



*“Living well, is to have a path, water, health, food and territory”*  
**Tito Guagasu of the Yuqui Bia Recuate Local Council Organization (Chimore Bolivia)**

## The Technical Exchange Mission to Bolivia in October 2014

concluded a series of field visits (Brazil 2012, Ecuador 2013, Peru 2014 and Colombia 2014), under PIACI program, that have contributed to enrich the protection strategies of the rights of Isolated Indigenous Peoples and in Initial Contact (PIACI) by gaining knowledge about the methodologies of protection and healthcare services of indigenous groups that live in the vicinities of these isolated peoples. These exchanges have facilitated the inputs to improve and implement of protocols and have allowed for the development of regional methodologies for protection proposal.

These Field activities together with the national and regional events on methodologies, legislation and healthcare services have endorsed the proposal of a second phase of the program by the PS/OTCA. The results of these events accompanied by the institutional assessments that have been carried out at a national and regional levels (Assessments of healthcare of isolated peoples and initial contact per country, international consultancies on methodologies, legislation, healthcare, evaluation and sustainability) have established a positive scenario between stakeholders to suggest a continuity in the program.

The main results of program have been the orientations, guidelines, recommendations and suggestions, and of support from the member countries in the formulation and implementation of their public policies for the protection of isolated peoples and in initial contact. Furthermore, the strengthening process of the Inter-institutional coordination at the national level during the missions as well as in national and regional events



must be noted. Finally, it should be noted that an informal network of specialists and indigenous activists was built; these specialists worked with enthusiasm and commitment for the promotion and participation of their governments in the defense of the rights of isolated peoples and in initial contact at a national and Amazonian level.

With this mission and the meeting of Focal points of the program on 29 - 30 October, 2014, the Program Strategic framework to elaborate a Regional Agenda for the Protection of Isolated Peoples and in Initial Contact of the ACTO/IDB came to a closure.



## THE TECHNICAL MISSION OF ACTO

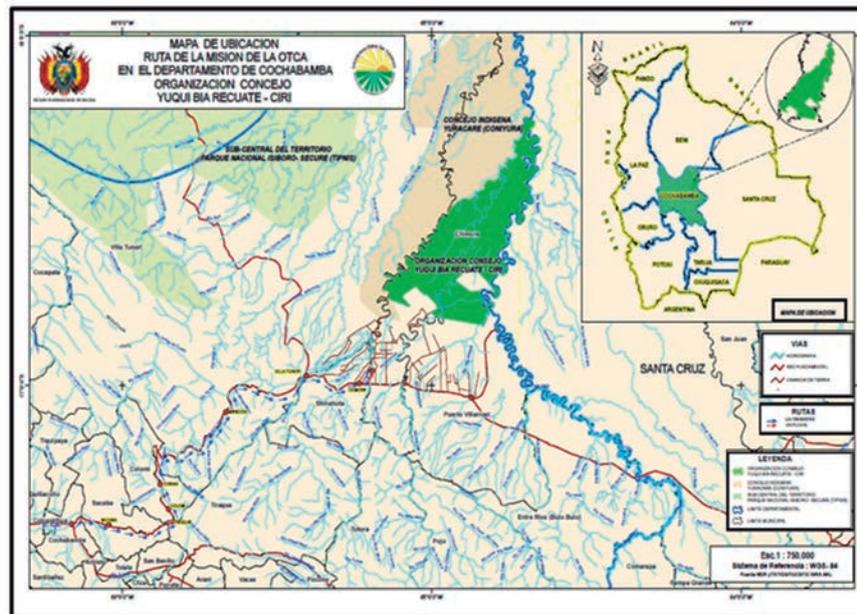
The purpose of the mission was to facilitate the exchange on healthcare services, protection strategies developed by the governmental institutions involved in the protection of Isolated Peoples and in Initial Contact, specifically the Vice-ministry of Lands, the Ministry of Health and local governments of Bolivia. The information and knowledge of the methodologies, development plans and health contingency plans of the mentioned organizations were highlighted.

The technical mission on “Methodologies and contribution to

Livelihood Development Plans, and Vulnerability of Indigenous Peoples in Amazon of Bolivia” was inaugurated with the participation of official delegates of Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador and Peru in the city of Cochabamba.

The Mission commenced with a press conference organized by Jhonny Cordero, Vice-minister of Lands on October 14, 2014. The various delegations introduced themselves and their work, and coordinators of the Mission conducted interviews with the local press.





