



For **OUR RIGHTS** ✓  
For **OUR LIFE** ✓  
For **THE LAND** ✓

**Program for the Defense of  
Indigenous Defenders of the  
Coordinator of Indigenous  
Organizations of the  
Amazon Basin**



Under the framework of:





It is a regional initiative to reaffirm our struggle in defending our rights as indigenous defenders of the Amazon basin.

## What is COICA's Program for the Defense of Indigenous Defenders (PDDD)?

This initiative aims to strengthen a good practice of indigenous organizations in monitoring, following up on, disseminating, and denouncing cases of violation of the rights of our Amazonian indigenous defenders. These defenders are under the threat of violence, criminalization, and persecution in the midst of the violation of their rights and lands. This initiative also aims for political and communicational advocacy at the national and international levels, including legal advice and the promotion of rights.



### Why is this initiative important?

- Before COVID-19, we as indigenous peoples found ourselves in a context where governments promoted aggressive investment policies in the extractive sector and infrastructure to the detriment of our rights. This has not stopped during the state of health emergency. On the contrary, investment promotion policies have intensified under the excuse of economic recovery without respecting our rights under national and international legislation.
- Indigenous peoples daily experience the consequences of severe environmental harm and the violation of our rights. During the pandemic, threats and attacks on indigenous communities in defense of their lands have continued, and women have been the most threatened. In addition, illegal agents linked to armed groups, drug trafficking, land trafficking, illegal logging, illegal mining, and the oil palm industry have also been present.



- It allows us to strengthen a preventative and protective mechanism regarding the rights of Amazonian indigenous defenders, mainly based out of COICA's offices.
- It allows us to address emerging cases by focusing on prevention and developing early warning tools to anticipate acts of violence and strengthen indigenous justice.
- It allows us to address the alerts generated and statements made by national and international bodies protecting rights, such as the Inter-American Human Rights System and the United Nations System.
- It allows us to have legal support and strengthen abilities for initiating strategic lawsuits and litigation.
- It allows us to have a fund for handling emergency cases and mobilizing threatened leaders.
- It allows us to consolidate a database that includes documents from the different countries.

## Who promotes the PDDD?

### Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA)

#### The nine (9) grassroots organizations of COICA:

- AIDSEP (Peru)
- COIAB (Brazil)
- OPIAC (Colombia)
- CONFENIAE (Ecuador)
- ORPIA (Venezuela)
- CIDOB Orgánica (Bolivia)
- FOAG (Guyana Francesa)
- APA (Guyana)
- OIS (Suriname)

#### Allied civil society organizations:

DAR, REPAM, Amnesty International, Servindi Wataniba, Landi is Life, Article 19, etc.



### Background:

2018

At the IV COICA Amazon Summit, the new COICA Governing Council (2018-2022) received the Macapa Mandate, setting out the strategic lines for the institutional work plan, which includes the defense of indigenous defenders and gives rise to the PDDD.

2019

COICA and its nine (9) national grassroots and allied civil society organizations developed actions for its design and initial institutionalization, as well as for carrying out advocacy and communication actions, based on the presentation and dissemination of cases in international forums.

2020

The PDDD is adapted and implemented within the framework of COVID-19, and the Rights Working Group is constituted to coordinate with the PDDD focal points for prioritizing the most relevant cases, following up on them, accompanying them, and giving them visibility in the international rights protection bodies. Furthermore, it carries out the required communication and political advocacy. Meanwhile, there have been training workshops (Minga of knowledge), exchanges of experiences with justice operators, Ombudsman's Offices and international specialists; bulletins, case reports, etc. We are seeking to strengthen the legal teams.



## What are the PDDD's lines of action?



*To achieve our objectives, the PDDD considers three main components of action:*

### **Documentation**



Information management through files to identify and follow up on cases of threats or violations against indigenous defenders. For example, annual case reports.

### **Protection and defense**



Monitoring of cases to defend their rights. This is done through legal advice, or, to the extent possible, strategic litigation of cases prioritized by our offices.

### **Communication and advocacy**



Achieving the positioning of cases at the national and international levels through political and communicational advocacy actions to effectively influence public policy reforms.



It also considers **three cross-cutting and/or support components:**



### **Ability strengthening**

**Training activities and development of teaching materials** (evidentiary manual, defense manual, etc.).

### **Inter-institutional coordination**

**Establishment of alliances with entities and organizations of the public sector, civil society, and international cooperation**, whose mission and institutional strategies are aligned with the program's objectives.

### **Sustainability**

**Search for financial sustainability** to continue the program's actions.

## **How have we been working?**

- **Focal point meetings** to strengthen PDDD management.
- **Mingas of knowledge** to improve information management abilities, knowledge of rights, as well as leadership and spokespersonship in advocacy spaces.
- **Generation of information for case reporting.** For example, the 2019 and 2020 case reports.
- **Participation in national and international advocacy spaces.** For example, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights sessions through meetings with civil society and its public hearings.
- **Technical accompaniment, advocacy and/or communication of prioritized cases,** and other activities.

Supported by:

