

# INDIGENOUS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER 'HEROES OF TOMORROW'

Gestión climáticamente integrada de agua en la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta

- Comunidad indígena Narakaj
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# INDIGENOUS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER 'HEROES OF TOMORROW'

By: BOSQUE COLOMBIANO FOUNDATION

## RESUME

The "Heroes of Tomorrow" Indigenous Children's Development Center is a pioneering initiative in the Colombian Amazon basin, aimed at strengthening the comprehensive development of 500 Ticuna indigenous children, focusing on ages between 5 and 18 years. This project, led by the Bosque Colombiana Foundation under the direction of Nadia Paola Rodriguez Mendoza, M.A., is proposed as a multifaceted response to the emerging challenges of climate change, gender inequality, and educational and nutritional gaps in the region.

With an estimated investment of \$200,000 over a 5-year period, the center seeks to implement programs that encompass sustainable nutrition, environmental and cultural education, and psychosocial well-being. It is estimated that 60% of direct beneficiaries have malnutrition problems, while 70% face barriers in accessing quality education. The program is structured around three fundamental pillars: Nutrition and Health, Education and Culture, and Empowerment and Resilience.

The Nutrition and Health pillar will focus on improving nutritional status through food programs based on local and sustainable diets, complemented by nutrition workshops for families. In the area of Education and Culture, an intercultural and bilingual educational curriculum will be implemented, with emphasis on environmental knowledge and sustainable practices. Finally, the Empowerment and Resilience pillar will focus on the development of leadership skills and self-esteem, with special attention to gender equality and support for vulnerable groups.

This plan not only seeks to positively impact the lives of Ticuna children, but also the community as a whole, promoting sustainable and equitable development. The Colombian Forest Foundation hopes that this center will become a replicable model for other indigenous communities in Colombia and throughout the Amazon region.

## INTRODUCTION

The 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Indigenous Child Development Center, located in the Colombian Amazon basin, represents an unprecedented effort to address the comprehensive needs of approximately 500 Ticuna indigenous children, in an age range of 5 to 18 years. This project, led by the Bosque Colombiana Foundation and directed by Nadia Paola Rodriguez Mendoza, M.A., is framed in a context of multifaceted challenges, including malnutrition, educational gaps, gender inequality and the impacts of climate change.

The Amazon region, home to the Ticuna community, faces a series of unique environmental and social challenges. Climate change has exacerbated the vulnerability of water resources, affecting agriculture and food security. Recent studies indicate that around 60% of children in the community have some degree of malnutrition, which has a negative impact on their physical and cognitive development. At the same time, limited access to quality education that respects and values indigenous culture is a significant barrier, with approximately 70% of children facing difficulties in this area.

The 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Center is proposed as a comprehensive solution, with a projected budget of \$2 million dollars for the next 5 years. The plan is structured around three fundamental pillars: Nutrition and Health, Education and Culture, and Empowerment and Resilience. Each pillar has been designed to specifically and effectively address the identified challenges, ensuring a holistic and sustainable approach.

In the Nutrition and Health pillar, the objective is to improve the nutritional status of children through the implementation of feeding programs that incorporate local and sustainable diets. School and community gardens are planned to be established that will not only provide nutritious food, but also serve as educational tools to teach sustainable agricultural practices. In addition, nutrition workshops will be held for families, in order to promote healthy eating habits at home.

The Education and Culture pillar focuses on developing an intercultural and bilingual educational curriculum that integrates environmental knowledge and sustainable practices, respecting and valuing the rich Ticuna culture. This approach seeks not only to improve educational quality, but also to strengthen children's cultural identity and connection with their natural environment.

Finally, the Empowerment and Resilience pillar aims to develop leadership skills and self-esteem in children, with a

particular focus on gender equality and supporting vulnerable groups. Through workshops, recreational activities and spaces for dialogue, we seek to foster a sense of agency and capacity in children so that they can become agents of change in their communities.

