



# 2020 Annual Report

The Amazon Conservation Team

## *Founder's Letter*

When we founded ACT, we could not have imagined the world 25 years later—a world in which political impunity seems to reign, deforestation continues to increase from unsustainable ranching and monoculture, wildfires scorch the once lush forest, and illegal mining pushes deeper into the most pristine tracts of the Amazon. Most unforeseen is the global pandemic that has reached even the most remote corners of Amazonia, with the region's indigenous peoples suffering starkly higher COVID-19 mortality rates than the general population.

Despite the titanic challenges and fueled as always by our original vision of a natural world stewarded by those most qualified to care for it, we push forward. In 2020 alone, ACT:

- Helped return 314,000 acres of forest to indigenous hands
- Partnered with the ASOMI indigenous women's association to create Mamakunapa, the first Colombian Civil Society Reserve established for the protection of sacred plants
- Planted 14,600 cacay trees (native to the Colombian Amazon) to improve family economies, food security, and forest connectivity
- Continued training eight afro-descendant and eight indigenous Amazon Conservation Rangers in the use of forest monitoring technology in Suriname
- Constructed 15 solar energy systems to provide village illumination at night and equipped three new community facilities with solar energy in Suriname. In Colombia, we distributed 570 solar energy kits.

Unfortunately, during the pandemic, challenges to forest-dwelling communities in Amazonia have increased, as enforcement by governments against land-grabbing, deforestation, and illegal extractive industries has waned. However, these threats have given us clarity about the efficacy of our investments. We know from this past year that our community partners with territorial monitoring capacity, formal land tenure, and autonomy in food sovereignty, energy, and communications have not only been able to mostly isolate and protect themselves from the pandemic, but also to keep the referenced threats at bay.

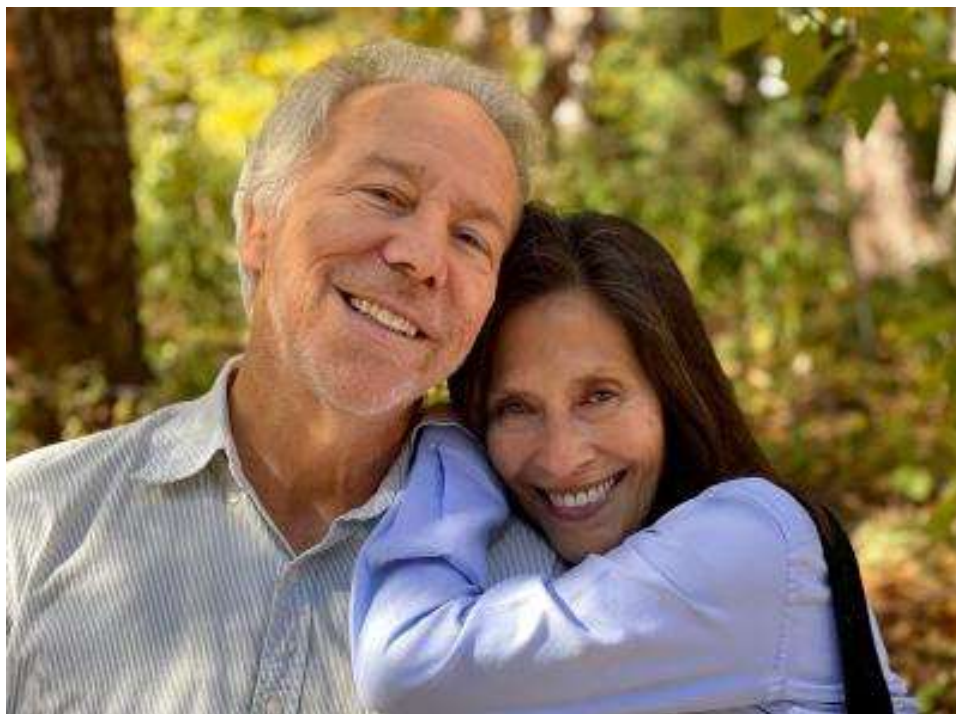
Even though our partner communities have the rainforest to sustain them and tools to protect themselves for now, we know that these threats will likely increase if the economic landscape continues to deteriorate and inequality still flourishes, if thoughtless consumption fuels irresponsible environmental destruction, if anti-indigenous rhetoric is not rejected, and if government-backed development projects continue to fragment the forest. Focused on these problems, with an unprecedented opportunity for reflection during the pandemic,

we have been formulating our strategic plan for the next three years and beyond.

