

Summary

Lives and territories in movement

Resistances of ten indigenous communities
in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru

Credits

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Preliminary

Presentation

This research report entitled **“Lives and territories in movement. Resistances of ten indigenous communities in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru”** is the result of a participatory process in which ten indigenous communities - most of them located in border areas of Colombia, Ecuador and Peru - the Instituto Pensar of the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana from Bogotá, the Jesuit Refugee Service - JRS Ecuador, Encuentros Jesuit Migrant Service - SJM Peru and the Jesuit Refugee Service for Latin America and the Caribbean - JRS LAC - took an active and collaborative part.

The seed with which we started the research was the recognition of the circumstances of high vulnerability, invisibilization, institutional isolation, structural impoverishment and - in some cases - persecution and threats to the lives of indigenous communities that, on occasions, have forced them to migrate to other territories. This forced migration has increased the protection gaps experienced by indigenous communities, and there is a legal and political debate on how to name cross-border ancestral territorial mobility, and how to protect their rights in all the territories where they are located. Added to this was the work that each organization and community was carrying out at various levels, where there was a need to articulate efforts to identify and propose changes to these realities based on respect, inter-culturality, dignity, and justice.

The permanent nourishment and irrigation that nurtured this process was to put the life of the communities at the center, to dialogue with them, to listen to and accompany their narratives-reflections-denunciations, and to explore new ways of expressing their historical, cultural, social and political awareness. The above, in order to find ways to influence the various actors with whom they

maintain relationships at the local, national, regional or international level.

In order for this influence to have a greater impact, it was necessary to support indigenous communities in two ways: the first, in the short term, in order to improve, to some extent, their living conditions; the second, to strengthen the advocacy capacities that communities can exercise concerning the processes of recognition and guarantee of collective rights at the local and national level before institutions such as the State and the International Community. We consider that these actions allow the rooting of a different perspective in which the ability to take action of the communities is recognized, as well as the historical debt that westernized society currently owes to these peoples who continue to resist despite the violence and permanent threat to their lives and territory.

Finally, in the report we want to present the fruits that sprout from the ancestral resistances that these ten communities generously share with us in their deep and spiritual relationship of co-care with the territories where they live. The commitment of this sowing requires more hands, nourishment, irrigation, land, work, and shared life. Therefore, this report also seeks to invite the States, the various actors of the international community, and the cooperation of civil society to take part in the care of this sowing. Cultivation in which equity, dignity and justice for all must be the main fertilizer for the care of life.

Introduction

Vidas y territorios en movimiento ofrece un informe **Lives and territories in movement** is a research report carried out in ten communities located in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, where the diagnoses obtained in each of them are presented. These diagnoses are made up of six general parts that take into account the particularities of both the contexts and the teams that carried out the fieldwork.

The first part identified and characterized the communities visited in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, locating them geographically, presenting their socio-political organizations, addressing issues related to mobility, the way they were constituted and their conception of ancestral territory. Censuses were also carried out to record the people and households directly and indirectly impacted throughout the process.

The second part sought to answer the question of how to understand the protection gaps, based on the practices of production and reproduction in community life; collective logics of care and self-subsistence that question the logics of the commodification of life imposed by capitalism.

The third part advanced further in understanding the negative character of the term *protection gaps*, pointing out the origin of the obstacles that each community identified in the production and reproduction of its life. In other words, the problems that the members of the communities face in order to subsist individually or to perpetuate the existence of the community in terms of its permanence and transformation over time. Specifically, the difficulties were formulated from the experience with the communities (fieldwork) and not from the diagnoses of the specialized literature on protection gaps in the region or the impact of institutional responses.

Based on the map of actors and the political map, the following are presented: humanitarian actors, state institutions, illegal actors, other indigenous communities and the types of people or institutions that could have relevant interactions with each community (commercial, transport, health). Thus, based on the current situation and historical legacies, these actors were characterized and the interactions they have with the communities were highlighted.