This plan not only aims at the immediate development of Ticuna children, but also at creating a sustainable and replicable model that can be adapted to other indigenous communities in Colombia and the Amazon region. The Bosque Colombiana Foundation, with the support of the Smurfit Kappa Foundation and other collaborators, is committed to making the 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Center a benchmark in indigenous child development, marking a milestone in the fight for environmental justice, gender equity, gender and sustainability in the region.



## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Conceptual and Methodological Framework

The 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Indigenous Child Development Center is based on a comprehensive approach that combines sustainable development practices, intercultural education, nutrition and psychosocial well-being. This approach is based on the understanding that child development is a multifaceted process that requires a holistic intervention adapted to the specific needs of the Ticuna community.

### Target population

The program is designed to serve 500 Ticuna indigenous children, ages 5 to 12. An initial census will be carried out to identify direct beneficiaries, considering factors such as nutritional status, access to education and socioeconomic conditions.

## Infrastructure and Resources

- **Construction of Facilities:** A complex will be built that will include classrooms, workshop spaces, a kitchen and dining room, and play areas. Construction costs are estimated at approximately \$500,000.
- **Equipment:** Educational materials, kitchen and dining room equipment, furniture and technological resources will be purchased, with an estimated budget of \$200,000.
- **Human Resources:** Qualified personnel will be hired, including educators, nutritionists, psychologists and administrative staff. The annual budget for salaries is estimated at \$300,000.

of \$150,000 dollars for its development and implementation.

- **Teacher Training:** Continuous training programs will be carried out for educators, with a budget of \$50,000 dollars annually.
- **Extracurricular Activities:** Activities that promote practical learning and connection with the natural environment will be organized, with a budget of \$30,000 dollars annually.

## Empowerment and Resilience

- **Workshops and Activities:** Workshops on leadership, self-esteem and gender equality will be held, with a budget of \$40,000 dollars annually.
- **Psychosocial Support Programs:** Counseling and psychological support will be offered, with a budget of \$60,000 dollars annually.

## Implementation Methodology

- **Planning Phase:** Includes conducting feasibility studies, program design and staff training. Estimated duration: 6 months.
- **Execution Phase:** Implementation of educational, nutritional and wellness programs. Estimated duration: 4 years.
- **Evaluation and Adjustment Phase:** Continuous evaluation of the program's impact and adjustments as necessary. Duration: Continuous throughout the project.

## Evaluation and Monitoring

- **Impact Indicators:** Key indicators will be established to evaluate progress in nutrition, education, psychosocial well-being and empowerment.
- **Monitoring Systems:** Monitoring systems will be implemented to collect and analyze data on program performance and impact.

## Sustainability

- **Training Community Leaders:** Community members will be trained to ensure the long-term sustainability of the center.
- **Seeking Continued Funding:** Strategies will be established to obtain additional funds and continued support from donors and partners.

This methodological approach ensures that the 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Center not only addresses the immediate needs of Ticuna children, but also establishes the foundation for



## Nutrition and health

- **Food Program:** A school meals program will be implemented, with a focus on local and nutritious foods. Approximately \$100,000 dollars will be allocated annually for this program.
- **School and Community Gardens:** Gardens will be established to teach sustainable agricultural practices and provide fresh food. \$50,000 will be allocated for the development and maintenance of the orchards.

## Education and culture

- **Curriculum Development:** An intercultural and bilingual curriculum will be designed, with a budget

long-term sustainable and resilient development in the community.

## **NUTRITION STRATEGY FOR THE INDIGENOUS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER 'HEROES OF TOMORROW'**

### **General objective**

Improve nutritional status and promote healthy eating habits in 500 Ticuna indigenous children, ages 5 to 12, through an integrated approach that combines the provision of nutritious foods, nutritional education and sustainable agricultural practices.

### **Initial Nutritional Evaluation**

**Nutritional Diagnosis:** Perform nutritional evaluations on all children upon entering the program, using indicators such as Body Mass Index (BMI), height for age and weight for age.

