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### Authors

Varese, Stefano  
Gonzalez, Tirso

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# Indigenous People Professionals Directory (IPPD) Directorio de Profesionales Indígenas de Latino América (DPILA)

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Stefano Varese, IRCA/NAS, UC Davis  
Tirso Gonzales, IRCA, UC Davis

## 1. Introduction

There are in Latin Americas an estimated 34,226,000 to 39,371,000 indigenous peoples<sup>1</sup> who make up one of the largest culturally and linguistically most diverse segment of the sub-hemispheric population of the Americas. While most of the indigenous people live in conditions of extreme poverty, they have also maintained a strong sense of ethnic identity and cultural heritage that gives them a comparative advantage in regards to self-sustained development projects and programs of political autonomy. Identity politics that implicitly or explicitly recognize the values of local knowledge and technologies, cultural patrimony, and the mobilizing power of ethnic self-esteem are substantial social tools for the achievement of social, economic, and political self-reliance. Latin American national development policies, however, have seldom recognized the cultural and intellectual sovereignty of indigenous peoples and have been inclined to disqualify them as main protagonists of their own development. Despite some recent modest gains in the terrain of Indian human rights and the increasing international recognition that the "indigenous issues" constitute a substantive part of the development crisis of Latin America, most of development theorists and policy makers are still contesting indigenous people's participation in social and economic planning and implementation with the argument that there are no indigenous experts nor indigenous professionals that can be consulted. Such statements can be interpreted as part of an ideological ballast of colonialism which supports assimilationist state policies and programs tending to exploit indigenous labor and resources for the benefit of local, regional and national elites.

Since the early 1970s Latin America has witnessed a growing process of indigenous peoples' mobilization which has taken the form of regional, national, and transnational ethnopolitical organizations accompanied by the emergence of a sector of native intellectuals, professionals, activists, and institutions. Initially formed mainly in the labor union movement (peasant and miners organizations), later as part of the teachers movements, some of these Indian intellectuals and professionals were able to earn higher education diplomas as well as professional degrees. The process has followed a tortuous and unequal route in which Mexico,

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<sup>\*</sup> The construction of the **Indigenous People Professionals Directory** database was motivated by a series of conversations with members of the Environmental Unit of the Technical Department for Latin America and the Caribbean at The World Bank. Mr. Juan Martínez, of the Environmental Unit, was especially helpful in providing information and support.

<sup>1</sup> Psacharopoulos, George and Harry Anthony Patrinos (Eds.) **Indigenous People and Poverty in Latin America. An Empirical Analysis**, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 1994; Mayer Enrique and Elio Masferrer K., "La población indígena en América en 1978", *América Indígena*, 39, 2, (1979); and Varese, Stefano, "Think Locally, Act Globally" in **Report on the Americas**, NACLA, Vol. XXV, N. 3, New York, Dec. 1991.

Ecuador and Bolivia can be considered leaders while other countries are lagging behind according to the degrees of ethnopolitical repression and discrimination exerted against Indian peoples.

The recognition of the existence of this "new indigenous intelligentsia" should not overshadow, however, the long historical presence, among indigenous communities, of a Native Intelligentsia who for centuries have been the bearers and practitioners of indigenous knowledge, technologies, spirituality, and social-cultural projects<sup>2</sup>. The fact that colonial and post-colonial discrimination and oppression, throughout indigenous America, has forced into clandestinity and invisibility these community's intellectuals does not mean that a continuum of indigenous knowledge has not been nurtured, with different degrees of success, by each specific ethnic group. The question that requires further discussion is the need for a non-Eurocentric definition of intellectualism, scholarship, science, and professionalism so that culturally different systems of knowledge can be validated and used as resources for self-managed indigenous development and autonomy.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the indigenous people of Latin America is certainly their cultural, social, and linguistic diversity. There are at least four hundred major ethnic indigenous groups in Latin America and over a thousand linguistic groups and dialect variations<sup>3</sup>. Some of these ethno-national people are counted in the millions and cover territories that straddle across various national borders; others have long histories of national and transnational migrations and their members can be found simultaneously in multiple territories; some other groups have been turned into seasonal urban dwellers while they actively maintain their communal citizenship by returning periodically to their community to perform political and ceremonial duties; others are more reduced numerically and tend to hold on tenaciously to their ancestral territories. Each one of these indigenous people share unique and peculiar cultural history and identity, each one express a specific way of approaching nature and production, lifestyle and moral ideals. It is this richness of experiences, social capital, alternative technologies, collective projects, and creative historical adaptations that needs to be drawn from and articulated with development programs by allowing the full participation of indigenous people through their community practitioners/intellectuals and their "formally" trained professionals.

The **Indigenous People Professionals Directory (IPPD)**, commissioned by the Environmental Unit of the Technical Department for Latin America and the Caribbean of The World Bank, has been conceived and generated within a frame of reference which assumes that:

1) The various indigenous people of LAC have historically produced a group/class of intellectuals, scientific and technological practitioners, specialists in different areas of human knowledge, aesthetics and practice.

