

AZIMUTH

WORLD FOUNDATION



We partner with Indigenous communities to strengthen their self-determination by funding community-led initiatives. Recognizing our role as allies, we complement our direct funding with strategic advocacy, while building networks that amplify Indigenous voices and priorities.

azimuthworldfoundation.org



Azimuth World Foundation was established by Terry Rockstad and Mariana Marques with a **profound vision: that all life on Earth exists in an intricate web of relationships**. This understanding drives their commitment to **advancing human rights through three essential pillars: Health & Healing, Water Access, Environment & Territories**.

At the intersection of these pillars lies a transformative approach that **recognizes the deep connections between social, humanitarian, and environmental challenges**. This perspective reflects the **wisdom that Indigenous Peoples have long embodied – an understanding that we are not separate from nature, but are nature itself, inextricably woven into the fabric of all life**.

Mariana Marques. Terry Rockstad



Our Mission

is to strengthen Indigenous sovereignty by supporting community-led initiatives through strategic grants, partnerships, and advocacy. We amplify Indigenous voices, knowledge, and solutions while raising awareness about the challenges facing communities and ancestral territories.

Our Vision

is a world where Indigenous Peoples fully exercise their rights and sovereignty over their ancestral lands, have equitable access to health and water, and thrive through their traditional ways of life. Through their wisdom and leadership, Indigenous Peoples guide humanity toward renewed harmony with all life.

"In the wisdom of interconnection lies the path toward a more promising tomorrow for all life."

Mariana Marques and Terry Rockstad

We Practice

trust-based philanthropy that honors Indigenous leadership and self-determination. Through flexible, multi-year support, we enable organizations to focus on their vision rather than short-term outputs.



We Build

lasting partnerships founded on honest dialogue and mutual learning, knowing that sustained commitment is essential for meaningful change. Indigenous communities hold deep wisdom about their needs and solutions. By providing both institutional and project support, we help strengthen organizations' capacity to create lasting positive change in their territories and communities.

Connect with our partners at
azimuthworldfoundation.org

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Health & Healing

Access to healthcare is a fundamental human right, essential for dignity and the foundation for all other rights. We support Indigenous-led health initiatives that weave together traditional healing wisdom with contemporary healthcare practices.

Indigenous communities hold sophisticated knowledge of healing that has sustained wellbeing for generations. Their understanding reveals the profound connection between environmental and community health – showing us that caring for one means nurturing the other.

Through our partnerships, we support organizations that honor this wisdom while addressing their communities' unique health challenges. We support healthcare initiatives that are culturally rooted and community-led, working toward systems that are free, universal, and equitable. These initiatives honor traditional healing practices while recognizing the inseparable connection between the health of communities and their environment.

Water Access

Water is the foundation of all life. Access to safe water is a fundamental human right that should be free, universal, and equitable. Through our partnerships, we support Indigenous-led water initiatives that honor traditional knowledge while addressing contemporary challenges.

Indigenous Peoples have been stewards of water since time immemorial, **holding sophisticated understanding of water systems and their critical role in sustaining all life.** Their wisdom teaches us that healthy waters and healthy communities are inseparable – each nourishing the other. **We support organizations that protect water sources, restore watersheds, and ensure communities' access to safe water** through approaches that blend traditional water management practices with current technologies.

Our partners lead initiatives that are deeply rooted in their communities' knowledge and needs, recognizing that those closest to water challenges hold the wisdom for lasting solutions. These projects not only improve access to safe water but **strengthen communities' ability to protect and manage their water resources for generations to come.**



Environment & Territories

A healthy environment is a fundamental human right, essential for the exercise of all other rights. Indigenous Peoples have been stewarding their territories for millennia, cultivating biodiversity and maintaining the delicate relationships that sustain all life.

Their deep understanding of these connections has created landscapes of extraordinary ecological richness – territories that harbor significantly more biodiversity than other conserved areas. We support Indigenous-led initiatives that defend territorial sovereignty and traditional ways of life.

Through our partnerships, we amplify organizations protecting their ancestral lands from environmental threats and neo-colonial grabbing while strengthening their communities' ability to maintain their cultural practices and traditional knowledge.

Our partners show us that protecting Indigenous territorial rights does more than preserve biodiversity – it upholds wisdom that has sustained life for generations and holds keys to our collective future.

“Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.”

Chief Seattle, Duwamish

Our Partners in Change

BATWA INDIGENOUS DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION FOCUS DROITS ET ACCÈS AFRICAN INITIATIVE FOR MANKIND PROGRESS ORGANIZATION

The **BATWA** were the original inhabitants of the equatorial forests in Africa's Great Lakes region. As hunter-gatherers living in harmony with their environment for millennia, they developed sophisticated knowledge of forest ecosystems and maintained deep spiritual connections to their ancestral lands. However, since the 1960s, systematic displacement through encroachment, deforestation, and forced and violent evictions for "conservation" projects has devastated their traditional way of life. Without compensation or alternatives, many Batwa now live in extreme poverty, facing discrimination, lack of access to basic services, and the risk of cultural extinction. Yet across the region, Batwa communities demonstrate remarkable resilience.

We are honored to support and learn alongside these Indigenous-led organizations, building lasting partnerships that recognize their wisdom, respect their leadership, and support their vision for the future:

In Rwanda, where the Batwa must navigate their struggles without being able to identify as Indigenous peoples due to post-genocide policies, **African Initiative for Mankind Progress Organization (AIMPO)** leads vital community-driven work in **WASH, food security, education, and cultural preservation**. Through culturally-sensitive approaches, they help preserve Batwa dignity while improving living conditions.

In eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, **Focus Droits et Accès** champions **Indigenous women's rights** amid ongoing violent conflict and displacement. Led by Indigenous women, they ensure **healthcare access** is recognized as a fundamental right rather than a privilege.

In Uganda's southwestern region, **Batwa Indigenous Development Organisation (BIDO)** leads transformative **food sovereignty, education and advocacy work**.

Through direct support to these Indigenous-led organizations, you can help strengthen Batwa voices, preserve vital cultural heritage, and build sustainable futures that honor both traditional knowledge and contemporary needs:

BATWA INDIGENOUS DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION
FOCUS DROITS ET ACCÈS
AFRICAN INITIATIVE FOR MANKIND PROGRESS ORGANIZATION

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ENDOROIS INDIGENOUS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT NETWORK JAMII ASILIA CENTRE

The **ENDOROIS** have been the traditional custodians of Lake Bogoria and the Siracho Range in Kenya for over half a millennium. This region holds profound spiritual and cultural significance for their community. Their **deep connection to the land** and extensive Indigenous knowledge systems have been **vital to preserving biodiversity** and maintaining harmony for generations. However, in 1973, the Endorois faced forced displacement from their ancestral lands without consultation or consent to create the **Lake Bogoria National Reserve**. Despite a landmark 2010 African Commission ruling declaring their eviction illegal, implementation of justice remains limited. This displacement, combined with climate change impacts, threatens not only their physical well-being but their entire cultural fabric and spiritual identity.

We are proud to support these Indigenous-led organizations working tirelessly to preserve Endorois rights, culture, and well-being:

Endorois Indigenous Women Empowerment Network (EIWEN) leads transformative work in **women's empowerment and disability rights**. Founded in 2016 by Endorois women, their holistic approach combines advocacy with practical support for their community's most vulnerable members.

The partnership between Global Wisdom Collective and **Jamii Asilia Centre** is pioneering the groundbreaking "**Revitalize the Roots: Bikaatorois**" program. This initiative brings together elders and youth to preserve vital cultural heritage, traditional ecological knowledge, and language through innovative digital documentation. Their work ensures that ancestral wisdom continues to guide future generations.

Through support to these Indigenous-led organizations, you can help strengthen Endorois sovereignty, preserve irreplaceable cultural heritage, and build sustainable futures that honor both traditional knowledge and contemporary needs:

ENDOROIS INDIGENOUS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT NETWORK
JAMII ASILIA CENTRE

SOUTH SUDAN COMMUNITY CHANGE AGENCY

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The **MOROKODO** are one of sixty-four recognized ethnic groups in South Sudan, with approximately 40,000 people primarily located in three counties of Western Equatoria. Speaking the Morokodo language of the Nilo-Saharan family, they maintain their livelihoods through farming, fishing, beekeeping, hunting, and small-scale livestock raising. The community faced severe challenges during Sudan's 21-year civil war and subsequent conflicts in 2013 and 2016, resulting in destroyed infrastructure, limited education access, and inadequate health facilities. In their region, HIV prevalence reaches 6.8%, with limited access to treatment and testing services.

South Sudan Community Change Agency evolved from a student organization founded in 2009 into a dynamic Indigenous Morokodo organization. With a comprehensive approach to community development, they implement programs spanning **youth sexual and reproductive health, civic education, peacebuilding, WASH, human rights, food security, and women's empowerment**. Their current HIV prevention initiative exemplifies their holistic work, as they implement data-driven HIV testing and prevention programs, establish community ART refill groups, and create peer support networks.

Through your support, **SOSUCCA** can continue empowering Morokodo families, helping to break cycles of poverty, promote health, and strengthen community resilience for future generations:

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ACTION POUR LA PAIX, L'ÉDUCATION, ET LA DÉFENSE DES DROITS HUMAINS

The **KUMU** are an Indigenous Bantu people living in the tropical rainforest of Ituri, specifically in Nyiragongo territory, North Kivu, DRC, bordering Virunga National Park and Rwanda. While some community members maintain semi-nomadic forest lifestyles, others live in rural areas, sustaining themselves through farming, animal husbandry, and cross-border trade. Their region currently hosts 521,000 internally displaced people, with 233,000 in spontaneous settlements in Nyiragongo territory, where cases of rape, sexual exploitation, and gender-based violence are frequently reported.

Action pour la Paix, L'Éducation, et la Défense des Droits Humains, founded in 2017 by young human rights activists, is a women-led organization with over 35 members from the Kumu community. Through collaborations with the United Nations and local partners, they conduct wide-ranging initiatives including **electoral education, local development, entrepreneurship training, capacity-building projects, human rights workshops, and citizens' forums**. Their current project exemplifies their multifaceted approach, focusing on building emergency shelters, establishing safe spaces with trained psychosocial assistants, and creating Village Savings and Credit Associations for women's economic empowerment.

Through direct support to APEDH, you can help strengthen their vital work protecting and empowering Kumu women and girls:

ACTION POUR LA PAIX, L'ÉDUCATION ET LA DÉFENSE DES DROITS HUMAINS



FUNDACIÓN SOBREVIVENCIA COFÁN

The **COFÁN** are an Indigenous community native to the Amazon rainforest regions of Ecuador and Colombia. For centuries, they have thrived in vast, biodiverse territories, which they sustain through a deep connection to the land, guided by traditional ecological knowledge. The Cofán have a unique language, A'ingae, which reflects their rich cultural heritage and intricate relationship with the forests. As stewards of their environment, the Cofán place cultural significance on preserving the land and water systems.

Their territories include crucial headwaters that feed into major Amazon tributaries, impacting biodiversity across the region. However, the Cofán's way of life has been profoundly affected by encroachment from extractive industries—especially illegal gold mining, oil exploitation, and deforestation. These activities have not only threatened their lands but also introduced toxic pollutants, such as mercury, into water sources critical for the Cofán and neighboring communities. Despite securing legal recognition of their territories, the Cofán continue to face limited autonomy over land management, with Ecuadorian government authorities often retaining control over protected areas within Cofán land.

The resilience of the Cofán is seen in their active efforts to confront these threats, safeguard their culture, and protect biodiversity. **Fundación Sobrevivencia Cofán**, a Cofán-led organization founded in 1999, plays a vital role in the struggle to **preserve Cofán sovereignty and the health of the rainforest**. FSC's projects include deploying Cofán park guards to patrol the Cofán-Bermejo Ecological Reserve, maintaining boundary trails, conducting anti-mining operations, and establishing training programs on environmental law, first aid, and monitoring. Through their efforts, FSC supports **community resilience and provides opportunities for Cofán youth**, ensuring they remain connected to their cultural heritage.

FSC's work not only benefits the Cofán but also protects one of the planet's most biodiverse regions. Join us in preserving this irreplaceable heritage by empowering the Cofán to continue their essential guardianship of the Amazon:

FUNDACIÓN SOBREVIVENCIA COFÁN



Our Community-Led Partners in Brazil

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Indigenous Peoples across what is now Brazil embody a cultural, linguistic, and environmental diversity far predating colonial boundaries. They belong to over 266 distinct groups, speaking more than 275 languages, each group profoundly connected to the unique biome that has sustained their ways of life for millennia. In the **Amazon**, peoples like the **Yanomami, Kokama and Karipuna** stewarded one of the planet's richest ecosystems through sustainable hunting, fishing, and agroforestry, relying on the forest's cycles to nurture their communities.