In another 25 years, we hope we can see that the gifts we received from our supporters enabled us to make a significant difference and find a future where thriving indigenous and local communities can exist in a reciprocal relationship with healthy tropical forests. As always, we are deeply grateful to all our wonderful friends and contributors for bringing our indigenous and local partners and us this far — which is very far indeed.



**Liliana Madrigal & Mark Plotkin**  
Co-Founder & Executive VP -- Co-founder & President





## *About ACT*

### *Mission*

The Amazon Conservation Team partners with indigenous and other local communities to protect tropical forests and strengthen traditional culture.

### *Vision*

We see a future where healthy tropical forests and thriving local communities exist in harmonious relationship with each other, contributing to the wellbeing of the planet.



## *Where We Work*

We are a field-based organization. Before we work anywhere, we first must be invited; in effect, we do not choose our partners, they choose us. Because the protection of water is of supreme importance to our partners, our work areas are frequently defined by the presence of headwaters and watersheds.

## *Offices*

- Washington, DC, United States (headquarters)
- Bogotá, Colombia
- Brasília, Brazil
- Macapá, Brazil
- Amsterdam, Netherlands
- Florencia, Colombia
- Mocoa, Colombia

- Paramaribo, Suriname



## *Our Strategies*

Through our three-pronged strategic approach to conservation focusing on land, livelihoods, and governance, ACT is working with our partners to attain these aspirations while strengthening their traditions.

The following pages highlight 2020 ACT initiatives that correspond to these overarching strategies.

## *Land*

**Promote sustainable land and resource management.**

Ensures the protection, stewardship and recovery of prioritized landscapes, including the biodiversity and natural resources they encompass.

### *Livelihoods*

#### **Promote communities' secure and sustainable livelihoods.**

Improves the local economy and livelihood conditions within our partner communities through environmentally and socially sustainable means.

### *Governance*

#### **Strengthen communities' internal governance and traditions.**

Increases the self-determination of our partner communities.



## *COVID-19 Crisis in Amazonia*

### Emergent Responses and Systemic Solutions



In 2020, the healthcare inequity suffered by indigenous citizens of Amazonia was laid bare for the world to see as COVID-19 penetrated even the most remote corners of the rainforest. In Brazil, the indigenous mortality rate from COVID-19 was found to be 110% higher than average, according to a study by COIAB, an umbrella association of indigenous organizations of the Brazilian Amazon, and other research partners. And per COICA, the Coordinating Body of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin, in 2020, 42,000 indigenous people living in the Amazon Basin perished from COVID-19. Marginal access to basic medical care in remote communities and the historical negligence of governments in providing quality healthcare for indigenous populations are among the foremost reasons why improving the situation in 2020 was so daunting and complex, and remains so today.

To help prevent further loss of life, combat variants that are overwhelming healthcare systems, and assist communities enduring national lockdowns and economic fallout, ACT has distributed emergency humanitarian support. Since March 2020, we have distributed physical supplies to over 9,500 families and multiple health posts across Amazonia, including:

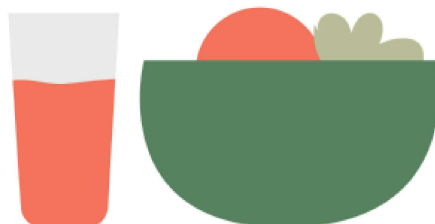


4,000 biosecurity kits

with materials such as face masks, hand sanitizer,  
and disinfectant



3,200 medical kits



3,000 food security and seed kits





2,000 emergency survival kits  
including supplies for hunting and fishing

Though this support responds to dire need and direct requests, we know that it does not address the root issues that are resulting in increased infection and mortality among indigenous citizens of Amazonian countries. To that end, ACT has been engaging in a variety of initiatives:

- Improving the communications infrastructure of remote communities with radio systems and stable internet connections
- Producing culturally specific public health campaigns in native languages
- Tracing the spread of COVID-19 with local health departments and civil society
- Constructing, equipping, and renovating indigenous community health posts
- Advising six indigenous groups in Colombia as they develop their own self-managed intercultural healthcare in collaboration with their regional health department
- Promoting representation in healthcare for indigenous peoples by facilitating the creation of a national subcommittee on indigenous health in Colombia

