

# SUPPORTING SOLUTIONS FROM TRADITIONS

Democratizing Access to Philanthropic Resources  
for Indigenous Peoples in Brazil







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# INTRODUCTION

In the decisive 23rd year of the 21st century, we began preparing a new field to be cultivated in Brazil. It was time for good rains to fertilize the land, for people to join forces to plant good seeds and branches that would multiply and bring plenty of food and reasons for people to rejoice and celebrate.

A new political cycle has begun in the country. We hope that this will be a time to consolidate public acknowledgment of indigenous peoples for their fundamental role as guardians of forests, cerrado, and other biomes, as protectors of ancestral knowledge that is key to a balanced life on this planet, as maintainers of biological and cultural diversity and of the life of territories where the Earth rests to continue its trajectory around the sun. In any case, this is the goal we will continue to fight for at any time and place.

We are witnessing a belated but welcome movement to occupy spaces that have long been denied to the original peoples of this nation. This is the result of a long journey traveled with great courage and determination by these peoples over centuries. They have never given up on their struggles, the search for respect for their ways of life, and the protection of territories that are much more than land measured in terms of hectares, they are sacred places where the life of a plethora of beings, spirits, encouragement, and hope multiply.

And we at the Casa Socio-Environmental Fund could not fail to recognize and celebrate the importance of this moment, of these peoples, their struggles and achievements. That is why

**we bring you the impressive results of our 19-year journey — marked by partnerships with more than 182 different ethnic groups at 202 Indigenous Lands — throughout which we have been supporting the demands and dreams of these communities.**

What is more impressive is that in **the last six years alone we have reached 177 ethnic groups**, showing not only our capacity for access but the new perspective that philanthropy has finally adopted, understanding the need to make resources available for social justice and the inclusion of guardian peoples as a fundamental strategy for protecting the planet's great biomes.

Since its foundation, the Casa Fund has been able to support indigenous peoples as it managed to raise funds and make them available for their struggles. But it was only between 2018 and 2022 that it was finally able to do so on a truly transformative scale.





**In less than six years, the Casa Fund directly reached more than half of Brazil's indigenous ethnic groups, who were able to implement their own solutions for their lives and territories. Historically, the Casa Fund has supported 727 projects of 402 associations from 182 ethnic groups.**

According to data from the last Demographic Census carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in 2022, Brazil recorded the existence of 274 indigenous languages in the country, where 1,693,535 indigenous individuals from 305 different ethnic groups live. The support granted by the Casa Fund reached 182 ethnic groups, 60% of the ethnic groups identified in Brazil.

<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://www.gov.br/funai/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2022-02/brasil-registra-274-linguas-indigenas-diferentes-faladas-por-305-etnias>



## The Casa Fund's cornerstone is the indigenous perspective on the Earth.

The Fund was born out of an understanding of the role of these guardians in protecting the planet's great forests and biomes. Its seeds began to sprout in the 1980s when, understanding the existence of the field of international philanthropy and the emergence of global movements to protect tropical forests, rivers, and oceans, among others, one of the founders realized that 100% of the resources were concentrated in the hands of large organizations in the northern hemisphere.

From that moment on, a collection of experiences shared between many hands and many hearts shaped the principles of how to break away from these patterns of distributing financial resources for environmental conservation combined with social justice — the socio-environmental approach. It was necessary to organize a structure capable of providing indigenous peoples and other community groups protecting South America's great biomes with access to financial resources and tools that could result in their actual autonomy, no longer dependent and subjugated.

**IF IT IS THEIR LOCAL GUARDIANS WHO PROTECT FORESTS, HOW COULD THEY NOT RECEIVE ANY RESOURCES TO DO SO?**

This transformation has certainly taken place because, finally, the large philanthropic conservation funds have realized **that there is no successful conservation without the effective and reinforced participation of its guardians.** And they realized that only a structure like the Casa Fund, designed for this purpose, has the capillarity and methodology necessary to carry out this task. Some indigenous institutions have the capacity to receive international funds directly, but unfortunately, they are still few.

**to the groups, strengthen institutional capacities, and be very welcoming.**

This publication honors this long partnership with the indigenous world. It pays tribute to the women, men, children, people of all ages, from all the villages, from all the indigenous communities spread throughout every bit of this territory that was named Brazil and which has many other names, colors, and stories. We invite you to join us on this journey in which we will tell you some of these stories.

**To reach the majority, it is necessary to build bridges, absorb complex processes in order to pass on simplified formulas**

**And for that, there's nothing better than starting with our myth of origin.**





## THE INDIGENOUS UNIVERSE INSPIRED THE CREATION OF THE CASA FUND

The very inception of Casa Fund was inspired by the indigenous universe when a young Brazilian woman studying in California, USA, discovers, in the first quarter attending a new college at the beginning of 1985, that the Rainforest Action Network (RAN), a global network for the protection of the world's rainforests, has just been created. She, an urban, middle-class person, far removed from the reality of this innermost Brazil, realizes how much she doesn't know about this almost mythical territory that is the Amazon and the people who live there, but she understands that this would be her way back to her homeland, to contribute to a cause much greater than she could have imagined. She then begins a journey of no return, willing to find answers and place herself at the center of this struggle.