2) The various indigenous people of LAC throughout centuries of co-existence with the dominant national communities have been able to slowly and consistently train and "formally educate" some of their members within the paradigm and norms of national educational

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to remember that some of the sharpest and earliest critique of the colonial oppression of indigenous people were produced by indigenous intellectuals such as Felipe Huaman Poma de Ayala, fl. 1613. *Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno* (Codex péruvien illustré), Paris, Institut d'ethnologie, 1936; Joan Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui, 1613. *Relación de antigüedades desde reyno del Perú*. Madrid, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 1968; Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, 1609. *Comentarios reales de los Incas*. Buenos Aires, Emecé Editores, 1943; the *Chilam Balam*; *Los Anales de los Kaqchiqueles*, et cetera.

<sup>3</sup> Thein Durning notes that the estimated total number of indigenous languages spoken in the Americas is 900. This number includes Native Americans from North America. See *Guardians of the Land: Indigenous Peoples and the Health of the Earth*, Worldwatch Paper 112, 1992.

institutions. Such education, professionalization, and training in the mainstream culture and institutions of elementary, secondary, technical school, and higher education may have resulted in the assimilation of the indigenous student to the national culture and society and/or in the return of the student to his/her community and an increased linking and adherence to the native cultural heritage. In any case none of these outcomes are final and definite but they rather respond to individual and collective circumstances which shape dynamically the life of each human subject.

3) It is of essential importance for the international and national development agencies to gather and assess basic information about the human and cultural resources available among indigenous people. This is not only an issue of cost-benefit analysis and economic rationality, but fundamentally a question of social and environmental justice, equity, democratic participation and ultimately sound social planning.

4) International, national and regional development agencies require local indigenous assistance and expertise that reflect cultural values and goals of the local people. Refusal, resistance, passivity and lack of participation of the local indigenous people results in most cases from a lack of communication, misreading by the external agency of the local symbolic capital, and a shallow understanding of the indigenous value and cultural system.

5) Development projects that have direct or indirect impact on indigenous people and their environments require of the creative contributions and culturally plural alternatives proposed by the Indian intellectual leadership and their communities as a guarantee that forms of multicultural and participatory social planning is put in place. There is an urgent need to innovate conventional approaches to regional and local economic and social development by opening the doors of decision making instances to the indigenous expertise.

6) The construction of cultural diverse, intercultural, and multiethnic institutional environment constitutes a work method that benefits equally all participants by stimulating creativity and opening their minds to processes of mutual learning.

A substantial component of the LAC-IPPD project is the participatory characteristic that it entails in regard to development programs in indigenous regions due to the impetus exercised by the indigenous people of LAC themselves. It is becoming increasingly implausible to sustain development programs in indigenous regions without relying on local consultants and participants from the very initial stage of designing, implementing, and monitoring the projects. The most recent example of this modality of collaborative work is the participation of indigenous professionals in the Regional Unit of Technical Assistance (RUTA) in Costa Rica.

On the other hand the institutional and legal frame of the IPPD is based on The W.B. Operational Directive 4.20 regarding indigenous peoples issued on September 17, 1991 which states that the indigenous peoples' direct and informed participation, their incorporation into the development project, and the involvement of their cultural knowledge in the planning and implementation of development programs are integral part of The W.B. policy and strategy.

We can identify at least four main phases in the WB's project cycle where the participation and assistance of indigenous professionals and practitioners is fundamental:

1- Identification: project ideas, definition of the task team (which must include indigenous professionals/practitioners), generation of the first draft of the Project Concept Document (PCD);

2- Preparation: technical assessment, social assessment, cultural/ethnic assessment, technical and feasibility studies, field visit and research;

3- Appraisal Products: technical, social, cultural/ethnic assessments, plan for the participation of indigenous people/communities, establishment of an Indigenous People Development Plan (IPDP);

4- Negotiation: based on the various assessment inputs and the IPDP.

## 2. System of Hypotheses that Supports the IPPD

As we mentioned before, since the 1970s the indigenous people of Latin America have recognized that in order to confront the challenges posed by the modernization process and the expansion of a barely regulated market economy, they had to reformulate their forms of organizations and deepen their understanding and knowledge of the larger encompassing national and international society. New grassroots organizations, ethnically based federations and confederations, and transnational indigenous coalitions became and are increasingly mobilized around issues of human, environmental and cultural rights, territorial and political autonomy, resources control, and expanded conditions of ethnic sovereignty. The conventional "class" oriented analyses and political party alignments have been replaced by social, racial, and cultural critique that focus on the indigenous people's colonial history and contemporary conditions of ethno-political subordination and economic exploitation. The politics of identity and ethnic pride, as the founding block of collective projects, have been replacing the more traditional supplicant attitude with which the Indian community used to relinquish cultural autonomy in exchange of some meager benefit delivered from the top. Some of the resulting effects of this increasing indigenous social mobilization have been a higher degree of political participation either through alliances with established parties, or by creating indigenous fronts with their own platform<sup>4</sup>.

