabriela Olguín, video entitled *Here I Am, Here We Are: Specific Rights of Indigenous Women*
- Gabriela Olguín, “A learning guide for the workshops for training of indigenous women and understanding the video”
- Doris Bill and Gabriela Olguín, “I am an indigenous woman and I know my rights”
- Lina Barrios, “Using the Maya costume is a right”

### Regional Training Programme

The Programme is the outcome of an important synergy between UNDP/ Guatemala and the culmination of several consultancies, ratifications, meetings etc. that were held over a period of approximately 32 months,

for the purpose of creating the Regional Training Programme. This Programme was created to support the commitment of the subregional commission for the training of indigenous women (Enlace Continental (Continental Network)) and was an outcome of agreements committed to during the Tercera Reunión Inter-Institucional (Third Inter-agency Meeting). The following is a chronological outline of the process developed for the creation of the Programme.

### *March 2000*

The Third Continental Meeting of Indigenous Women was held in Panama City. The Enlace Continental de Mujeres Indígenas (Continental Network of Indigenous Women) offers a space for dialogue and exchange and deliberations and provides the opportunity for indigenous women to put forth their own proposals. It is organized into three sub-networks corresponding to the northern, central and southern regions and works through the following Commissions: the Commission for Training, the Commission for Commercialization/Marketing and Copyrights, the Commission for International Instruments and the Commission for Communications.

During this meeting, Honduras and Guatemala were selected to implement the programme of the Commission for Training for the central subregion of the Network.

### *May 2000*

The Third Inter-agency Meeting on Indigenous Peoples was held in San José, Costa Rica. Among the agreements reached at this Meeting was one on the exchange of information between the agencies regarding gender and on work with the regional networks of indigenous women. A follow-up committee was created with UNDP/Guatemala, the ILO Project, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and the Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de América Latina y El Caribe—Fondo Indígena (Indigenous Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean), maintaining the ILO Project as the link.

### *2000*

UNDP/Guatemala and the ILO Project initiated conversations with the Continental Network of Indigenous Women to assist in the implementation of a training programme for indigenous women of the region.

### *September-October 2000*

Indigenous women organizations of the region that belonged to the Continental Network of Indigenous Women were initially consulted regarding their needs in terms of training.

### November 2000

UNDP/Guatemala and the ILO Project hired a consultant to carry out the systematization of the data results and the production of a proposal from the Regional Training Programme for Indigenous Women.

### December 2000

The validation workshop, entitled “Pensando el futuro del liderazgo de la mujer indígena: una invitación al diálogo y propuesta” (“Thinking about the future of indigenous women’s leadership: an invitation to a dialogue and a proposal”), was held in Guatemala City to discuss and facilitate input for the Regional Training Programme for Indigenous Women. The meeting was sponsored by the ILO Project and UNDP/Guatemala. The Workshop made use of an entertainment dynamic that permitted the attendees to envision future scenes as indigenous women and as persons belonging to indigenous peoples. In attendance were some 30 women from Central American countries and Mexico belonging to indigenous organizations that were part of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women, as well as other indigenous organizations. Mexico became part of the subregional network, as it did not have a commission for training in the northern region.

### June 2001

After the input had been received at the workshop of the women themselves, the final proposal for the Regional Training Programme for Indigenous Women was put forth.

### March 2002

There was now an educational guide on the specific rights of indigenous women for the training workshops and an accompanying video. These were the outcomes of the December 2000 workshop.

### October 2002

There was an official presentation by the Regional Training Programme to the Continental Network of Indigenous Women.

## Negotiation processes led by indigenous women

In the indigenous territory of Rey Curré, Costa Rica, the organization *Mujeres con espíritu de lucha* (Women with struggling spirit) has been created to tackle the threat of the construction of the hydroelectric dam in their territory. This is an example where engagement in the negotiation processes supported by the project have been led by women.

### Ombudsman's Office for Indigenous Women in Guatemala

Guatemala is the only country to have an ombudsman's office for indigenous women. The agreement to create an ombudsman office was included in the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in which the national Government promised to promote the dissemination of, and faithfully abide by, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women<sup>3</sup> and other legal instruments relating to the rights of indigenous peoples that had been ratified by the Government of Guatemala, creating an indigenous ombudsman office. It was determined that women should participate in its operation and that the ombudsman office should offer legal aid and social services, among others.