In the fourth section, three scales were covered: (1) International in terms of the humanitarian narrative, (2) National in relation to the legal frameworks, and (3) Local, with respect to the diversity of needs of each of the communities, attending to issues at a regional level. Also, when appropriate, based on the location of problems that are not delimited either by the political division of the national maps or by spatial contiguity, but by common features, family ties, traditional practices and other geographically transversal elements.

In the penultimate section, the abilities to take action identified in each community were highlighted and answers were provided to several questions. For example, how can humanitarian actors and state institutions articulate with the communities' capacities to support them, strengthen them or, at least, not become an obstacle to their life and subsistence; and how do these capacities relate to the obstacles to community production and reproduction?

Each diagnosis -Colombia, Ecuador and Peru- presents conclusions and recommendations regarding the territorial and structural threats faced by ethnic peoples, and the way in which indigenous migration in the current context is becoming a forced migration. The common and differential factors of the institutional responses to the situation are indicated, as well as

the common and differential factors regarding the demands of each of the communities.

In addition, at the end of each document, recommendations were made based on the experiences of interaction between the mobility of indigenous communities and the institutional response. This was done taking into account key factors, social dynamics, protection needs and challenges (related to the production and reproduction of community life and institutional responses), accompaniment practices that could improve, change or incorporate humanitarian actors and state institutions for the care of cross-border indigenous communities.

Findings in the research process

The following are the findings and learnings from the research process in which ten communities in the three countries participated, as follows: in Colombia, El Escobal (Yukpa people), Villa Esperanza (Eñapa people), and El Paujil reservation (Puinave people); in Ecuador, Upiritu Kankhe Ancestral Settlement Center (A'i Kofân people), Santa Rosa de los Épera (Éperara Siapidaara people), San José de Wisuyá (Kichwa-Siona people), El Baboso Awá Center (Awá people); and, in Peru, Papag Entsa and Alto Pajakus (both belonging to the Awajún people), and the community of Cantagallo (Shipibo-Konibo people).

The reflections emerged from the field visits and the situated perspectives that respond to national, territorial and cultural peculiarities, based on the collaborative exchanges between the research teams and the community promoters who took an active part in the research. This made it possible to prepare a diagnosis for each country regarding the threatening situations faced by the communities, including a multi-scale analysis of the challenges or protection gaps, a mapping of actors, and the recognition of the forms of reproduction of life and culture.

With this in mind, the main reflections emerging from the three country diagnoses were presented, which in no way seek to subsume the complexity of the particular, situated and contextual realities of each community. The intention is to gather the most significant common elements in order to make a critical analysis of the sometimes conflictive and antagonistic relations with the State, humanitarian actors and other actors that are beginning to have strategic interests in the territories. Further analysis is

therefore recommended by looking at the diagnoses for Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

In this sense, the following are six reflections that were identified as common and that allowed for a critical understanding of the meaning of protection gaps..

Threats to the reproduction of life and culture faced by communities

The exercises and knowledge workshops carried out in each of the communities highlighted the fact that the current threats related to the danger of territorial dispossession, the deepening of confinement, cultural loss, the disintegration of the social fabric, institutional disregard of subjects who have collective rights, among others, are part of a continuum of violence that has been experienced historically since colonial times. The historical memory of the indigenous peoples has made it possible to trace the processes of economic exploitation, and forced displacements as a consequence of the presence of armed actors and socio-religious impositions, that were detrimental to their physical, cultural and spiritual survival, and that have been based on modern conceptualizations of appropriation and exploitation of the land and the human, animal and inanimate beings that cohabit there.

Ancestral territories have been understood by the State and white-mestizo society as empty spaces that can be transformed into *commodities* for the international market, while the communities that have

established these special relationships with the territory have been represented as “obstacles” and have had to experience criminalization and stigmatization processes when they have undertaken the collective defense of their territories.

The communities of the Upiritu Kankhe Ancestral Settlement Center, San José de Wisuyá, El Baboso (in Ecuador), Papag Entsa and Alto Pajakus (in Peru) have been put under heavy pressure by the presence of state and private, legal and illegal extractive companies, whose activities have impacted their territory, including “legalized” or de facto forms of dispossession, environmental pollution, and loss of food sovereignty.