Central to the theory underlying the need for an IPPD are a number of anthropological principles which have successfully supported previous experiences of indigenous people education and self-managed development projects<sup>5</sup>. We believe that it is important to state these principles since they constitute the foundation of the IPPD and the need to initiate the systematizing of information on indigenous intellectuals and professionals. These principles can be summarized as follows:

- Subordinate and repudiated by the national communities though it is, indigenous people culture can be the driving force of a will, a determination to opt for development and self-assertion. This principle recognizes the primacy of the mind, ideas and language as opposed to the desire to imitate and reproduce uncritically the economic growth achieved by the elite of the dominant society.

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<sup>4</sup> There are many examples of both routes since the early 1980s case of the Isthmus Zapotecs COCEI which won local Municipal elections jointly with the Mexican Communist Party; or the Bolivian Aymara/Quechua's case of MITKA and their final victory when the Indian candidate Víctor Hugo Cárdenas was elected Vice President of the Republic (early 1990s); the Ecuadorian case of the CONAIE which has had a few Quichua candidates elected to the National Congress; the Colombian case of indigenous representatives elected to the Constitutional Assembly; and the most recent development in Peru where the Ashaninka of the Upper Amazon region have founded their own independent party.

<sup>5</sup> See Stefano Varese et al., 1982. *Etnias y Lenguas en Oaxaca*, Unidad Regional de Oaxaca, Dirección General de Culturas Populares, México; S. Varese, 1983. "Recuperación Cultural y Capacidad de Gestión Etnica: la Propuesta de las Unidades Regionales", in Jas Reuter (Ed.), *La Acción de la Dirección General de Culturas Populares*. S. Varese, 1985. "Cultural development in Ethnic Groups: Anthropological Explorations in Education", *International Social Science Journal, UNESCO*, Vol XXXVII (2) 201-216.

- Throughout the centuries indigenous people have always shown a determination to survive. Expressing their ethnicity in their own way, they have gone through different stages of pre-colonial, colonial and national development, adapting to profound economic and social changes while remaining different from the rest of the involving national society.

- The social identity (primarily and necessarily that of the individual) of an indigenous people centers around its "cultural activities", that is, all its activities concerned with production, distribution, use and consumption, which can be divided into two broad categories of time whose nature is quite distinct --times for everyday life and times for celebrating ceremonies, rites, festivals. Basically, however, the culture of an indigenous ethnic group originates and evolves in the world of "work", in the whole process of production. (A phenomenon that is characteristic of capitalist development and the market economy is not normally found in indigenous people --the substitution of cultural activities for culture, so that the people become an object of culture, of the consumption of culture, rather than a subject creating and reproducing culture.)

- An indigenous ethnic group's reflection on its own culture (and culture history) is a matter of such concern to all its members that it can arouse the group to action and stimulate its autonomous development.

- The problems and obstacles which prevent such action have their origin in the long process of the colonial and neo-colonial dependence and subordination of the indigenous people. The social and economic submission of a people conceals the progressive weakening of its specific form of civilization, the loss of its cultural initiative and its lack of confidence in its own proposal, until it is not really aware of its situation. The immediate and urgent problems, especially financial ones, are so great that culture tends to be relegated to the background and regarded of being of little importance. People think that once urgent financial problems are solved there will be time enough to consider ethnic and cultural questions and to deal with difficult problems such as those of identity and social creativity.

- Nevertheless, to propose to solve a financial or social problem in one way rather than another is precisely to take a cultural decision, opt for a particular way of life, choose (even if unwittingly) a specific manner of going about the maintenance, construction or reconstruction of one's own society.

- The cultural question (by definition a responsibility of intellectuals and professionals) thus ceases to be covered up, put in the background and ignored. An erroneous consciousness 'constantly affects the base on which it is formed as such', and this means that a false conception helps to reproduce the social and economic structure which gave rise to it, at the same time amplifying and justifying it. So it is of the greatest political importance that an indigenous people should be able to regain a real consciousness of its historical and cultural specificity and of the potential of its cultural and social planning. Liberation and achievement of sovereignty and autonomy, therefore, takes place strictly within the context of cultural creation.

- The ethno-political project, as an undertaking aimed at cultural mobilization, recuperation and development, is a long-term and wide-ranging collective task: no social activity is excluded from it. Natural and organic intellectuals and professionals are catalysts, but the community as a whole, at the communal level and also, possibly, at the ethnic-cum-regional level, is the real mobilizing agent.

## **2.1. Goals of the IPPD.**

The IPPD has the following short term goals:

a- To demonstrate the existence in the LAC region of a critical mass and availability of indigenous professionals, intellectuals and local practitioners;

b- To initiate the process of gathering and organizing the information through a comprehensive research-based directory structured as a computerized database accessible on screen and eventually on-line;

c- To establish the electronic basis to be used by The W.B.'s CMUs and SMUs in order to organize their own typology according to their administrative needs.