The project offered technical assistance to the ombudsman's office in the execution of the project entitled "Promotion of the Rights of Indigenous Women" which was sponsored by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/Guatemala. The technical assistance given was in developing the strategy for consulting on the specific rights of indigenous women within the 24 linguistic communities of Guatemala. For this purpose, the following activities were conducted:

- Training on women's human rights, the rights of indigenous peoples and specific rights of indigenous women, for those facilitators in charge of the process of consultation and training
- Producing a workbook for consulting and training on the specific rights of indigenous women (rights that are intrinsic to indigenous women because they belong to a people that is separated from the rest of the national society) and an evaluation of the existing inability of indigenous women to exercise certain of those human rights considered to be universal, as well as a workbook designed to systematize the data from the consultation and training

#### *Achievements*

The conclusions arrived at were useful to the Ombudsman's Office for Indigenous Women in Guatemala in respect of its having access to an analysis of the real situation of indigenous women in their communities. This would be aimed at addressing situations where the indigenous woman in the country was particularly vulnerable, defenceless and discriminated against.

#### What the strategy was

- To develop a systematic programme aimed at promoting: analysis and reform of existing legislation, legal training, and broad-

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<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

based interaction involving indigenous organizations, public authorities and other social actors in the legal field

- To promote awareness of indigenous people's rights, especially indigenous women's rights, as reflected in one of the outputs, the development of an illustrated guide to be used by indigenous peoples
- To provide a forum for a number of indigenous women's organizations in Central America and Mexico, as reflected in another output of the project which included a conference held in December 2000 in Guatemala entitled "Pensando el futuro del liderazgo de la mujer indígena: una invitación al diálogo y propuesta" ("Thinking about the future of indigenous women's leadership: an invitation to a dialogue and a proposal") and the resulting video
- To contribute to local discussions on the topic of indigenous women's rights and facilitate the collective search for solutions, which was the intention of the video

#### Who was involved

- ILO Subregional Office in San José
- Enlace Continental de Mujeres Indígenas (Continental Network of Indigenous Women)
- Proyecto "Mujer y Acuerdo de Paz" (Project entitled "Woman and the Peace Agreement") of UNDP/Guatemala

#### Specific changes resulting from the project

The project, in its 46 months of promoting activities, has achieved important and noteworthy results, among which the following may be highlighted:

1. Our working capital encompasses the confidence and faith that emanates from the indigenous peoples and organizations of the subregion.
2. Numerous indigenous organizations of the subregion have been able to benefit from the training workshops offered by the project.
3. We have shortened the distance between discourse and action in the exercise of the rights of indigenous peoples.
4. Some of the trained legal teams have initiated actions in the national courts to present the cases with which they have been entrusted by indigenous organizations and/or communities. For example, cases in Panama and Costa Rica currently await final resolution in the courts of those countries. The cases are in defence of the indigenous territories as regards the construction

of the Tabasará II Hydroelectric Dam, and the delimitation and transfer of land registration of Boruca and Terraba indigenous territories, respectively.

5. Other legal teams have opted for an activist strategy and/or negotiation. This is the case for the legal team of Guatemala, which has undertaken the defence of the Communal Forest of Totonicapán. The legal team of Costa Rica is negotiating for the approval of the Ley del Desarrollo Autónomo de los Pueblos Indígenas (Law for the Autonomous Development of Indigenous Peoples).
6. On the other hand, a lawsuit has already been successfully concluded, aided by the project. The case in point concerns an appeal to the Constitutional Court, promoted by the legal teams and the communities affected by the oil concessions on Costa Rica's Caribbean coast. The Supreme Constitutional Court of Costa Rica, in 2000-08019 of 8 September 2000, annulled the allocation to MKL-XPSLORATION (resolution R-702 of the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE)) and urged that the Government should promote consultations with the indigenous peoples concerned, according to ILO Convention No. 169. Furthermore, there has been a request made to the Government for compensation for possible damages.
7. The production of educational materials has been noteworthy. These include the Serie Guías Legales (Series of Legal Guides), Serie Normativa (Normative Series) and Jurisprudencia Indígena (Indigenous Jurisprudence), teaching materials designed to create awareness of the rights of indigenous women and/or aimed specifically at them, as well as other specialized studies that were produced in support of particular demands, as was the case for the studies entitled "Condiciones laborales de los Buzos Miskitos de Nicaragua" (Working conditions of the Miskito Divers of Nicaragua) and "Condiciones de las comunidades indígenas de El Salvador" (Conditions of the indigenous communities of El Salvador) issued after the earthquake of 2001.
8. The educational material has been distributed to the indigenous peoples and organizations of the subregion and also, on many occasions, to indigenous organizations and peoples of Mexico and South America that have requested copies.
9. Initial steps have been taken for the establishment of alliances to bring indigenous organizations and labour organizations closer together to ensure the effective use of existing ILO mechanisms, conventions and recommendations for the defence of indigenous people's rights.