In the case of Santa Rosa de los Épera (Ecuador), the main threat has to do with the non-recognition of their territory and the process of confinement and enclosure of the territory they currently inhabit; this, together with the increase in their population, is putting their food sovereignty at risk. On the other hand, the multicultural reservation of El Paujil (Colombia), which -despite being officially recognized as a collective territory- is undergoing a process of confinement due to the arrival of families of the Puinave people. They have family relationships there, and have had itinerant mobilization processes, but recently the current multidimensional crisis in Venezuela has forced them to mobilize in order to ensure new means of food security and reproduction of life.

A similar situation is experienced by the communities of Escobal and Villa Esperanza (Colombia), who have recently settled in urban territories, and recognize themselves as bi-national, cross-border, and even transnational. Their recent itinerancies correspond, not to their own cultural logics of life reproduction, but to urgent responses to the Venezuelan situation, and the Colombian State has placed administrative obstacles concerning the recognition of itinerant and mobile subjectivity, which has resulted in a lack of recognition of their right to access basic services, and the increase of cases of statelessness among minors.

In the case of the community of Cantagallo (Peru), there is also evidence of a mobilization process to the city, in this case in response to the repeated absence of political will to guarantee the minimum conditions of existence in their territories. In addition, they face a broad process of stigmatization and discrimination, and many of these communities - by moving across nation-state borders - have been exposed in recent years to forms of control and violence of illegal armed actors and drug traffickers.

Towards a critical conceptualization of protection gaps

As can be seen in the diagnoses of each country, various reasons make the expression inadequate, insufficient and even an obstacle. For this reason, when faced with the need to use such a notion, the research team was obliged to overcome two of its constituent defects. On the one hand, the notion of a gap implies the absence of something related to a completeness that is never specified, which from the outset is problematic because, on the other hand, it does not take into account the specific situation of the communities on which the notion impacts (those diagnosed as being in a protection gap). This produces the imaginary idea of indigenous communities as societies lacking something and in need of protection, leading to a state or supra-state legality that generates unequal power relations. Therefore, it is stated that:

... it will require, initially, an approach to a phenomenon that can always be observed again with new tools, due to the continuous reordering of social conditions involving migration, and the fragility of human groups in the face of naturalized violence in territories where the logics of liberal democracies do not transparently govern with their array of rights and institutions. In short, this approach seeks to identify the possible contents of the humanitarian concept of “protection gaps”, as it could be understood by displaced indigenous communities, subjected to international migration or living on borders, where their mobilization is determined not so much by their own ability to take action, as by state or illegal actors or climatic factors. Therefore, rather than starting from a definition of the term protection, field-workers will collect information from communities to identify in what sense they identify what we might call “gaps” in their conditions of existence, what role these communities consider they play in managing that gap, who or what entity they consider could or should be in charge of filling that gap, how that might refer to a type of protection, and in what sense they relate to the issue of mobilization (methodological document).

As can be deduced, the idea of protection gaps - intended as a way of making visible the living conditions of the communities with which the research teams interacted in the three countries - was crucial to critically

understand the threats and dangers that affect them and how these are articulated with the action or inaction of the State and humanitarian organizations.

The issue at stake is that this term ratifies the state-centric and liberal dimension with which links are established with the communities, with whom exchanges were made during the fieldwork. This logic is problematic in that it is produced “from above”, assigns legal-administrative frameworks that are incapable of dialoguing with other ways of “doing” and imposes individualization procedures that ignore the collective and integral character of the indigenous peoples. An understanding that, moreover, tends to reproduce what has been called the myth of the absence of the State, the idea that there is something that the State has not yet been able to cover and that must be addressed because it represents a “gap”.

However, such a gap actually shows a type of operation, a social order, that serves specific political and economic interests. In this sense, the cracking of the social fabric, territorial loss, as well as the individualization already mentioned, produces individuals on the margins of their social conditions of existence. In the end, this depoliticizes their situation turning it into a matter of self-sustainability and adequacy to a market that, for reasons that are widely presented in the country reports, does not offer equitable conditions of participation and perpetuates colonial relations.