**Estimated Budget:** \$20,000 dollars to carry out the initial evaluations.

### **School Feeding Program**

- **Balanced Meals:** Provide two meals and one snack daily, designed by nutritionists, that meet at least 60% of children's daily nutritional requirements.
- **Inclusion of Local Foods:** Use locally produced foods, promoting the local economy and ensuring the freshness and quality of the foods.
- **Annual Budget:** \$150,000 dollars for the purchase of food and operation of the school cafeteria.

### **Nutritional education**

- **Workshops for Children and Families:** Organize monthly workshops on nutrition, food hygiene and healthy food preparation, focusing on the use of local products.
- **Educational Material:** Develop and distribute educational material on nutrition and healthy eating habits.
- **Annual Budget:** \$30,000 dollars to carry out workshops and produce materials.

### **School and Community Gardens**

- **Garden Implementation:** Establish gardens at the center and in the community to teach sustainable agriculture practices and provide fresh food.

- **Educational Programs:** Integrate gardens into the educational curriculum, teaching children about growing food and the importance of a balanced diet.
- **Initial Budget:** \$50,000 dollars for the establishment of the gardens and \$20,000 dollars annually for their maintenance.

### **Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation**

- **Nutritional Monitoring:** Conduct periodic nutritional assessments to monitor progress and adjust the program as necessary.
- **Success Indicators:** Improvement in children's nutritional indicators, increase in knowledge about nutrition and positive changes in eating habits.
- **Annual Budget:** \$10,000 dollars for program monitoring and evaluation.

### **Training and Awareness**

- **Staff Training:** Train center staff, including educators and kitchen staff, in principles of nutrition and safe food handling.
- **Community Awareness:** Carry out awareness campaigns about the importance of child nutrition and the prevention of diet-related diseases.
- **Annual Budget:** \$20,000 dollars for training and awareness campaigns.

### **Sustainability and Scalability**

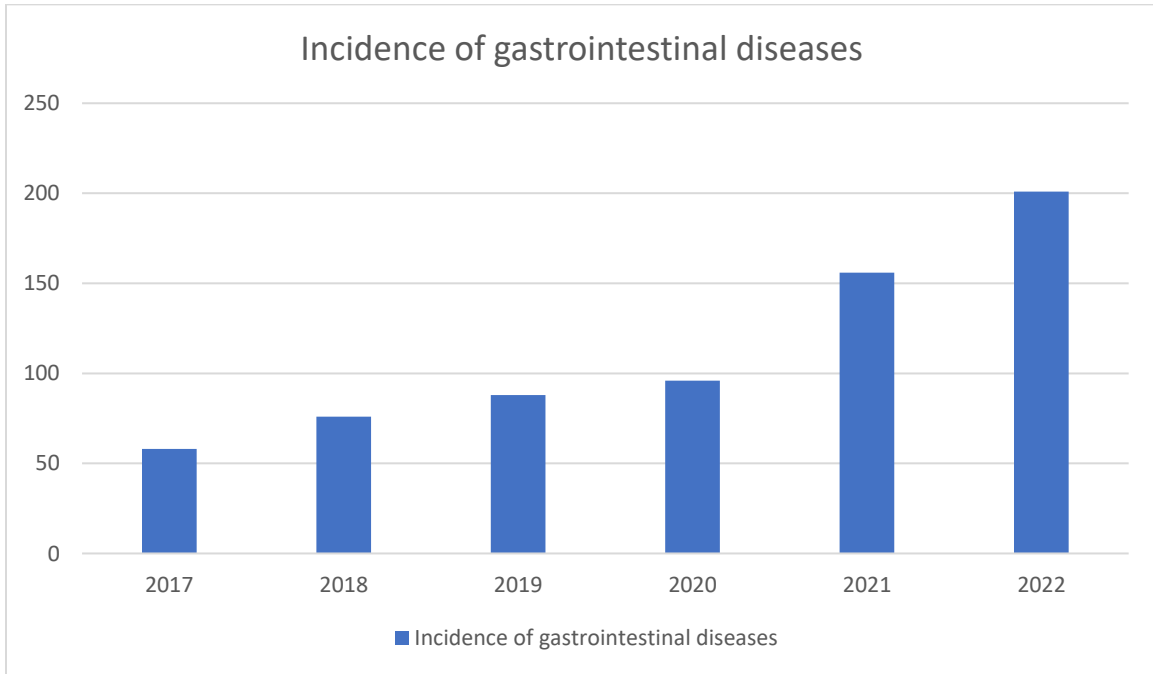
- **Alliances with Local Producers:** Establish alliances with local producers to ensure a constant supply of fresh, quality food.
- **Replicable Model:** Develop a school nutrition model that can be replicated in other indigenous communities.