In the **Cerrado**, the **Xavante** and **Krahô** developed fire management techniques and agriculture that promoted biodiversity and maintained the health of the land. Within the arid **Caatinga**, resilient communities such as the **Pankará** and **Atikum** developed water conservation and agriculture practices that allowed them to thrive amid harsh conditions. Along the lush **Atlantic Forest**, the **Guaraní** and **Tupinambá** thrived through fishing, hunting, and exchange with other coastal communities, fostering a connection with both the land and sea. In the **Pantanal**, the world's largest wetland area, the **Terena** practiced swidden agriculture, a sustainable and cyclical farming method that makes use of natural processes. In the **Pampas**, peoples like the **Charrúa** developed sophisticated practices of seasonal migration and cattle herding that maintained the delicate balance of these vast open plains. These ways of life were violently devastated by colonization, which shattered traditional systems, imposed arbitrary boundaries, and continues today through systematic dispossession of Indigenous territories and rights.

Despite Brazil's 1988 Constitution and international agreements theoretically safeguarding Indigenous rights, these protections are continually eroded. Environmental agencies like FUNAI were systematically weakened, opening the door to massive deforestation, illegal mining, and humanitarian crises. Indigenous groups continually face violent attacks and displacement, armed aggression and arson by militias tied to agribusiness, criminal groups tied to drug trafficking, and illegal extractive industries. The presidency of Lula da Silva marked a renewed effort to restore Indigenous rights with the creation of the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples. Yet the journey forward remains fraught. Brazil's agribusiness lobby wields immense power in Congress, and policies like the "Time Limit Trick," which limits Indigenous claims to lands occupied before the 1988 Constitution, continue to threaten ancestral rights.

Indigenous Peoples in Brazil are not simply resisting exploitation, they are fighting for survival, sovereignty, and the preservation of biomes that support not only their cultures but the planet's ecological stability.

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Our community-led partners in Brazil:

Yvy Marane'ỹ "Land Without Evil" Institute

Tangareí Karipuna Ethno-environmental Institute

Inamatí Xâne Terenoe Collective

Kokama & Kambeba Omágua Associations of Santo Antônio do Içá

Amplifying Indigenous Voices

We provide advocacy communications to elevate Indigenous voices, knowledge, and priorities while raising awareness about the challenges facing their communities and territories.

Our platforms share stories directly from Indigenous communities, highlight the work of our partners, and explore the deep connections between environmental and community health.



CONNECTING THE DOTS — Our Podcast

Through conversations with Indigenous leaders, academics, community members and allies, we explore environmental protection, territorial rights, traditional knowledge systems, public health challenges, water and food sovereignty and community-led solutions that honor both ancestral wisdom and contemporary needs.

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Podcasts



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RSS

Join the conversation. Be part of the movement.

follow our advocacy work:
azimuthworldfoundation.org



Our team

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CEO, president

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Petrea Klein

Trustee

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Africa Program Officer

Azimuth's Advisory committee brings together diverse expertise spanning Indigenous leadership, conservation science, anthropology, humanitarian action, multimedia creation and social and environmental justice. Committee members contribute strategic guidance to strengthen our grantmaking and advocacy while helping ensure our actions align with and support Indigenous priorities and ways of knowing.

Gary Shaye (Chair)

Aby Sène-Harper

Billi Jo Beheler

Kiliii Yuyan

Rowan Martin

Rui Diogo

Thea Bechshøft

Get to know us at
azimuthworldfoundation.org





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/ˈæzɪməθ/

the position of an object in the sky, expressed as an angle related to a distance on the horizon of the Earth

(Cambridge Dictionary, "Azimuth.")

The name Azimuth reflects our understanding that finding true direction requires multiple reference points. Like celestial navigation that guides travelers across vast distances, we recognize that addressing today's complex challenges demands a perspective that sees beyond isolated issues to understand their profound interconnections.

For us, this true north means moving away from fragmented approaches that separate social, humanitarian, and ecological challenges. Instead, we advance toward the holistic understanding that Indigenous Peoples have long embodied — an understanding that recognizes everything is connected and that human wellbeing is inseparable from the wellbeing of all life on Earth.

Just as an azimuth helps chart a course through uncertainty, our foundation seeks to bridge divides and strengthen connections between Indigenous wisdom and global action for a more just and sustainable world.

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A complex collage artwork featuring various black and white photographs of people and nature, overlaid with large, vibrant, abstract shapes in teal, red, orange, yellow, and blue. The collage includes images of a man in a striped shirt, a woman holding a child, a person in a hat, and various natural elements like trees and rocks.