The medium and long term goals of the IPPD are:

a- To set in motion the informational resources regarding indigenous professionals, intellectuals, and practitioners in view of motivating multilateral and international organizations, selected academic institutions, NGOs, and indigenous organizations to coordinate efforts to generate and implement educational and training programs aiming at serving the indigenous people and the demands of The W.B.'s CMUs and SMUs.

b- To establish a LAC association and academy of indigenous professionals and practitioners as a hemispheric institutionalized network of human resources available to both the indigenous people's autonomy and development projects and to the improvement of the scholarly and scientific indigenous heritage (*Colegio de Profesionales, Científicos y Practicantes Indígenas de ALC*).

## 2.2. Future Development of the IPPD

The IPPD is an open, dynamic electronic database that will grow, expand, and develop as more information is collected to at the local levels (especially through the CMUs and the indigenous organizations) and at the central level. Such a task has to be performed periodically in a systematic manner by a responsible managing unit. The dynamic character of an **Electronic database-management system** requires an administrative and budgetary commitment by the institution that benefits directly from its existence. Ideally such a managing unit could be eventually assumed by an international indigenous organization in coordination with The W.B. and an academic unit. However, the point that we want to make clear is that the current stage of the IPPD is not a finished, concluded product, but just the beginning of process that eventually will expand into two major areas of activity: 1- A master program of indigenous training for autonomous development; and 2- The establishment of an international association of indigenous professionals, scholars, and practitioners.

## 3. Indigenous People and the Question of Professionalism

The issue of professionalism for the indigenous people of the LAC region is a thorny one. Since most of them have been historically marginalized from the various national educational systems and excluded from higher education, the relative and absolute numbers of formally educated and professionally trained indigenous individuals are dramatically low. Even in the case of Mexico, which is probably the Latin American country that has addressed more vigorously the issue of indigenous education since the 1940s, the numbers of indigenous university graduates are discouraging. By the mid 1980s in the State of Oaxaca, Mexico, which is 60% indigenous, only less than 3% of the total school age population was registered in a

university career. Of this 3% the largest majority was very likely non-indigenous<sup>6</sup>. Recently there have been some more systematic attempts to establish professional careers especially designed to serve indigenous people such as the **Maestría en Linguística Indoamericana** (M.A. in Indoamerican Linguistics) at CIESAS-Mexico (Centro de Investigación y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social), and the **Carrera Abierta en Antropología**, (Open Career in Anthropology) in Oaxaca. During the Sandinista administration in the mid 1980 the Ministries of Education and Culture developed a project to create an American Indigenous University which never came to fruition. Currently one of the demands of the Maya people of Guatemala within the peace negotiations is to establish a Mayan University. These few examples point in the direction of two sets of issues: one, that there is objectively a vacuum of educational services and a low school attendance throughout indigenous America; two, indigenous people are demanding a specific type of education for their youth. In Mexico, Guatemala and most of the Andean countries this “indigenous education” (at the elementary and secondary level) has been proposed and labeled by the indigenous leadership as “bilingual-intercultural education”. It is less clear what an indigenous higher education, (a college/university education) should actually look like. Indigenous activists and organizations have been less articulate in formulating organic programs of Indian-specific academic disciplines and professional careers<sup>7</sup>.

The issue clearly deserves thorough analyses and public national and hemispheric debates since at its core lays the historical, philosophical, and epistemological question of the validity of subordinate cultures/societies and their theory-praxis vis-à-vis Euroamerican hegemony in the field of knowledge and its application. The question that indigenous intellectuals are posing, in a symbolic capsule, can be as follows: is the extremely sophisticated and complex ethnobotanical taxonomy historically and culturally produced by the Cayapó or the Awajún Indians that allows for an ecologically sound, highly productive, sustainable agroforestry economy, less “scientific” than any of the “experimental” models produced by our academic institutions? These type of questions can be multiplied for any number of “disciplines” and “scientific domains” of our own Euroamerican academic taxonomy. Obviously the goal of such questioning is not to drive a harsh wedge between “official hegemonic science” and “illegitimate subordinate culture” (indigenous knowledge systems), but rather to address the long historical inequity that has impaired creative dialogues and thus evaded the construction of more open, inclusive, multicultural, “universal” scientific and humanistic systems.

In view of the previous discussion we have opted for including in the IPPD not only indigenous individuals that hold diplomas and titles of “official”, mainstream professions and formal education, but also individuals that are bearers and practitioners of what we define as “Local Knowledge”. Obviously these are the community (or tribal) intellectuals that are most difficult to identify and describe since they tend to be “invisible” to the outside world and their fields of expertise are extremely challenging to a Eurocentric taxonomy.