10. Efforts were made to train and create awareness among public authorities in the countries covered by the project, resulting in the attainment of significant breakthroughs. A ruling was obtained from the Attorney General of Panama, recommending a discussion on ILO Convention No. 169 at a plenary session of the Legislative Assembly.
11. The Executive Power of Panama has reached an agreement with the Indigenous Congresses to submit ILO Convention No. 169 for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly at a plenary.
12. Another achievement was the full support for the Indigenous Parliament in respect of the legislative lawsuits of the indigenous peoples of Nicaragua.
13. Owing to the work that has been accomplished, the legislative assemblies of different countries regularly consult the project regarding the congruence of the different laws and legal instruments that can be applied to indigenous affairs.
14. Indigenous peoples and organizations of the subregion regularly consult the project regarding the relevance of their legal strategies. The use of this mechanism often extends beyond the subregion, since on various occasions indigenous organizations and State organisms of Mexico and South America have been given legal advice.
15. The work that the project has carried out in empowering indigenous women's organizations and attending to their specific needs has been remarkable.
16. Numerous workshops for training and dissemination aimed at indigenous women have been organized.
17. A Regional Training Programme for the Continental Network of Indigenous Women has been developed to support the Commission for Training—Central American Region of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women.
18. An interesting discussion and analysis have been initiated on the specific rights of indigenous women.
19. Educational material on the rights of indigenous women has been developed for or aimed directly at them.
20. Also, there has been technical support and advice given to State organisms that were designated as responsible for examining particular situations where indigenous women might have been vulnerable, defenceless or discriminated against, as is the case for the Ombudsman's Office for Indigenous Women in Guatemala.
21. Dissemination of information on indigenous peoples' rights and laws has been encouraged through educational material, videos and public announcements via radio, with a view to se-

- curing a greater involvement of society at the national level in recognizing and respecting those rights.
22. People and organizations of the subregion regularly consult the website of the project. Such involvement has often extended beyond the subregion, since on various occasions indigenous organizations or State organisms of Mexico and South America were given legal advice or educational materials.
  23. Important synergies have been created with other organizations of the United Nations system especially UNDP, UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Guatemala, and with the International Human Rights Law Institute of DePaul University College of Law (Chicago, Illinois).
  24. A minimum Agenda for the Defence of Indigenous Peoples' Rights was developed to support organizations and indigenous peoples in their strategies for the defence, respect and fulfilment of their rights as individuals and collectives after the project was concluded.

### Replication/spin-off effects

We are confident that the knowledge passed on to the legal teams and indigenous leaders who participated in the various workshops and general meetings of the project will be transmitted to other groups and persons in such a way as to ensure that at each transmission there will be an ever-greater number of indirect beneficiaries of the project.

We believe that the legal teams will continue advising the indigenous peoples and organizations and will conclude in a satisfactory manner their legal proceedings.

The educational materials generated by the project are both lasting products that will continue to be useful to indigenous peoples and their advisers in the creation of effective strategies and powerful tools for protecting and safeguarding their rights.

The labour union organizations constitute essential spokespersons on existing ILO mechanisms for implementation of the norms and recommendations; therefore, the synergies between these organizations and the indigenous organizations are vital. The project initiated a process of reconciliation to bring them closer. It would be highly advantageous for this truly innovative unification process to continue, as it would contribute, through the powerful strategies shared by both groups of organizations, to the fulfilment of the project's fundamental objectives.

The project has provided a unique experience to the subregion and it would be highly desirable for ILO through its headquarters in San José, which has generated high visibility and credibility in this regard, to continue its support of indigenous peoples and organizations. Consequently,

there is a need for concerted efforts to consolidate and expand the activities in this field, and meet the challenge of mainstreaming the aforementioned legal provisions, so that they will yield tangible benefits to indigenous peoples in their everyday life.

The experience derived from the project has demonstrated the need for a more integral strategy that will take into consideration the aspects of income-generation and economic empowerment within a framework encompassing the recognition and exercise of the rights of indigenous peoples.

The above-mentioned fundamental principles and rights are invested with a special importance and meaning in the work sphere for the members of indigenous peoples owing to the fact that they face social exclusion and discrimination. The project has made efforts to apply the new integral perspective to the launch of international labour standards and their use by the members of indigenous peoples, especially the fundamental conventions strategically linked to indigenous issues. It would be of the utmost relevance to continue this strategy and to be able to focus the different activities of the ILO Subregional Office in accordance with this vision.

### What was learned

The prominent use of graphics and a simple format highlight the importance of adapting the means of conveying information to the intended audience. In this case, the high illiteracy rate among indigenous peoples requires a more graphic format.

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