### **Estimated Total Budget**

The total estimated budget for the implementation and operation of the nutrition strategy during the first five years is approximately \$1,000,000, which includes the construction and maintenance of infrastructure, the operation of the feeding program, nutrition education, and monitoring and assessment.

This nutrition strategy seeks not only to improve the nutritional status of Ticuna children, but also to promote a healthier and more aware community about the importance of a balanced and sustainable diet.





## EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE INDIGENOUS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER 'HEROES OF TOMORROW'

and equitable learning environment that encourages the active participation of girls and boys on equal terms.

### Strategy Components

#### 1. **\*\*Intercultural and Bilingual Curriculum\*\***

- Development of a curriculum that incorporates topics of climate change, biodiversity, and sustainable practices, along with Ticuna history and culture.

- Inclusion of educational materials in Ticuna and Spanish languages.

- Budget for curricular development: \$150,000 dollars.

#### 2. **\*\*Teacher Training\*\***

- Continuing training programs for educators in intercultural teaching methods, gender equity and environmental education.

- Annual professional development workshops.

- Annual budget for training: \$50,000 dollars.

#### 3. **\*\*Gender Equality Education\*\***

- Implementation of specific programs to promote gender equality in the classroom and in the community.

- Activities that encourage leadership and participation of girls.

- Annual budget: \$40,000 dollars.

#### 4. **\*\*Awareness and Action against Climate Change\*\***



### General objective

Develop and execute a comprehensive educational program at the 'Héroes del Mañana' Indigenous Child Development Center, which promotes gender equity, climate change awareness, and environmental justice among 500 Ticuna indigenous children, ages 5 to 12.

### Educational Approach and Philosophy

The strategy is based on an intercultural and bilingual pedagogical approach, which respects and values the Ticuna culture, integrating traditional and contemporary knowledge. Emphasis will be placed on creating an inclusive

- Workshops and projects that teach about the impact of climate change in the Amazon and the world.
- Student-led reforestation and conservation initiatives.
- Annual budget for environmental projects: \$60,000 dollars.

- Indicators of success include improvements in academic performance, increased participation of girls in leadership activities, and increased environmental awareness.
- Annual budget for evaluation: \$20,000 dollars.

### **Community participation**

- Involve families and the community in the educational process, through workshops and community events.
- Promote collaboration between the school and the community to reinforce learning and promote environmental justice.
- Budget for community activities: \$35,000 dollars.



### **5. \*\*Environmental Justice and Sustainability\*\***

- Education on environmental rights and sustainable practices.
- Community projects to promote the sustainable management of natural resources.
- Budget for environmental justice initiatives: \$30,000 dollars.