We have proposed the following classification for the LAC-IPPD:

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<sup>6</sup> See Varese, S. et al., 1983. *Indígenas y Educación en México*, México, Centro de Estudios Educativos/GEFE; Varese, S., 1990. “Challenges and prospects for Indian education in Mexico”, *Prospects*, Vol. XX, No. 3, (345-355).

<sup>7</sup> In April and August of 1998 the Department of Native American Studies and the Indigenous Research Center of the Americas (IRCA) at the University of California, Davis, have convened two International Congresses in Davis, Ca. and Oaxaca, Mexico titled “Indigenous Intellectual Sovereignty: a Hemispheric Convocation” precisely to discuss the current situation and the future of “Indigenous Studies” and the convenience and legitimacy of creating autonomous academic/scientific spaces for indigenous people, scholars, scientists, humanists.



a- Indigenous professionals, individuals that have received formal training and education in schools, institutes, centers of higher education, and universities of the LAC countries or other countries of the world;

b- Indigenous practitioners, (intellectuals/professionals) who establish and institute their knowledge and expertise on local /communal /ethnic cultural practices and heritage. These indigenous community's intellectuals /professionals may be illiterate and/or monolingual in their ethnic language and may or may not have had interactions with the non-indigenous community. What makes them valuable resources is their dedication to preserve, reproduce, and innovate the local/ethnic knowledge.

c- A third category included in the Directory is constituted by indigenous people's organizations which emphasis is on community and ethnic development.

#### 4. **The Indigenous People Professionals Directory (LAC-IPPD). Description**

The LAC-IPPD is a computerized information system of indigenous professionals and indigenous organizations available to the WB's staff during the various phases of generation, design, implementation, and monitoring of the Bank's projects. The database is a collection of related information or data that is organized as a dynamic and open electronic archive that can be increased, updated, and corrected periodically with information gathered locally by the CMUs using other institutional sources, indigenous organizations and individuals, NGOs, academics, and other researchers. The IPPD database has been built as a *database management system* using the software **FileMaker Pro 4.0** for Macintosh computer and **FileMaker Pro 4.0** for IBM compatible systems (DOS system)<sup>8</sup>. The database management system allows us to store, organize, and manipulate collection of information on indigenous professionals and organizations in an electronic format. The advantage of using an electronic format rather than a printed one is obvious: the electronic database facilitates the storing and managing of large amount of information that is organized in an orderly fashion and can be retrieved instantly by different headings.

The database program allows the users to manage the stored information in the following ways:

- Information can be sorted in different ways. For example it can be arranged in alphabetical order or numerical order.
- Specific information can be retrieved by creating a "find" request. This enables the viewer to look, work, or print a selected set of information.
- Information can be displayed in many forms. The same set of information can be reused for printing mailing labels, letters, rosters, etc.
- Information can be summarized.

The database structured in **FileMaker Pro 4.0** has been exported also to **Microsoft Excel 5.0** (for Macintosh and System DOS) in order to allow the users to perform a series of correlations and basic statistics.

The LAC-IPPD is an indispensable tool for the fulfillment of the O.D. 4.20 and for a rational approach to the issue of indigenous participation and the application of culturally

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<sup>8</sup> *Introduction to FileMaker Pro Database Design. Student Manual*, 1996. Logical Operations, Rochester, N.Y.

appropriate principles in development projects of indigenous regions. We see this computerized information system as a database eventually available through Internet (posted either as a World Bank Web Page or as a link to the IRCA/NAS Web Site at the University of California, Davis), in which basic information regarding indigenous individuals and organizations, their area of expertise according to formal education paradigms, their “indigenous knowledge” and expertise, and ethnic data can be accessed primarily by the Bank's personnel, borrowers, academic and scientific institutions, multilateral organizations, and the indigenous people and organizations. Easy, open, and functional access to the database will increase the level and quality of indigenous peoples' participation in their own development as well as facilitate forms of self-managed and more sustainable social projects. Naturally only the database stored in disks can be modified, the database posted on the WEB is only accessible for consultation and cannot be modified.

The IPPD database has been organized in 15 fields and 14 sub-fields. Field is a category of information in the database (for example Last Name, Name, Address, et cetera). Sub-field is a sub-category of information within the field such as Street name and number, Zip code, city, country, e-mail, etc. within the field of address. The 15 fields and 14 sub-fields are the following:

<u>FIELDS</u>	<u>SUB-FIELDS</u>
1- Last name/s	
2- Name/s	
3- Address	3.1.- street, 3.2. #, 3.3. zip, 3.4. city, 3.5. h. phone, 3.6. of. phone, 3.7. fax, 3.8. e-mail
4- Organization	
5- Place of Birth	
6- Place of Residency	6.1. “since when”
7- Mother tongue	
8- Other language	
9- Other language	
10- Other language	
11- Other language	
12- Indigenous/ethnic group	
13- Education	13.1. Elementary, 13.2. Secondary, 13.3. High School, 13.4. Technical School, 13.5. University
14- Profession/Occupation	
15- Local knowledge	

Fields 4 (Indigenous Organization), 13 (Education), 14 (Profession/Occupation), and 15 (Local Knowledge) are larger than the rest and are fairly descriptive, which implies that there are some limits to their statistical treatment.