**ROUTE OF THE TECHNICAL MISSION OF ACTO**

## **Bolivia's regulation and the Law for the Protection of Highly Vulnerable Native and Indigenous Peoples**

The delegates of the Mission travelled by road from the Andes to the foothills of the Amazon in the municipality of Chimore where each delegation presented the challenges and protection strategies for the Isolated Peoples and in Initial Contact of their respective countries.

Brazil's Ministry of Health presented the national network for differentiated healthcare services for Indigenous Peoples, giving examples of certain groups in Initial Contact. The Ministry of the Interior of Colombia explained the state of situation in relation to the protection of isolated peoples as well as the process of prior consultation and development of the public policy for protection; it also provided an explanation of the national context, the institutional coordination and the challenges faced of internal conflict to grant healthcare services to the Nukak peoples, who underwent official contact in 1988.

Ecuador's Ministry of Health presented the management model for services to population with problems of accessibility to health services. The Ministry of Justice of Ecuador explained

its methodology of Survey to provide evidence of the existence of Isolated Peoples in the areas around the intangible zone that has been declared to guarantee the survival of the Tagaeri and Taromenane in isolation.

Peru's Ministry of Culture outlined the process of land titling for the established and proposed Territorial and Indigenous Reserves which are the legally determined for protection for these groups. Peru's Executive Director of Traditional Medicine within the Ministry of Health spoke generally of their indigenous peoples, as well as the proposed lines of work for cooperation with indigenous Amazonian groups.

The host nation, Bolivia, spoke of the ongoing process of the development of the Law for the Protection of Highly Vulnerable Native and Indigenous Peoples, as well as the Intercultural Community-family health program (SAFCI, acronym in Spanish), with which the peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact will be protected under the Bolivian national health system.



Anthropologist Ely Linares presented some observations and inferences with regards to the changes that contact with Bia-Yuqui peoples between 1969-1991, has brought and the challenges faced today in the protection of their rights. This exposed the difficulties in caring for this population, while proposing some recommendations for implementation by the Bolivian government which may be applicable to other groups in the member countries.

The Mission continued two hours' drive from Chimoréto the Yuqui community of Bia Recuaté. During an meeting with the community, the delegates of the member countries introduced themselves and the leaders of the community voiced the difficulties that they have had with regards to their "Living well or Well-being" (buenvivir), specifically the lack of drinking water, basic sanitation, impropersolid waste disposal in the environment, creating encumbrances on health especially high rate of tuberculosis,

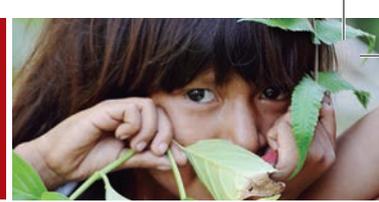
gastrointestinal and respiratory illnesses, amongst others.

In addition to these problems, the communities emphasized the need for larger territories, the concerns about the invasion of their lands by farmers/settlers, there by hindering their hunting and gathering activities of survival. They also indicated that they do not grow coca plant and they feel a sense of exclusion from the government incentives and programs that seek to eradicate these crops.

Furthermore, the impact on their customs, culture and practices from extended presence of missionaries was visible, especially the imposition of a sedentary lifestyle, housing structures, changes in the patterns of mobility, changes in food production-consumption, alcohol consumption levels, amongst other social problems.

Resulting from public forestry policies in the region, the community had the initiative to carry out a Forestry Management Plan on their lands, and this project has generated