Supporting the health of both the Amazon's forests and its peoples is in ACT's organizational DNA. We hold true that the

forest cannot thrive without its guardians, as our indigenous partners live in a reciprocal relationship with their territory. For 25 years, ACT has supported the continued practice and transmission of traditional medicine based on local flora with partner communities. Across these long-term relationships, we have developed mutual trust and understanding. We have also formed alliances with local, regional, and federal governments and civil society organizations, placing us in an advantageous position to help our partners in conservation navigate this difficult time. And as we respond to this emergency, we are actively helping our partner communities recover their autonomy, through access to renewable energy, improved land management and monitoring practices, and ancestral regenerative agricultural practices, to help preserve the symbiotic relationship with the forests that have long sustained the health of these populations for generations to come.



Powered by Esri

ACT's COVID-19 Response Map



## *Featured Stories*

Powered by Esri

### **1** A New Protected Area, Managed by Women



In December 2020, with ACT's facilitation and legal assistance, Mamakunapa, a lush segment of Andes-Amazon rainforest in Colombia, achieved formal designation as a Civil Society Nature Reserve, integrated into the nation's protected areas systems. Mamakunapa is territory that is stewarded by ASOMI, an association of indigenous women focused on the perpetuation of traditional plant medicines, conserving local biodiversity, and environmental education in partnership with ACT. The new 18-hectare (44-acre) reserve connects to an existing 52-hectare (128-acre) ASOMI property, creating a 70-hectare (172-acre) haven of biodiversity. The official recognition of Mamakunapa not only improves ecological connectivity in the Andes-Amazon transition region, but also formally acknowledges the value of indigenous practices, in particular those of indigenous women.

## 2

### A Vast Expansion of Andoke Lands



In 2020, with technical and legal support from ACT, the Andoke de Aduche indigenous reserve of the Andoke people in Colombia was expanded by more than 126,000 hectares (311,000 acres). The reserve now holds more than 188,000 hectares (460,000 acres) of tropical rainforest and connects to a 10-million-hectare (25-million-acre) conservation corridor the size of Portugal. This land designation protects Andoke communal land in perpetuity and is critical for the cultural survival of this vulnerable population. It also safeguards part of the Araracuara region, a landscape sacred to the Andoke and other indigenous peoples in the area. Additionally, the territory contains irreplaceable biodiversity, including endangered fauna such as the giant otter (*Pteronura brasiliensis*) and the Amazon river dolphin (*Inia geoffrensis*).

With this expansion, ACT has assisted in the legal designation of nearly one million hectares (2.5 million acres) of indigenous land in the country, amounting to almost half of all lands in Colombia titled to indigenous peoples in the last decade.

### 3

## Return of Ancestral Land to the Kogui



For the Kogui people of Colombia's Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the recovery of ancestral territory is a paramount objective. In 2020, for the Kogui communities of the Jerez River watershed, ACT purchased a 64-hectare (158-acre) property on ancestral lands that had been colonized by outsiders decades ago. This culturally significant location, known as Shindua to the Kogui, embraces multiple sacred sites, including one where the Kogui carry out traditional baptism ceremonies. Geographically, Shindua is a unique terrain with a number of small streams feeding rivers that later reach Jaba Tañiwashkaka, a sacred site on the Caribbean coast that was previously acquired with ACT's support. As the ancestral land of the Kogui is slowly consolidated, not only is the geographic and ecological connectivity of the Sierra Nevada restored, but also the spiritual and cultural connectivity of the region's people.

**4**

## Protecting Isolated Peoples with Satellite Imagery



ACT believes that the safety of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation in Amazonia is one of the most urgent human rights and environmental issues of the 21st century. These communities have chosen to avoid contact and are some of the last human populations that survive on forest resources alone. They reside in the most remote corners of the Amazon rainforest, making the protection of their territories essential for the preservation of intact forests that maintain enormous levels of biodiversity and help mitigate climate change. Furthermore, respecting their right to self-determination helps preserve a vital part of humankind's cultural diversity and heritage.

ACT actively monitors and protects these groups by supporting community patrol posts, reviewing satellite imagery, and carrying out overflight missions. In 2020, with satellite imagery, ACT detected the presence of illegal gold mining activity close to a known community of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation, who have little immunity to illnesses common to the Western world. These trespassers put the community in danger of contact, and their territory

in danger of exploitation. ACT's monitoring resulted in the removal of these illegal actors by area authorities and the continued well-being of these vulnerable populations.