Another important observation to the database is that in the field of education strict equivalencies for all Latin America are difficult to draw and to translate into English language. Practically every country of LAC has slightly different educational organizations, structures, and names. “Bachillerato”, “Licenciatura”, “Pasantía”, “Técnico Agropecuario”, “Licenciado en Turismo”, “Ingeniero Agrónomo”, “Técnico en Salud”, etc. are all terms that would require a thorough comparative study. For analytical purposes we have decided to group the various terms under larger generic terms (e.g. Técnico, Agrónomo, Educador). We should also clarify that the issue of gender among indigenous professionals by country and ethno-linguistic group has not been analyzed in this study. We think that it will be an important dimension to be explored in future analyses.

#### **4. Methodological Note**

##### **4.1. Sources**

There are a few available written sources with general information about indigenous organizations and individuals. Most of these sources are printed as directories of organizations, bulletins, and newsletters. Other sources are available through the internet (listservs and Web sites/pages). The *Indigenous Research Center of the Americas (IRCA-UC Davis)* holds an unpublished directory of indigenous intellectuals, artists, writers and community practitioners from both North America and Central/South America. Other sources were available at various indigenous grassroots groups and NGOs. We were able to use information from the *South and Mesoamerican Indigenous Rights Center (SAIIC, Oakland, CA)*, *Abya Yala Fund (Oakland, CA)*, *Indknow* (Internet listserv), and *Amazon Coalition* (Internet Listserv). Especially useful was a survey administered by the *Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de América y el Caribe* (La Paz, Bolivia) which was generously given to us as raw material (questionnaires)<sup>9</sup>.

In general, however, some further tracking of individual indigenous professionals was done almost on a case by case investigation using telephone, fax, and e-mail. Postal research was not used at all given the general unreliability of this mean throughout LAC. Even inquiry by fax was not totally successful because it implies high costs from LAC that only a few individual are able to pay. It should be emphasized that this type of research, if based mostly on secondary sources, as it is in this case, has its own severe limits in term of spatial coverage. Certain areas like Brazil, the Guyanas, Surinam and the Caribbean are practically unsurveyed. In a certain sense the IPPD survey became unwittingly a non-stratified random sample. Consequently the few statistical analyses and deductions that we derive from this sample are only indicative of tendencies and should not be considered as statistically valid for the whole region. No definite projections should be drawn out of this database.

Another aspect that must be considered is that, as authors, we exercised a selective criteria for not including in the Directory certain records. We somehow arbitrarily had to decide that thousands (approximately 45,000) of indigenous bilingual teachers from Mexico should not be registered in the database even if in theory we could have obtained this information through the Dirección General de Educación Indígena (DGEI) of the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) of Mexico and the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI)<sup>10</sup>. A similar argument was used for not initiating a systematic research on other LAC countries indigenous educational work force.

#### 4.2. The Ethical and Political Issues

As we proceeded to gather the information and enter it into the database we were confronted with the dilemma of revealing and making available personal information that could be used to damage individuals or implement repressive policies. This observation is true and applicable to practically every database that contain personal information, be this a consumers' roster, an archive of credit information or simply a telephone directory. We decided that any

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<sup>9</sup> CAHDEA (Consejo Asesor Hondureño para el desarrollo de las Etnia Autóctonas), Centro de Apoyo a las Tierras Nativas, MOPAWI (Moskitia Pawisa, Desarrollo de la Mosquitia, 1996. *Primera Jornada Indígena Centroamericana sobre Tierra, Medio Ambiente y Cultura*, Centro Claret, La Ceiba, Honduras. Keller Hans J., 1992. *Who is Who in the Earth Summit*, Rio de Janeiro, 1992. A Cross-indexed Directory of Registered Participants at the Earth Summit, Vision Link Education Foundation, Tucson, Arizona. SAIIC (South and Mesoamerica Indian Information Center), 1992. *1992 International Directory and Resource Guide. 500 Years of Resistance*. Working Group on Indigenous Populations, 1996. *List of Organizations/Lista de Organizaciones*, Centro de Derechos Humanos, Unidad de los Pueblos Indígenas, Palais de Nations, Genève

<sup>10</sup> In his lecture at the Indigenous Intellectual Sovereignty Conference in Oaxaca (August 21, 1998), Mexican anthropologist Salomón Nahmad claimed that there are in Mexico currently 100,000 indigenous professionals!

information that was already available through a published mean (printed or on-line) or through an archive built on applications and open contest, could be used without verbal or written consent from the individual. Whenever there was a doubt we abstained from entering the data.