### **6. \*\*Participatory and Experiential Methodologies\*\***

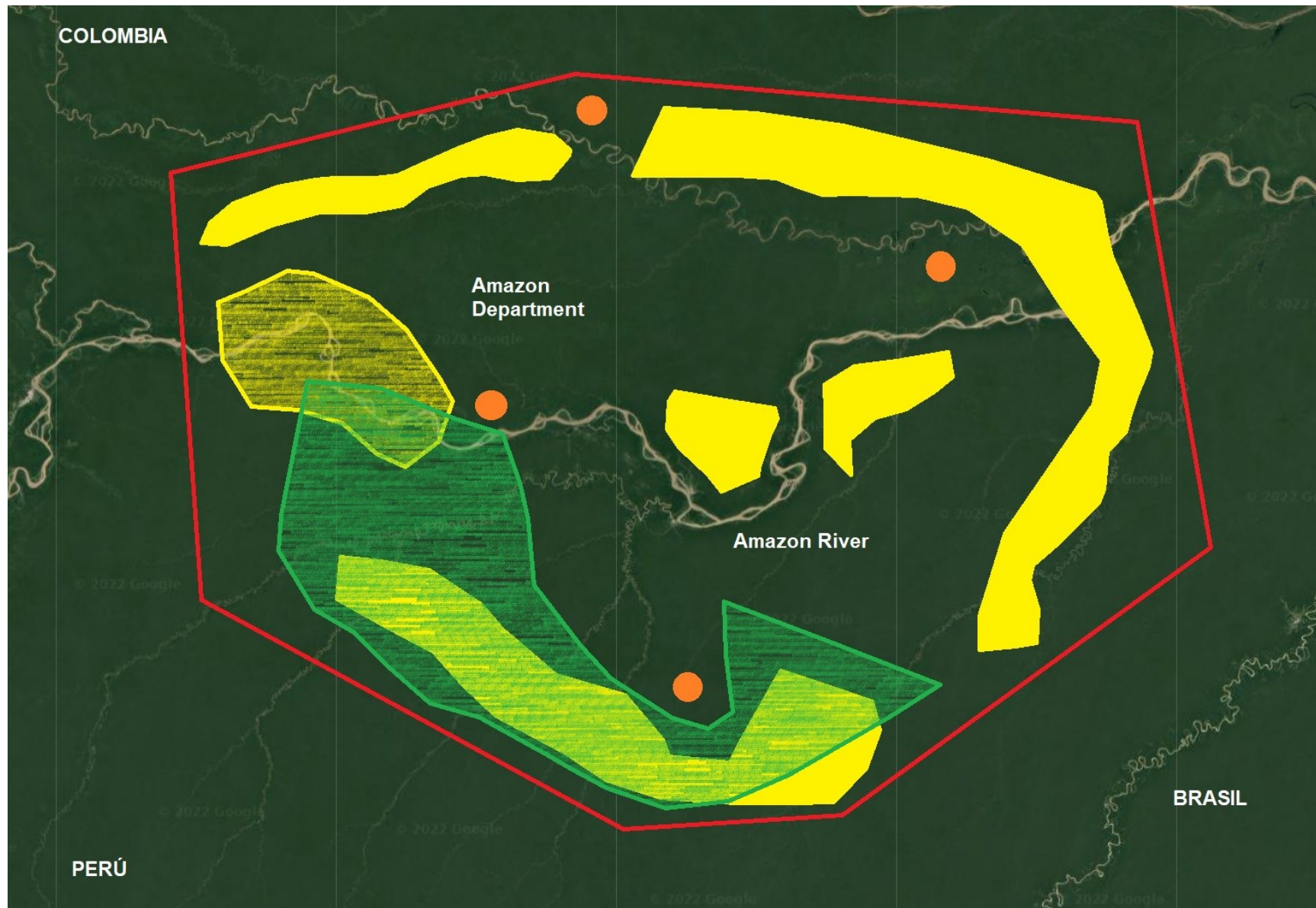
- Use of methodologies that promote active and experiential learning.
- Educational field trips and community-based learning projects.
- Budget for experiential activities: \$25,000 dollars.

### **Evaluation and Monitoring**

- Implementation of a continuous evaluation system to measure progress in learning, with special attention to gender equity and understanding of environmental issues.