Based on the above, the research took as a starting point the reflections proposed by Professor Louidor (2017), to understand protection gaps as “(...) the inadequacies or shortcomings at the analytical, legal, political, institutional and other conceptual levels...”

In this sense, the gaps range from the lack of (officially accepted) names to categorize certain groups of migrants, through the absence of international instruments for the protection of their rights or their limitations. Then there are also analytical, political or institutional gaps in order to be able to carry out a correct analysis of their needs, adopt adequate measures (in terms of public policy, support programs and services) and implement them through institutions established for this purpose (p. 66).

Thus, the notion of a gap, from being a fixed characteristic of indigenous communities, becomes a tool to identify the difficulties that States and humanitarian actors have to account for, intervene, support, make visible, and even produce, for the communities with which they work.

Ways of naming and conceptual frameworks matter

The conceptual frameworks produced by governments and humanitarian aid platforms end up limiting and even blocking the understanding of practices associated with the *continuum* of human mobilities. This also makes it difficult to empathize and accept the complexity implied by other forms of socially producing and inhabiting the territory, which, at the same time, enter into contradiction with forms of dispossession and violence. This is why there is no form of nomadism without uprooting, re-adaptation, hopes and cultural differences, and there is no sedentary lifestyle that can be understood as a definitive fixation to geographical coordinates. Nor is there human mobility in an objective, unique sense: each settlement and each mobility is impacted by a series of specific details related to the borders crossed, national legislations, the personal situation of those who migrate, and the networks they are part of.

The diversity of situations contrasts with the homogeneity of such concepts and the institutions’ statement records on the subject of migration: a series of statements as part of an official narrative that produces identities, classifications of territories, policies and institutional practices, as well as social responses and resistances, all of them empirically identifiable. We speak of migrants when members of an indigenous community cross territorial borders (defined by modern nation states), when, from the community’s point of view, this mobility takes place in the territories of circulation and reproduction of life that are their own, defined even from ancestral times.

This vocabulary problem is repeated - *mutatis mutandis* - with terms such as *citizenship* or other figures in national legal frameworks, such as displaced persons or refugees, for example. And while these terms may serve to identify specific situations, they also conceal, ignore and promote processes of stigmatization against migrating groups, as well as persecution or segregation in the host societies; cases that can be identified in their diversity and particularity in the country diagnoses.

The above made it possible to understand the work with the communities that participated in the research, because the protection gaps are produced by the vertical imposition on the ways of speaking. This aspect

makes it impossible both to establish horizontal dealings with the indigenous communities and to account for the diversity of phenomena to which they are exposed due to the territorial situation in which they live. Therefore, this leads to the impossibility of treating them on equal terms beyond the narrow framework of citizenship, the impossibility of accepting their own point of view, the impossibility of thinking of them outside the institutional structures of the territorial organization of nations or of local and transnational humanitarian bureaucracies.

The observations will allow those who read these pages to create a network of statements that establish forms of visibility and concealment of the communities.

Institutional racism and the handling of indigenous communities as cases of otherness

The violence and lack of recognition that befalls indigenous collectives due to the way in which they are named is reinforced by the way in which the national records operate concerning their supranational interactions. These records determine the visibility of the communities from the effects of differentiation to which they continually refer: the presence of others, in relation to the citizenship of the national territory. This condition of otherness is worsened in countries such as Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, where conditions of structural inequality persist. Such communities that are misnamed and/or are not even recognized as members of the citizenship often lack food security, an education according to the needs of their community, a recognition as actors in the labor market, the possibility of taking care of their own health, both in the terms of the communities and in the forms of healing linked to professional medicine.

There is a lack of political will to implement legal mechanisms for protection and recognition, and excessive bureaucracy to address urgent problems of human rights violations. There is also a lack of legitimacy of the State authorities in the eyes of the indigenous communities due to a repeated history of non-compliance with previously established agreements, as well as an inoperability to investigate violations of prior consultation and to paralyze imminent territorial violations. All this is contrasted by a wide margin of maneuver to approve mining licenses, reinvent legal figures concerning

ancestral territories, and the active criminalization of communities that oppose the imposition of extractive industries. These ambivalent but deliberate actions of turning a blind eye when it comes to situations that put communities at physical risk, while facilitating the deployment of extractive and mining-energy economies, provide evidence of a particular form of State intervention based on necropolitics (Mbembe, 2003) and the production of precarious lives, as a continuity of the coloniality of power.