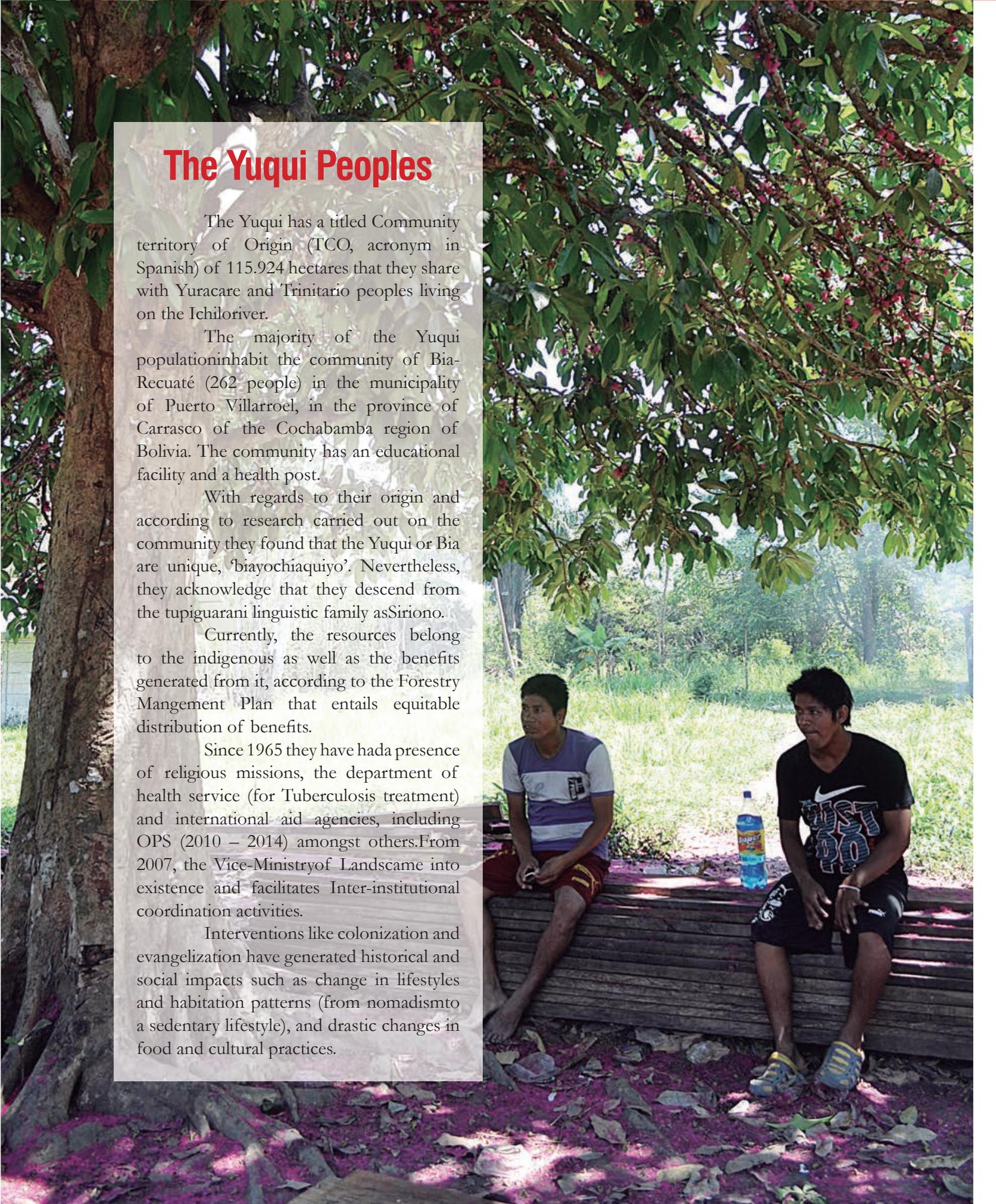


economic incomes for the community through payments to foresters, local school restaurant cooks, transportation subsidies for local leaders, health insurance for those services outside the universal health plan of the state, and stipends for each family.

The local doctors that provide their services in the community explained that the activities they carry out under the Intercultural community and family health program (SAFCI, acronym in Spanish). These activities include diagnoses per family and a plan of medical attention according to the findings, tuberculosis treatments, promotion and prevention of basic sanitation, especially a periodic plan for garbage collection, capacity building in terms of food security, planting, harvesting and consumption of certain foods. They acknowledge the participation of Villarroel's local government and expressed the need for more participation from Chimore's local government.

After spending a day with the Yuqui, the harsh reality of these peoples was made evident, in particular with regards to health and "vivirbien" of the community. In this sense we held a meeting with the local technical team of Chimore's municipality to share our observations and perceptions of the evidence during our visit to Yuqui territory. The local administrators informed the mission team that the Yuqui live outside of their administrative jurisdiction, but nevertheless are tended to in the urban areas of Chimore, with specific attention to health services and a infrastructure that was originally proposed for craft sale for Yuqui but now utilized by the Yuqui as a lodging home when in town.