**5**

## Supporting Self-Sufficient Livelihoods in the Northwest Amazon



In Colombia's Andes-Amazon transition region, ACT has been partnering with indigenous and rural communities to improve livelihoods through the implementation of solar energy technologies and agroforestry practices. As national lockdowns were put in place in South America to prevent the spread of COVID-19, markets, trade, and transportation came to a standstill. During this time, many Amazonian families experienced food and energy insecurity, but our community partners who had well-established agroforestry systems and access to renewable energy did not face such issues. This emergency reinforced for us the importance increasing local communities' autonomy in land management, governance, and especially livelihoods. To that end, through

2020, 78,593 trees for agroforestry systems have been planted, and 8,467 hectares of associated land have been put under voluntary conservation agreements since 2017. Moreover, in 2020, 122 individuals benefitted from installed solar systems. Going forward, we seek the expansion of these initiatives to further regions in Amazonia in order to increase the autonomy of more communities.

**6****A Landmark Partnership Brings Better Access and Understanding of Rights**



In 2020, ACT signed a partnership agreement with the Colombian Constitutional Court to improve the access of the nation's indigenous peoples to their legal guarantees, protections, and rights. This collaboration will result in a new digital platform, a mechanism for improved citizen inclusion that strengthens the outreach work of the Court to all ethnic communities. To date, ACT has helped translate legal decisions into over 26 indigenous languages. It is our hope that this work will help prevent violations against the rights of the country's indigenous groups and protect their autonomy, territory, and culture—critical to many of these groups' very survival.

**7****Leadership of the Amazon Conservation Rangers**



During the height of the pandemic in 2020, the Amazon Conservation Rangers of Suriname—community members who monitor their territories—demonstrated new levels of autonomy, not only in forest management, but also as leaders supporting their community in times of need. The rangers collected data on how the villages were coping with the national lockdown, distributed PPE, taught the communities to make face masks, and assisted healthcare agencies that visited the villages.

During this time, 16 rangers from indigenous and afro-descendant communities were still committed to continued remote training with ACT. The rangers learned and applied technologies such as satellite-based early warning systems, mapping tools, data collection apps, and camera traps. And ACT developed guidebooks on the use of these new technologies in their indigenous languages, providing a long-term reference for the communities.

In 2020, the high price of gold summoned an influx of illegal gold miners into southern Suriname. As an immediate result of the monitoring of the Sipaliwini Nature Reserve by the community's rangers, the presence of such miners was

detected and pertinent authorities were alerted, resulting in the miners' prompt removal—a further demonstration of the leadership and efficacy of the Ranger program.

**8**

## Sustainable Income-Generating Projects in the Forests of Suriname



As forest-dwelling communities in Amazonia are progressively folded into the global economy, more villagers are leaving for the cities or being drawn into extractive industries for lack of alternatives. To prevent the environmental destruction and devaluation of traditional lifeways and territorial knowledge associated with these trends, ACT incubates sustainable livelihood projects that generate income at home.

In the indigenous village of Kwamalasamutu in southern Suriname, ACT helped guide the development of an herbal tea project in 2017. Today the project continues to expand and incorporate new participants. To keep up with this growth, in 2020 ACT upgraded the physical infrastructure where the community processes tea and purchased a new tea dryer and solar-powered water

filtration system. In addition, six project participants received formal training in project management, hygiene, and food safety in Suriname's capital.

ACT also supports income-generating projects that promote traditional forest knowledge and biodiversity, such as beekeeping. Today, honey and propolis, a medicinal resin, are being produced by four partner communities in Suriname. And at the close of 2020, Kwamalasamutu hosted more than 130 active hives, a number that continues to increase as more and more bee boxes are constructed.

## 9

## A Community Center for Remote Communications



The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges that impacted the execution of ACT's field activities as planned. In Suriname, for most of 2020, staff could not travel to communities in the interior, and our office operated with minimal in-person staff. It was not clear when or if ACT staff would be able to return to regular, in-person interactions with our partner communities. To ensure that ACT could continue to lead workshops and effectively communicate in the large indigenous settlement of Kwamalasamutu, at the request of the

community we established a remote community learning and media center in the village. The center, powered by solar energy, is furnished with internet connectivity, a large monitor, laptops, desktop computers, and a projector. The center has not only enabled the continuity of biocultural conservation projects, but also kept the community safely in contact with the outside world. This investment will serve as an important tool for the community to further develop their own education, internal governance, and healthcare projects.