Added to this is the absence of intercultural and territorial approaches when planning and developing social policies, the lack of or very low participation of communities in public discussions that affect them, exclusionary and discriminatory practices in public administration that end up stigmatizing, exoticizing and ignoring the communities and their members as subjects with rights.

The research also identified the legal frameworks of protection, from the international scenario to the complex domestic scenario of each country that is contracting agreements, conventions and other instruments; while at the same time passing through the regional scenario, differentiated specifically in each country, not only in its narrative, its profile and legal hierarchy, but also in its developments.

The legal representation of power relations is linked to fundamental aspects of our South American constitutionalism, even more so in societies that are searching for their identities, associated with ethnicity and territory. So, although the general frameworks survive in abstraction on a universal level, their local, regional, domestic application implies a meticulous process of construction from the diffuse angles contoured by instruments that are difficult to implement, and lack binding force due to the absence of hard mechanisms of enforceability, among others. Although in each of the states investigated there are protection frameworks with different levels of progress, it is necessary to contrast them, to put them in dialogue with each other, in order to methodologically identify common gaps, with a view to presenting serious proposals, with multiple solution levels. This is also what the work presented here will show.

Short-term solutions to structural and pressing problems

The ways of conceptualizing and understanding the realities of indigenous peoples and nationalities “from above” end up shaping public policies and forms of intervention by humanitarian actors. It turns out to be a common denominator that actions are rationalized on the basis of welfarism and humanitarianism. When this happens, the intervention itself ends up producing gaps in the protection of communities, with the following consequences. 1). Humanitarian entities, in the case of the three countries, end up replacing the State in its responsibilities as guarantors of rights, which also poses problems when the measures taken end up being short term. This occurs due to the conditions set by international cooperation, such as the limited budget and the logic of action through projects; that is, disjointed and conceived in the limiting context of emergency relief. 2). Actions from humanitarianism and benevolence are reiterated with no recognition of indigenous peoples as subjects with collective rights; in the long term they do not promote legal guarantees and the recognition of collective rights. 3). There is a gap in the understanding of the situations experienced by the communities. On the one hand, from above these are understood as emergency situations, when they have to be forcibly displaced, but what is not recognized is that behind these situations lie historical demands of indigenous peoples for the recognition of their territories, the inviolability of the same, or the recognition of their conditions as bi-national, transnational or cross-border peoples. 4). As expressed by the different communities that participated in the research, the interaction of the communities with other actors has implied losses in their survival conditions, in their daily life, and in their forms of organization.

Abilities to take action

The research exercise also consisted of making visible the strategies and abilities to take action mobilized by the communities in the three countries and recognizing their historical struggles for the survival of their peoples. For this reason, in each of the reports, the background of each settlement is indicated, in particular issues related to mobility, the way in which each

community was constituted, and its conception of the ancestral territory. In addition, the research identified community practices related to the ways in which individually and collectively the life of the community is produced and reproduced, and the ways in which possible obstacles to this end are overcome.

The country diagnoses indicate the various abilities to take action shown by the communities to confront the situation of mobility in relation to the obstacles identified in the fieldwork regarding the production and reproduction of their community life. This implies distinguishing that although from the point of view of the States, the mobility of these indigenous communities may appear as international migration or irregular migration, this displacement is an ability to take action shown by the communities to confront the obstacles to the production and reproduction of the community and its collective practices.

In other words, human mobility - which served as a driving force for the formulation of this research project in relation to protection gaps in transnational indigenous communities - is a capacity of these communities to overcome the daily difficulties that put at risk the subsistence of their members, and also the capacity of adaptation and transformation of the communities to guarantee their durability over time.