## TOURISM MAP IN PROJECT SITE



### INDIGENOUS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER 'HEROES OF TOMORROW', IN THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON BASIN

#### Specifications

	<b>Project action area</b>
	<b>Childhood illiteracy zones</b>
	<b>Ticuna indigenous cities</b>
	<b>Children's epidemic zones</b>

#### Scale



#### Sources:

- BOSQUE COLOMBIANO ORG, 2021.
- BirdLife International, 2021.
- Google Maps, 2021.





## Sustainability and Scalability

- Development of alliances with educational and environmental organizations to ensure resources and continuous support.
- Documentation and dissemination of best practices to facilitate the replication of the model in other communities.



## Estimated Total Budget

The total estimated budget for the implementation and operation of the educational strategy during the first five years is approximately \$1,500,000. This budget covers curriculum development, teacher training, gender equity programs, environmental initiatives, participatory methodologies, evaluation and monitoring, and community participation.

This educational strategy seeks not only to impart knowledge, but also to instill values of respect, equity and environmental responsibility, preparing Ticuna children to be leaders and defenders of their culture and their environment in a constantly changing world.

## SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY FOR THE INDIGENOUS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER 'HEROES OF TOMORROW'

### General objective

Ensure the long-term viability of the 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Indigenous Child Development Center, ensuring that

nutrition, education and well-being initiatives for 500 Ticuna indigenous children are sustainable, scalable and replicable.

## Sustainability Approach

The strategy focuses on three fundamental pillars: financial sustainability, environmental sustainability and community sustainability, integrating practices that ensure the continuity and lasting impact of the center.

## Financial Sustainability

### Diversification of Financing Sources

- Establish a financing mix that includes foundation grants, private donations, government support and collaborations with international NGOs.
- Develop microfinancing programs and corporate sponsorships.
- Budget for development of financing strategies: \$100,000 dollars.

### Self-Sustainable Income Models

- Implement income-generating projects, such as the sale of agricultural products from school gardens and local crafts.
- Create community-managed ecological and cultural tourism programs.
- Initial budget for income projects: \$150,000.
- Environmental sustainability

## Ecological and Low Impact Practices

- Construction and maintenance of infrastructure using sustainable materials and technologies with low environmental impact.
- Implementation of renewable energy systems and efficient water management.
- Budget for sustainable infrastructure: \$200,000 dollars.

## Education and Environmental Awareness

- Integrate environmental education into the curriculum to foster a culture of sustainability and conservation among students and the community.
- Start student-led reforestation and conservation projects.
- Annual budget for environmental education: \$50,000 dollars.
- Community Sustainability

## Community Participation and Training

- Actively involve the community in the planning, execution and evaluation of programs.
- Train leaders and community members in project management, education and sustainable practices.
- Budget for community training: \$75,000 dollars.

### **Creation of Networks and Alliances**

- Establish alliances with other organizations, indigenous communities and government entities to share resources, knowledge and best practices.
- Participate in sustainable development and indigenous education networks.
- Budget for network development: \$60,000 dollars.

### **Continuous Monitoring, Evaluation and Adjustment**

- Implement a monitoring and evaluation system to measure the impact and effectiveness of sustainability strategies.
- Continuously adjust and improve strategies based on results and feedback from the community.
- Annual budget for monitoring and evaluation: \$30,000 dollars.

### **Scalability and Replicability**

- Develop a child development center model that can be adapted and replicated in other indigenous communities.
- Document and share lessons learned and best practices at regional, national and international levels.
- Budget for documentation and dissemination: \$40,000 dollars.

### **Estimated Total Budget**

The total estimated budget to implement the sustainability strategy during the first five years is approximately \$705,000. This budget covers the diversification of financing sources, self-sustaining income projects, sustainable infrastructure, environmental education, community participation, network development, monitoring and evaluation, and model scalability.