## 10 Preserving Oral Histories, Protecting Cultural Heritage



The Matawai are one of six Maroon groups in Suriname, descendants of enslaved Africans who fled into the rainforest over 300 years ago. Their territories in the rainforests of northeast South America are home to traditions and cultural knowledge that risk being lost as older generations die out and as younger ones move away or lose interest. In 2020, in partnership with ACT, the Matawai released an interactive storytelling map, titled *Lands of Freedom*, showcasing centuries-old oral histories of their ancestral lands and culture.

The Matawai collaborated with ACT to record, compile and digitize an unprecedented repository of stories, including place-based narratives mapped to more than 700 sacred sites, settlements, and other places of significance across their territory. The interactive storymap integrates these oral histories, vintage photographs, and archival documents recovered by the Matawai in recent years. *Lands of Freedom* serves as an important landmark in the endeavor to preserve, recognize, and honor the intangible cultural heritage of Maroon peoples.

## 11 Safeguarding a Vital Sea Turtle Nursery



Among ACT's small portfolio of satellite initiatives outside of Amazonia, ACT has partnered with the NGO Tortugas Preciosas to protect the sea turtles of Costa Rica's Osa Peninsula. Home to 2.5% of the world's biodiversity, the Osa Peninsula is where many Hawksbill (critically endangered), Olive Ridley (vulnerable), and Green (endangered) sea turtles return to lay their eggs. To

protect the peninsula's beaches, the nests of these three species, and adjacent ecosystems, Tortugas Preciosas collaborates with volunteers, local communities, and the Costa Rican Park Service. While these partners and volunteers patrol beaches, transfer vulnerable nests, and guide turtle hatchlings to sea, they also raise public awareness about the turtles and the threats they face. To date, over 397 patrols have protected the beaches where sea turtle eggs are laid, covering 750 kilometers (466 miles). As a result of these patrols, over 300 wild nests were protected and monitored, nearly 250 nests safely relocated, and over 1,600 eggs cared for in their nursery, resulting in a 60% reduction in the predation of nests in the region and more baby turtles able to make their journey safely to the sea.

**12****Returning Indigenous Peoples Safely to their Communities**

In the Brazilian Amazon, priorities like accessing medical care, collecting social welfare benefits, and pursuing education after grade school often compel travel to urban hubs. In the city of Macapá, ACT has sponsored and advised the Casa de Apoio, or “Support House” of the Tiriyo, Kaxuyana, and Txikuyana indigenous peoples since its establishment in 2019. This space provides secure lodging with energy, internet, and food, as well as practical guidance and

community connection for indigenous travelers. For those traveling for longer periods, the house provides both a launch pad for their transition and a stable link back to their communities.

In 2020, the multidimensional value of this house was underscored when more than three dozen people became stranded in the city after federal COVID restrictions blocked travel to and from villages. Here, they were all able to quarantine safely while ACT coordinated and advised discussions with health professionals and government agencies to obtain testing, receive special flight authorization, and coordinate health safety protocols. ACT then organized the complex logistics for flights home and proper quarantines upon arrival. After several months, all 39 people returned to their home villages safely and in good health.



### *Financial Overview*

For ACT, 2020 was a difficult year due to the global pandemic, testing our resilience and ability to adapt to the circumstances. We adjusted our operational modality to address the urgent humanitarian needs of our partner communities. The most essential fieldwork continued through both very cautious in-person interactions and telework.

Sadly, many organizations and companies could not overcome the economic decline resulting from the pandemic. ACT remained stable thanks to the steadfast and compassionate support of our loyal donors, the flexibility of many funders, and prudent financial management that has been practiced throughout our existence, allowing us to maintain all staff and operations during the year.

With respect to the financial results presented in the following pages:

- On the **revenue** side, in 2020, the combined foundation, individual and in-country grants categories declined by more than 100% compared to 2019. Delayed work in on-the-ground projects obliged us to request a handful of extensions from funders, limiting opportunity to renew several grants in 2020.
- **Expenses** remained flat relative to the prior year. Program services remained solid at 80%, indicative of our commitment to invest largely in field operations.