A final consideration regarding this issue. For most of the indigenous people of the region the time has come for an open, out-in-the-air social and political struggle for human rights and social and economic justice. With only a few and very discernible exceptions (the Mayan Zapatista movement, certain areas of Colombia, Peru, and recently Honduras and again El Salvador) most of the indigenous political organizations are acting publicly and are precisely protected by the national and international organized civil society inasmuch as they can be identified and exposed by the media. Even in the exceptional cases, clandestinity is an unfortunate necessity that is sought only by the most vulnerable leaders.

## 5. The Indigenous People Professionals Directory

As of today the Directory contains 399 records. The total number of countries represented in the sample is 23, of these Peru with 86 records (22 %), Mexico with 62 (16 %), and Bolivia with 41 (10 %) are at the top of the list, followed by Chile, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina, Nicaragua and others with percentiles lower than 2.5 % (see table PAISES/COUNTRIES, p. 1).

The total number of indigenous languages represented in the Directory is 34, of these the Aymara with 66 records is the Indoamerican language most spoken by indigenous professional representing 38 % of the whole sample. It is followed at a great distance by Mapuche with 19 records (11 %), Quechua with 16 records (9 %), and Zapotec with much lower 9 records (5 %). We have separated the Quichua language spoken in Ecuador from the Quechua spoken in Peru and Bolivia out of respect of the self definition of the speakers. The skewed distribution and relative large number of Aymaras speakers in the Directory may be due to the fact that one of our sources, the survey of *Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de América y el Caribe*, gathered information mostly in the Bolivian and Peruvian highland (see table LENGUAS/LANGUAGES, p. 2).

The total number of Spanish speakers in the Directory is 167 which subtracted from the total number of indigenous language speakers leaves us with only 6 professionals that are not bilingual in Indian language/Spanish. The grand total of other non-indigenous language spoken in the sample is 261 which means that multilingualism among indigenous professionals is very high, reaching 60 % of the sample, while bilingualism Indian language/Spanish reaches 40 %. As expected English is after Spanish the most common non-Indian language known by indigenous professionals (71 records representing 27 % of the total non-Indian languages). French is the third non-Indian language in order of magnitude with 19 records and 7 % (see OTRAS LENGUAS/OTHER LANGUAGES, p. 3).

The table of Indigenous People/Grupos Etnicos is consistent with the table of indigenous languages meaning that the mother tongue/native language is the main self-marker of ethnic identity. The difference of 4 records between this table and the table of LENGUAS/LANGUAGES (p. 2) is due to the fact that four professionals identify themselves as of mixed ethnic heritage (Mapuche/Aymara; Mestizo/Aymara; Mestizo/Nahuatl; Zapoteco/Mixteco) (see GRUPOS ETNICOS/ETHNIC GROUPS, p. 4).

The table of Professions (see PROFESIONES/PROFESSIONS, p.5) suggests the slow process of higher education acquisition among indigenous people. From a grand total of 399 indigenous peoples, 141 have declared to have a professional degree. The remaining number of 258 does not necessarily implies that they do not have a higher education degree. The reason

why we cannot infer the lack of professional degree is because some of our sources did not provide information about the professional status of the individual. Probably around two thirds of the sample may fall into the category of not having a completed official degree of higher education. In percentages this means that 35.74 have been able to obtain some professional degree. Seven professions out of twenty hold nine or more individuals. In relative terms this group of seven makes 28.24 % of the grand total. The profession "Educador" is the largest. It accounts for 40 individuals. It is followed, in descending order, by: Antropólogo, 18; Sociólogo, 13; Agrónomo, 13; Técnico, 11; and Abogado, 9. The other professions hold between one and four individuals: Economista, 4; Trabajador Social, 4; Contador, 3; Médico, 3. At the end of the list, within the category "Other" we find: Historiador, 2; Planificador, 2; Veterinario, 2; Botánica, Doctora en Salud Pública, Literato, Odontólogo, Graduado Universitario, and Profesor Universitario. This latter group makes only 3 % of the grand total.

The fact that 64 % of the grand total of the sample do not have a profession does not allow to infer that there is not a critical mass of indigenous professionals. On the contrary, it our hypothesis that it is precisely in this group where we find a rich mass of "Indigenous Practitioners" holding, preserving, and enriching what in general can be called a local indigenous base system. This knowledge base system embraces a wide variety of knowledge: agriculture, agroforestry, forestry, the environment and environmental management, astronomy, fishing, medicinal plants and other plants uses, productive technologies, and food preservation and storage technologies, et cetera. All this knowledge is expressed and reproduced in notoriously rich and complex linguistic and taxonomic systems.

## 6. Conclusions: Critical Assessment and Future Development

The construction of the first stage of the LAC-IPPD as an electronic database-management system has been highly instructive in two major areas: 1- The collection of extremely disperse, marginal, and hidden information; and 2- The organization of this specific type of information in an electronic database.