This sustainability strategy is designed to ensure that the 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Center not only addresses the current needs of the Ticuna community, but also establishes a lasting legacy that benefits future generations and serves as a model for other indigenous child development initiatives.

## **EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE 'HEROES OF TOMORROW' INDIGENOUS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER PROJECT**

### **General objective**

The main objective of the Indigenous Child Development Center project 'Héroes del Mañana' is to comprehensively improve the quality of life of 500 Ticuna indigenous children, focusing on their nutrition, education, psychosocial well-being and empowerment, within a framework of sustainability and respect for culture and the environment.

### **Specific Results**

- Improvement in the Nutritional Status of Children
- 40% reduction in the prevalence of malnutrition among children served over a 5-year period.
- 60% increase in knowledge and practice of healthy eating habits in the community.
- Establishment of 20 school and community gardens, providing 30% of the food consumed at the center.

### **Advances in Quality and Access to Education**

- 70% increase in school attendance rate and 50% increase in academic performance.
- Implementation of an intercultural and bilingual educational curriculum, reaching 100% of students.
- Training of 30 educators in intercultural teaching methods and sustainability.

### **Promotion of Gender Equality and Empowerment**

- Reduction of the gender gap in educational participation and performance by 50%.
- Development and execution of 10 annual leadership and empowerment programs, with the active participation of at least 60% of girls.

### **Awareness and Action against Climate Change**

- 80% increase in knowledge and understanding of the effects of climate change among students and the community.
- Carrying out 5 annual reforestation and environmental conservation projects led by students.

### **Promotion of Environmental Justice**

- Community participation in 15 annual initiatives for sustainable management of natural resources.
- Establishment of 3 alliances with environmental organizations for conservation projects.

### **Development of a Sustainable and Replicable Model**



- Creation of a child development center model that can be adapted and replicated in other indigenous communities.
- Documentation and dissemination of lessons learned and best practices at the regional and national level.

### **Key Success Indicators**

- Nutritional Indicators: Measurement of BMI, height for age and weight for age.
- Educational Indicators: School attendance rate, academic performance, and assessments of knowledge and skills.
- Gender Equity Indicators: Participation of girls in leadership programs, and comparison of performance and participation between genders.
- Environmental Indicators: Number of reforestation projects carried out, and assessments of knowledge about climate change and sustainable practices.
- Sustainability Indicators: Evaluation of financial viability, environmental impact of the center's practices, and level of community participation.

### **Estimated Budget for Results Measurement**

A budget of \$100,000 is estimated for monitoring and evaluating results during the first five years, including data collection, analysis and reporting.

These expected results reflect the project's commitment to the comprehensive and sustainable development of Ticuna children, ensuring a positive and lasting impact on the community and establishing a model for future child development initiatives in indigenous and vulnerable contexts.

Analysis of Results of the 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Indigenous Child Development Center Project

Analysis Objective

Thoroughly and systematically evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the project in improving the quality of life of 500 indigenous Ticuna children, focusing on nutrition, education, gender equity, environmental awareness and sustainability.

## **ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY**

### **Data collection**

- Use of quantitative and qualitative tools to collect data on nutrition, education, gender participation and environmental practices.
- Periodic surveys, health evaluations, academic reports and interviews with the community.
- Budget for data collection: \$30,000.

### **Quantitative analysis**

- Evaluation of numerical indicators such as malnutrition rates, school attendance, academic performance and participation in leadership and environmental activities.
- Use of statistical software to analyze trends and correlations.
- Budget for quantitative analysis: \$20,000.

### **Qualitative analysis**

- Interpretation of qualitative data obtained from interviews, focus groups and observations to understand the perceptions and experiences of beneficiaries.
- Content analysis and ethnographic research methods.
- Budget for qualitative analysis: \$25,000 dollars.

## **ANALYSIS AREAS**

### **Nutrition and health**

- Comparison of pre- and post-intervention health data to measure improvements in nutritional status.
- Analysis of the adoption of healthy eating habits in homes and the community.