This capacity should not be confused, particularly when dealing with communities with some degree of nomadism: it is not always the result of communal will or traditional behavior. Many times, it is the effect of pressure from illegal actors, state-supported industries, the extension of the agricultural frontier, and climatic factors, among others. In each of these cases, the communities' ability to take action is apparent, as evidenced by their subsistence and the trajectory of their mobility (which may include rest or circularity).

This research - carried out in little more than a year - made it possible to get to know the communities in each of the countries, to travel through their territories as far as possible, and to make visible the emerging leaderships and the collective practices of self-care and survival that persist despite the great institutional challenges and the consequences of the extractivist locomotives. In addition, those who read these pages will find, not recommendations, but critical frameworks to understand how States, borders, extractive companies and humanitarian actors have produced forms of vulnerability and have reduced indigenous peoples to

being subjects with needs. These frameworks can surely be replicated to approach other situated experiences.

Finally, with regard to the continuity of the project, in the coming months, the teams will continue to work together with the communities in each of the countries to strengthen their organizational processes based on respect and listening, sharing knowledge and experiences, and accompanying training and political advocacy processes.

Methodological considerations that framed the research

1. A first factor to consider refers to the notion of *indigenous population* as a unit of analysis. Because in Colombia this notion is polysemic, within the same document, *people* and *community* are used interchangeably, bearing in mind that the sources of information make empirically difficult the historical reconstructions of the indigenous households worked with in this research. Pragmatically, the population units were established based on the condition of *being a speaker of the language of the community*; that is: speaking Panare for the people of the Eñapa community, and Yukpa for the Yukpa people (any of its dialectal variants).

This ethno linguistic category is included in almost all sources of information with an ethnic marker and is not only a useful criterion in retrospective studies of indigenous demographic dynamics, but also language constitutes an important articulating element of the community or the people, as well as being considered as territory of memory and a space of cultural resistance. (Bartolomé y Barabas, 1996).

In the case of the Puinave community, ethnic recognition was one of the identification criteria also taken into account in the consideration of belonging to this indigenous people. This decision was made for several reasons: 1) Despite the fact that approximately 87.5% of the totality of the people speak the Puinave language and that there is a great vitality of its use¹, gradually and especially in the child and youth population (0-14 years), there are perceived

limitations for the adequate use of the language (Ministry of Culture, S.F., p. 1). 2) To account for the variety of multiethnic relationships that occur in the territories where members of the Puinave community live with other indigenous peoples as well as with people who do not identify themselves as such, so that even if people do not speak Puinave, as happens in cases of marriage, adoption, etc., they can be considered Puinave. 3) To question and make evident the spatial mobilities and the construction of new places of life for the Puinave community, which rethink and problematize the use of a single language, the continuity in a single territory, and the development of static cultural practices anchored in time and in a specific historical moment.

By breaking the confinement of indigenous societies as isolated, static communities, alien to local, regional and transnational networks, the complexities regarding the use of their language become apparent. The interrelationships between mobilities make it possible to understand the Amazon as “a complex panorama of regional organization, with large-scale exchange networks, stratified societies and interethnic economic, political and religious systems” (Micarelli, 2010, p. 494).

On the other hand, it is pertinent to clarify the use of the term *community* when referring to the Puinave people. The SINCHI institute, in a research project on human settlements in Guainía, defined it as: “The spaces of this people, with fluid and ambiguous limits,

¹The Puinave language is also called wänsöhöt yedöhët, guaipuinace, caberre, uaipi and belongs to the Maku-Puinave linguistic family. (Ministry of Culture, S.F., p. 1).

whose organization is based on cultural rather than political or economic criteria, which are given by the hierarchy of the clan and their respective lineages. Here the communal ownership of land establishes associative forms that are fundamental for the unity of the ethnic group” (Salazar et al., 2006, p. 28).

This definition will be expanded below, given that -when reference is made to *community*- we are talking about multiethnic and intercultural spaces and populations that do not correspond -most of the time- to the notion of a single ethnic group, although there may be a predominance of one of them. A Puinave community promoter, when asked about the definition of the word community, answered: “It is a group or association of people who are mostly located near bodies of water such as rivers or streams, and organized as hamlets with their houses, their families, their sports field and their church, and where it does not matter that not all the people are of the same ethnic group”. (Conversation with a leader during a social and historical mapping exercise in the archives of the El Paujil reservation).