We are committed to remaining a field-based organization by working hand-in-hand with our indigenous and local partner communities and leveraging our human and financial resources to maximize our impact on the ground. ACT's staff and partner communities are deeply grateful for the support of so many generous people who believe in our team and the importance of our work.



**Karla Lara-Otero**

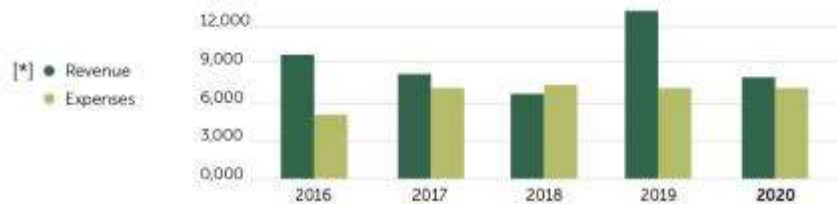
Senior Director, Finance and Operations

*Support*

	2020		2019	
	In USD	%	In USD	%
● Foundations	4,840,613	62%	9,075,020	70%
● Individuals	1,308,695	17%	2,234,026	17%
● In-country grants	918,789	12%	1,193,095	10%
● In-kind contributions	352,236	4%	199,022	2%
● Corporations	48,925	1%	106,440	1%
Interest and investment return, net	151,122	2%	183,291	1%
Other	19,455	0%	32,758	0%
Foreign currency valuation gain/(loss)	179,893	2%	(137,108)	-1%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>7,819,728</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>12,886,544</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Organizational Efficiency*

	2020		2019	
	In USD	%	In USD	%
● Program services	5,444,276	79%	5,477,493	80%
● General and administration	1,021,014	15%	989,165	14%
● Fundraising	438,789	6%	436,878	6%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>6,904,079</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,903,536</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Revenue and Expenses Trends*

[\*] Significant annual fluctuations in revenue are attributable to receipt of multiyear grants, the full value of which is recorded as revenue in the year awarded.

# Combined Statement of Financial Position

(For the Year Ended December 31)

## 2020

In USD

## 2019

In USD

Cash and equivalents	8,711,372	6,679,158
Grants and pledges receivable	4,040,067	5,022,259
Field operating advances	49	1,932
Prepaid expenses	30,530	29,893
Investments	1,749,555	1,618,460
Property and equipment, net	304,704	158,763
Security deposit and others	45,123	26,240
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>14,881,400</b>	<b>13,536,705</b>
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	389,196	372,547
Deferred revenue	296,019	119,606
Deferred rent	-	2,779
Note payable	238,549	-
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>923,764</b>	<b>494,932</b>
Without donor restrictions	9,261,670	7,035,312
With donor restrictions	4,695,966	6,006,461
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>13,957,636</b>	<b>13,041,773</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>14,881,400</b>	<b>13,536,705</b>

Funds are presented according to the accrual method of accounting.

ACT's audited financial statements which reflect an unqualified opinion, can be obtained online at [amazonteam.org](http://amazonteam.org) or by calling (703) 522-4684.



[Charity Navigator](#) - [GuideStar](#)

# Combined Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

**2020**  
In USD

**2019**  
In USD

(For the Year Ended December 31)

Contributions	4,313,714	4,598,311
Grants	2,803,308	8,010,270
In-kind contributions	352,236	199,022
Interest, investment return, net	151,122	183,291
Other	19,455	32,758
Foreign currency valuation loss	179,893	-137,108
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>7,819,728</b>	<b>12,886,544</b>
Program Services:		
Land management	2,662,792	3,030,059
Sustainable alternatives livelihoods	1,397,298	1,385,253
Governance and culture	1,384,186	1,062,181
<b>Program Services</b>	<b>5,444,276</b>	<b>5,477,493</b>
Supporting Services:		
General and administration	1,021,014	989,165
Fundraising	438,789	436,878
<b>Supporting Services</b>	<b>1,459,803</b>	<b>1,426,043</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>6,904,079</b>	<b>6,903,536</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets before Translation Adjustment</b>	<b>915,649</b>	<b>5,983,008</b>
Translation Adjustment	214	-
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>915,863</b>	<b>5,983,008</b>
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	13,041,773	7,058,765
<b>Net Assets, End of Year</b>	<b>13,957,636</b>	<b>13,041,773</b>



## *Our Team*

# Our Board

## ACT-US Board of Directors

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Writer and Producer  
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Emeritus