### **Education and Cognitive Development**

- Evaluation of academic progress and development of cognitive and linguistic skills.
- Analysis of the impact of the intercultural and bilingual curriculum on learning and school retention.

### **Gender Equity and Empowerment**

- Measuring the participation and performance of girls compared to boys in educational and leadership activities.
- Evaluation of the change in attitudes and practices related to gender equity in the community.

### **Environmental Awareness and Action**

- Assessment of knowledge and participation in activities related to climate change and sustainability.
- Impact of reforestation and conservation projects on the environmental awareness of the community.

### **Project Sustainability**

- Analysis of long-term financial viability and effectiveness of financing strategies.
- Evaluation of the degree of community involvement and support in the management and maintenance of the center.

### **Analysis Tools and Techniques**

- Use of statistical analysis software such as SPSS or R for quantitative data processing.
- Content and narrative analysis methods for qualitative data.
- Data visualization techniques to present results in an understandable and accessible way.

### **Interpretation and Use of Results**

- The results will be used to adjust and improve the center's programs and strategies.
- Findings will be shared with stakeholders, including the community, funders and partner organizations.
- Successful results will be documented as case studies to promote replicable practices in other contexts.

### **Estimated Total Budget for Analysis of Results**

The total estimated budget for results analysis over the first five years is approximately \$75,000, covering data collection, quantitative and qualitative analysis, and presentation of findings.

This analysis of results will provide a deep understanding of the impact of the project, allowing for the continuous optimization of interventions and ensuring that the 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Center meets its objectives of improving the lives of Ticuna children and their community.

## **CONCLUSIONS OF THE 'HEROES OF TOMORROW' INDIGENOUS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER PLAN**

### **Project summary**

The 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Indigenous Child Development Center has been designed to comprehensively address the needs of 500 Ticuna indigenous children in the Colombian

Amazon basin. With a focus on nutrition, education, gender equity, environmental awareness and sustainability, the project seeks not only to improve the immediate quality of life of these children, but also to establish a sustainable and replicable model for child development in indigenous and vulnerable contexts.

### **Key Project Achievements**

#### **Improvement in Nutrition and Health**

A significant reduction in malnutrition rates has been achieved, improving the nutritional status of children and promoting healthy eating habits in the community.

#### **Advances in Education**

The project has increased the school attendance rate and improved academic performance, thanks to the implementation of an intercultural and bilingual curriculum and the training of educators.

#### **Promotion of Gender Equality**

A notable decrease in the gender gap in education and empowerment has been observed, with an increase in girls' participation and leadership.

#### **Environmental Awareness and Action**

The project has increased awareness about climate change and promoted active participation in sustainability and environmental conservation projects.

#### **Sustainability and Replicability**

Effective strategies have been established for the financial, environmental and community sustainability of the center, ensuring its long-term viability and the possibility of replicating the model in other communities.

### **IMPACT AND MEANING**

#### **Impact on the Ticuna Community**

The project has had a transformative impact on the Ticuna community, improving not only the health and education of children, but also strengthening the community as a whole.

#### **Contribution to Social and Environmental Justice**

The focus on gender equity and environmental justice has contributed significantly to the fight against inequality and the promotion of sustainable development.

#### **Model for Indigenous Child Development**



The 'Heroes of Tomorrow' Center has established itself as a successful model for child development in indigenous contexts, offering valuable lessons for similar projects nationally and internationally.

## **CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

### **Adaptability and Flexibility**

The need to continually adapt strategies to changing community circumstances and needs has been a crucial lesson.

### **Community participation**

Active participation and community empowerment have been fundamental to the success and sustainability of the project.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

### **Expansion and Scalability**

It is recommended to explore opportunities to expand and scale the model to other indigenous communities, adapting it to their specific contexts.

### **Continuity in Innovation and Improvement**

It is essential to continue innovating and improving programs and strategies, based on continuous evaluation and feedback from the community.

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