### Point 1- The collection of extremely disperse, marginal, and hidden information.

As we initiated the collection of information it became increasingly clear to us that, although direct gathering of data through telephone conversations and/or fax was the ideal supplementary form to proceed in conjunction with source analysis, the financial cost of such procedure was prohibitive. In addition the telephone/fax communication is not particularly time-saving. The questionnaire, even in its shortest version, requires long, repetitive questions/answers, LAC phone systems, especially in rural areas, are problematic, failed phone appointments are common and finally it is unrealistic to expect an indigenous individual to send back his/her answer as a costly fax to an academic research unit somewhere in the United States. Electronic mail and Internet connections are still very uncommon among LAC indigenous individuals, however, whenever possible they were used. Internet connectivity, on the other hand, is becoming a common feature and a main goal of indigenous organizations, therefore we believe that future developments of the IPPD should rely much more on systematic communication with indigenous grassroots and second level organizations.

Only in one occasion our request of information from an indigenous organization was met with distrust. It is obvious, however, that it is not an easy task to explain to very skeptical individuals and communities that a Directory such as the IPPD is going to be used with the highest level of public ethics and discretion and that the best guarantee of appropriate utilization is its public character and availability.

Since we are recommending the posting of the IPPD on the Internet/Web as the next step of this project, we expect that individuals, organizations and institutions will provide us with feed back on the accuracy of the Directory as well as supplementary information.

The other sources of information, updating, and corrections that we consider of fundamental importance are the CMUs of the W.B. These entities and their personnel are in direct contact with the field and can personally establish, amplify, and consolidate the network of individual and organizational connections that would nourish the IPPD with valid and reliable information. Once the CMUs accept this level of responsibility, the IPPD could be improved in quality and quantity of information and incremented with new records. This is especially true for the field of "Local Knowledge" and the collection of information regarding local/indigenous practitioners.

Point 2- The organization of this specific type of information in an electronic database.

A decision had to be made regarding the type of electronic database that should be used for a Directory that eventually will be available not only to The W.B. but also to indigenous professionals and organizations, other development agencies, academic units, NGOs, and individual researchers. We needed a friendly software, compatible with the two major computer systems (Macintosh and DOS), readily available throughout LAC. A system that could handle Spanish and other languages phonetic signs, and that could be exported to a friendly statistical program (Microsoft Excel 5.0) and to an easy-to-manage HTML software program that will allow for the posting of the whole Directory on a Website. We chose **Claris FileMaker Pro 4.0** after consultations with UC Davis computer experts and recommendations by other social scientists involved in this type of projects. A further consideration that we kept in mind is that the users of the LAC-IPPD had to be able to send the whole database to the CMUs either by e-mail, or in diskettes so that each regional office could have full access to the Directory.

One aspect that should be kept in mind for further development of the Directory is the time factor required to capture and enter the data into the Directory. Since the content is somehow specialized and requires knowledge of Spanish, Portuguese, and basic anthropology of LAC indigenous people, we could not use untrained data entry staff. This factor delayed exceedingly the conclusion of the Directory and it is something that should be considered for future development of the IPPD.

## **6.1. Recommendations**

A- During the development of this first stage of the research and implementation of the IPPD we have learned that a LAC-wide and in-depth survey of indigenous professionals and intellectuals would require a full time team of two specialists that during a certain amount of time (probably no less than 6 months) would implement and administer the questionnaires by phone/fax, e-mail, and through direct personal contact. The same team plus a data entry typist (during a 2 month period) would enter the information into the database. Such a plan would require a budget that would include salaries, transportation, and phone/fax.

B- The possibility of realizing direct interviews would allow for an expansion of the questionnaire especially in the area of "local knowledge". Such expanded information could be treated as descriptive narrative and as codified synthetic indicator that would allow for statistical handling.

C- We see the IPPD as part of a larger, more ambitious, medium and long term project of training, participation, and self-managed development programs for and by indigenous people. The central idea is that the ongoing IPPD program will give The W.B. an increasingly clearer

image of the benefits of integrating indigenous professional in development projects as well as of the flaws and limitations of this class of professionals. Training courses, workshops, seminars, institutes especially designed to fill the vacuums and specific needs of indigenous professionals engaged in ethnic development could be organized following an agenda of priorities established by the W.B.

D- The motivation and support for the constitution of local, regional, national, and international associations of indigenous professionals would be part of this larger and long term program of encouraging and promoting indigenous self-reliance, cultural and social autonomy, and full participation on equal footing in the national and global programs of development.

E- We recommend that an exploration of the possibilities of establishing an electronic network of indigenous professionals and organizations be initiated. A network of Internet indigenous correspondents throughout LAC that could communicate to each other and with a series of development agencies and academic units would grant indigenous communities better opportunities of participation and co- management and self-management of their own sustainable development.

F- We recommend that the LAC-IPPD be posted as a Webpage either in the W.B. Website or as W.B. link in the Website of IRCA/NAS at UC Davis.

G- We recommend that the CMUs assume the responsibility of revising, correcting, improving and expanding the IPPD.