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Emeritus

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Project Healthy Children

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Jane Goodall Institute

**Walter Isaacson**  
Aspen Institute

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Director of International Relations

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Board Member

**Sandra Charity**  
Board Member

**Annemarie Mijnsbergen**  
Treasurer

**Mark Plotkin**  
Board Member

**Christian Ruck**  
Board Member

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**Mark Plotkin**  
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Board Member

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Treasurer

# Our Team

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Program Director

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Traditional Medicine Specialist

**Evandro Bernardi**  
Field Technician

**Carla Cetina**  
Legal Advisor

**Alinne Ferreira**  
Financial Specialist

**Felipe Garcia**  
Field Technician

**Elisângela Pinheiro**  
Administrative Specialist

**Tailly Terena**  
South Regional Project Coordinator

**Ayrton Vollet**  
North Regional Project Coordinator

## Colombia

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Northwest Amazon Regional  
Director

**Maria Consuelo Prada**  
Financial & Administrative  
Subdirector

**Carlos Alvarez**  
Administrative Support, Land  
Program

**Lady Angarita**  
Putumayo Program

**Daniel Aristizábal**  
Coordinator, Isolated Peoples and  
Lower Amazonas Program

**Cristhian Boada**  
Land Program

**Andrea Bonilla**  
Contracts, Procurement & Project  
Management Specialist

**Jaime Burgos**  
Land Program

**Alejandra Calderon**  
Isolated Peoples & Lower Amazonas  
Program

**Rafael Calderón**  
Field Technician, Fragua-Churumbelos  
Program

**Yendy Cantillo**  
Local Promoter

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General Support, Bogotá Office

**Valentina Cardona**  
Ecologist, Isolated Peoples Program

**Edgar Castro**  
Land Program

**Lina Castro**  
Environmental Education Specialist

**Ubency Cerquera**

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**Reinaldo Corredor**

Land Program

**David Delgado**

Land Program

**Libardo Díaz**

Agroecologist, Fragua-Churumbelos Program

**Maria Fernanda Franco**

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**Paula Galeano**

Coordinator, Putumayo Program

**Fernando Galvis**

General Services, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta Program

**Denise Ganitsky**

Anthropologist, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta Program

**Alexis García**

Field Technician

**Linda García**

Program Coordinator, Land Program

**Alvaro Gil**

Graphic Designer

**Gonzalo Gómez**

Local Activity Coordinator, Fragua-Churumbelos Program

**Maria Camila González**

Ecologist, Isolated Peoples and Lower Amazonas Program

**Saul Gutierrez**

Field Technician, Fragua-Churumbelos Program

**Yojan Gutiérrez**

Agroecologist, Middle Caquetá River Program

**Constanza Guzmán**

Accountant

**Carlos Hernández**

Land Program

**Brian Hettler**

Senior Manager, Mapping & Programs Support

**Edwin Jaramillo**

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**Francelys Pêche**  
Coordinator, Executive and Operations

**Antonio Peluso**  
Coordinator, Communications

**David Stone**  
Senior Manager, Narrative & Media Content

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## Our Team

## In Memoriam



### *Margarita Buesaquillo*

Mama Margarita Buesaquillo (1934-2020), of Colombia's Kamentsá people, was an esteemed traditional medicine specialist who was an expert in the flora of the páramo, an endangered alpine tundra ecosystem of the eastern Andes and her native Sibundoy. In 2003, she joined the establishment of the ACT-sponsored Asociación de Mujeres Indígenas de la Medicina Tradicional (ASOMI), a union of women of five peoples that seeks to preserve women's traditional knowledge across Colombia, especially medicinal knowledge. With ASOMI, through the oral tradition, she worked to document

her knowledge for future generations, in order to preserve both the identity and the health of local communities. Through this legacy, we continue to feel her strong spirit and energy.

### *Natividad Mutumbajoy Jansasoy*

Natividad Mutumbajoy Jansasoy (1941-2021) was a leader of the Inga people of Caquetá and a fighter for indigenous rights, the affirmation of the role of indigenous women, and the education of new generations. At the turn of the century, she and Taita Laureano Becerra were the first individuals to push for the creation of the indigenous Yachaikury School of Yurayaco, Colombia, which now serves as the anchor and focal point of a network of Inga schools. In all of ACT's work in Colombia focusing on ethno-education and the activities of indigenous women, we sought and deeply valued her counsel. We honor her legacy; her life's testimony will always guide us.





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