The meeting came to an end with the Vice-ministry of Lands informing that a future meeting will be held to present the Supreme Decree for the protection of vulnerable Indigenous peoples and for the necessary coordination to improve the conditions of the community Bia-Recuaté.



## The Yuqui Peoples

The Yuqui has a titled Community territory of Origin (TCO, acronym in Spanish) of 115.924 hectares that they share with Yuracare and Trinitario peoples living on the Ichiloriver.

The majority of the Yuqui population inhabit the community of Bia-Recuaté (262 people) in the municipality of Puerto Villarroel, in the province of Carrasco of the Cochabamba region of Bolivia. The community has an educational facility and a health post.

With regards to their origin and according to research carried out on the community they found that the Yuqui or Bia are unique, 'biayochiaquiyo'. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that they descend from the tupiguarani linguistic family as Siriono.

Currently, the resources belong to the indigenous as well as the benefits generated from it, according to the Forestry Mangement Plan that entails equitable distribution of benefits.

Since 1965 they have had a presence of religious missions, the department of health service (for Tuberculosis treatment) and international aid agencies, including OPS (2010 – 2014) amongst others. From 2007, the Vice-Ministry of Landscapes into existence and facilitates Inter-institutional coordination activities.

Interventions like colonization and evangelization have generated historical and social impacts such as change in lifestyles and habitation patterns (from nomadism to a sedentary lifestyle), and drastic changes in food and cultural practices.





“The Yuqui peoples are characterized as a highly vulnerable indigenous group; with reduced population, chronic illnesses, landconflicts, and disrupted social structure”

Source: Ely Linares.

## OUTCOMES

- Provided opportunities for discussion and reflection on the protection and high vulnerability of peoples in initial contact, for the delegates of the Member Countries of ACTO and government authorities in Bolivia at the national, regional and municipal levels. The results of these discussions were consolidated.
- Exchanges and inputs to the methodologies, standards, laws, measures, actions related to the protection of the rights of PIACI activities.
- Knowledge and Information on Yuqui and other tribes in highly vulnerable conditions, in the Member Countries.
- Knowledge and discussion of Bolivia Nr.450 Act and its proposed regulations.
- Strengthening of the Ministry of Lands in Bolivia on the criteria of working with PIACI team.
- Agreement between the delegates to support a second phase of the program, that focuses on the indigenous peoples of high vulnerability in border regions.
- New perspectives on bilateral and regional cooperation between MCs in regards to the operational aspects of the institutions dealing with cases of vulnerability of indigenous peoples.
- New delegates and institutions of member countries included in the network of exchanges and discussions within the ACTO / IDB program.

## Strategic Framework Program to Develop a Regional Agenda for the Protection of Indigenous Peoples in Isolation and Initial Contact

The program seeks to contribute to protecting the rights of indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact in the Amazon Basin by defining effective policies and concerted actions between governments, indigenous peoples and organizations, and non-governmental organizations with experience on the matter.

It consists of five components that aim to achieve: (i) a regional inter-institutional coordination mechanism supported by national bodies; (ii) a concerted strategic framework that incorporates physical and cultural protection measures; (iii) a territorial protection plan that includes legal and physical they occupy and adjacent areas; (iv) a regional health strategy that includes a technical health prevention standard with an intercultural approach or characteristics, and emergency health systems in the areas where they live; and (v) systematized data and knowledge about the situation of isolated peoples and capacity and commitment to protect them.

As counterpart for the program, the Government of Bolivia organized a Technical Field Mission to Cochabamba region of Amazon, for technical experts involved in protecting and promoting indigenous rights in ACTO Member Countries. Its aim was to provide governmental stakeholders with a practical experience to promote or enhance multilateral action.

The mission's objective was consistent with the Program's Component 5, particularly “creating technical capacity and commitment in Member Countries to protect isolated indigenous peoples”.



## ILO Convention 169 - Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

This was the first international legally binding instrument to specifically address the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, recognizing their rights to work, land and territory, health and education (1989).

## United Nations Guidelines on the Protection of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact

On 16 December 2005 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Program of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, in which two specific recommendations are made on indigenous peoples in isolation and in initial contact. At the international level it is recommended that “a global mechanism should be established to monitor the situation of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and in danger of extinction.” At the national level it is recommended “that a special protection framework for indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation should be adopted and that Governments should establish special policies for ensuring the protection and rights of indigenous peoples with small populations and at risk of extinction.”



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