2. Community promoters. This work provided two connotations: (1) “As an activist who assumes a specific and delimited role in the research carried out in his or her territory of struggle or in another of those visited together. Their work is not equivalent to or a substitute for the academic², but is developed out of their knowledge of the struggle for and experience of their territories” and (2) as “central figures in the network of affinities” that sustain the research (Flórez-Flórez et al., 2020).

This is based on the scope described above and four specific aspects of their actions: 1. As a *community liaison actor* to facilitate communication between those who participate directly -from their own people- and the research team, with their own traditional authorities, and with other indigenous peoples with whom they coexist and live together in the same space or territory. They also motivate group participation and

exchange in the research activities, ensure the proper use of the research materials, share, debate, and present relevant information and plan and adapt the methods for its collection, and value the life experience and knowledge of their own people. 2. As a *linguistic and intercultural mediator* to translate and interpret in different scenarios between the indigenous people and the different actors, in addition to the different activities developed in the project and its products, to ensure the dissemination of the indigenous language in scenarios of access to information, forms of integration, and resistance of the culture and intellectual heritage of these populations. 3. As a *methodological facilitator* who is an integral part of the field research team, and who also participates in the design, execution and socialization of listening sessions, participatory diagnoses (social mapping), and dialogues with different actors, communication pieces and didactic materials throughout the project, and the implementation of community initiatives. 4. *Guides and counselors* who question the way of being, doing and undoing the research, in a way that goes far beyond the classic figure of the informant in the field and tries to challenge, even if only a little, the unequal relations in research projects. Many times the processes, the ways of implementing the activities, and the results were discussed, as well as the successes and failures in the processes carried out and the expected results.

3. Regarding the political aspect of the research. The notions of counter-narratives and counter-mapping have been a reference: they refer to the production of new maps or heretical cartographies³ of migration and borders with the intention of contributing to the reflection on the different forms of appropriation of mapping practices for critical research and political activism. These practices encourage the problematization of official cartographies or cartopolitics for the critical analysis of the disputes and resistance concerning the control and freedom of movement in the

² Two puinaves chosen as community promoters, two leaders who accompanied this process from the beginning and the people who responded to the call for the process and the accompaniment provided, often went beyond the academic work because they questioned and nurtured it in the various activities carried out. These included the accompaniment of the tours to the different parts of El Paujil reservation, the ways of relating to the community, the stories about the ways in which the territory moves and is transformed and the time to understand the processes, the way in which the proposal of the community initiative (Kogkağ-ajícero-restaurant) took shape, and the relationship with the entities (calls for proposals, patience, etc.). All this enabled them to understand that the struggles and experiences in their territories are precarious struggles in transnational border spaces where life and death are determined.

³ A notion inspired by the work of Abdelmalek Sayad on new modalities of mapping as practices of negotiation, contestation and resistance, arising in the context of the intensification of migration and border controls and multiple violence exercised on migrant subjects. (Basualdo et al., 2019).

South American territories. (Basualdo et al., 2019). The heretical in Sayad (2010) implies a critical interrogation of “state thinking”.

The objective of the new textual and territorial narratives was to promote participation and the use of their own forms of representation, and to narrate the movements through the territories. The exercise of “mapping” was conceived as “a practice, an act of reflection in which the map is only one of the tools that facilitates the approach to and problematization of social, subjective, geographical territories” (Risler and Ares, 2013, p. 7). Through these community practices and the stories that emerged from them, it was intended to subvert the dominant and hegemonic views on territories and question the creation of “borders” as a mechanism that manages, organizes and regulates the people who inhabit or transit through different places, spaces and territories.

4. Regarding the scope of this research, the results are limited to the communities worked with, and caution is required when generalizing findings and conclusions for the totality of indigenous peoples; in this sense, the findings are limited to each subgroup of families in each of the ten indigenous communities mentioned at the beginning of this preliminary text.

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