In 1986, during the First Citizens Conference on the World Bank in Washington, D.C., Maria Amália Souza, aged just 23, meets Ailton Krenak, then coordinator of the Union of Indigenous Nations (UNI). For the first time, through the traditional stories and experiences of this leader, she is able to see another way of being in the world, she perceives the deep, inseparable relationship between indigenous peoples and nature and the organic possibilities for these peoples to organize themselves to resist and fight to guarantee their rights.

Maria Amália Souza, Casa Fund's creator, says that based on this relationship of friendship and work with indigenous people and other traditional communities, she sees the importance of international philanthropic resources as a real possibility to compensate for

centuries of domination and strengthen civil society in the countries of the South, which has been so erased from history and repressed by governments and economic systems. At the same time, however, she realizes **the great distance between philanthropic resources and the most affected and vulnerable communities, which are invisible to support systems. Funders generally do not know the local reality and demands, they do not recognize the difficulties, the lack of structure, and the cultural differences of these groups. Even when they are aware of this, their support mechanisms make direct support unfeasible. They end up opting to strengthen large organizations that carry out projects for these communities. However, this ends up, albeit unintentionally, perpetuating the shock of colonialist thinking on the affected populations.**

As she prepares to return to Brazil permanently, she studies everything she can about tropical forests, indigenous organizations in the Americas, and the intricacies of international philanthropy. A thought-provoking observation also occurs during this period: in 1985, during a biology class, when she heard about RAN's plans from its founder, the network was just an idea, a desk in a borrowed office. During these four years of direct involvement with RAN, she seeks out resources for UNI and takes a few dollars as she can on her visits. By the end of 1989, when she makes her journey back to Brazil after graduation, RAN is taking up the entire ground floor of a huge building in San Francisco's financial district, one of the most expensive places in the world, with a large team, equipment, and major campaigns underway.



**This reveals the great imbalance in the philanthropic sector which she has dedicated her life to offset.**

It is not a question of not recognizing the important work of international organizations concerned with the preservation of the planet and the pressure from rich countries on natural resources that causes much of this devastation, but rather of recognizing that, however much we can influence this agenda from a distance, or even support a number of local groups in this work, this strategy is always incomplete, and as unfair as all the factors that have brought these territories to such pressure. It fails to prioritize the direct empowerment of the communities living in these places so that they have full autonomy to decide their own future and create their own solutions. These communities, who have until now been the ones truly responsible for protecting what remains of these places, end up being left out of the direct support equation.

Amália returns to Brazil in the early 1990s to work with UNI and the Alliance of Forest Peoples — coordinated by UNI and CNS (then the National Council of Rubber Tappers, now the National Council of Forest Dwellers). During this time, she really got to know the great forests, the different biomes, and the struggles of their peoples: the Amazon, the Pantanal, the Cerrado, the Atlantic Forest, the Caatinga, the Marine-Coastal regions, the Mangroves, and all the diversity of peoples who live in these biomes. During her visits, which take days in boats along great rivers and small streams, she witnesses the day-to-day life in its own time, talking and attentively listening to the stories and worldviews

that are so rich, and also to the complex struggles of each people. With this expanded view, she feels she needs to find ways for these voices to be truly heard, their struggles recognized, and their solutions strengthened. As she supports the development of proposals and the search for resources, she builds bridges with people around the world who want to understand and support the cause.

In the understanding of the local peoples and the entire Casa Fund team and partners,

**there will never be environmental conservation without the real inclusion and autonomous participation of these peoples, so that they can fully and legitimately lead this fight. Until now, they have been the objects of support rather than the subjects of their own solutions.**

At the same time, they are the only victims of such violence, with scarce resources to keep fighting. It is this historical imbalance that the Casa Fund aims to transform.

☺ ☺ ☺ **“The Casa Fund has been a partner, an institution open to dialogue... it's made up of very sensitive people.”**

Guarani Yvyrupa Commission



Photo: Joseane Daher

Maria Amália Souza, founder of the Casa Fund, sails on the Jordan River on her way to the land of the Huni Kuin people (Acre) in 2000.



Photo: Lakio

## LISTENING, BUILDING, TRUSTING

So how can we bridge this chasm? This huge challenge actually has a simple answer, but at the same time, it is very far from the “white way of being”: listening to the communities about their real needs, supporting their strengthening process, trusting in their ability to identify and solve problems, accompanying them as an ally, as a partner, side by side, respecting their autonomy in the application of resources and guaranteeing the tools for project management, with flexibility and course adjustments.

In the early years of consolidating the Casa Fund model, resources were scarce, and conventional philanthropy did not understand the idea. Although the vision of how to reach indigenous associations was clear to its founders and was based on tried and tested systems thinking tools, the macro vision for acting at the micro-level was poorly understood by society in general and especially by the field of conservation philanthropy and international cooperation.

**Financial support in the appropriate amount to meet the real demands of a community, utilized in a strategic, coordinated way, is capable of producing concrete results with a major impact on an entire system.**

That is the answer: the philosophy based on the dynamic systems of nature and traditional knowledge has been guiding, just like the stars in the sky, Casa Fund’s life story, which began with its creation in 2005. Since then, Casa Fund has been supporting indigenous organizations in all its programs, which have already exceeded 3,550 grants, totaling BRL 128,700,000.00 (US\$25,740,000.00) donated across all the biomes of South America.





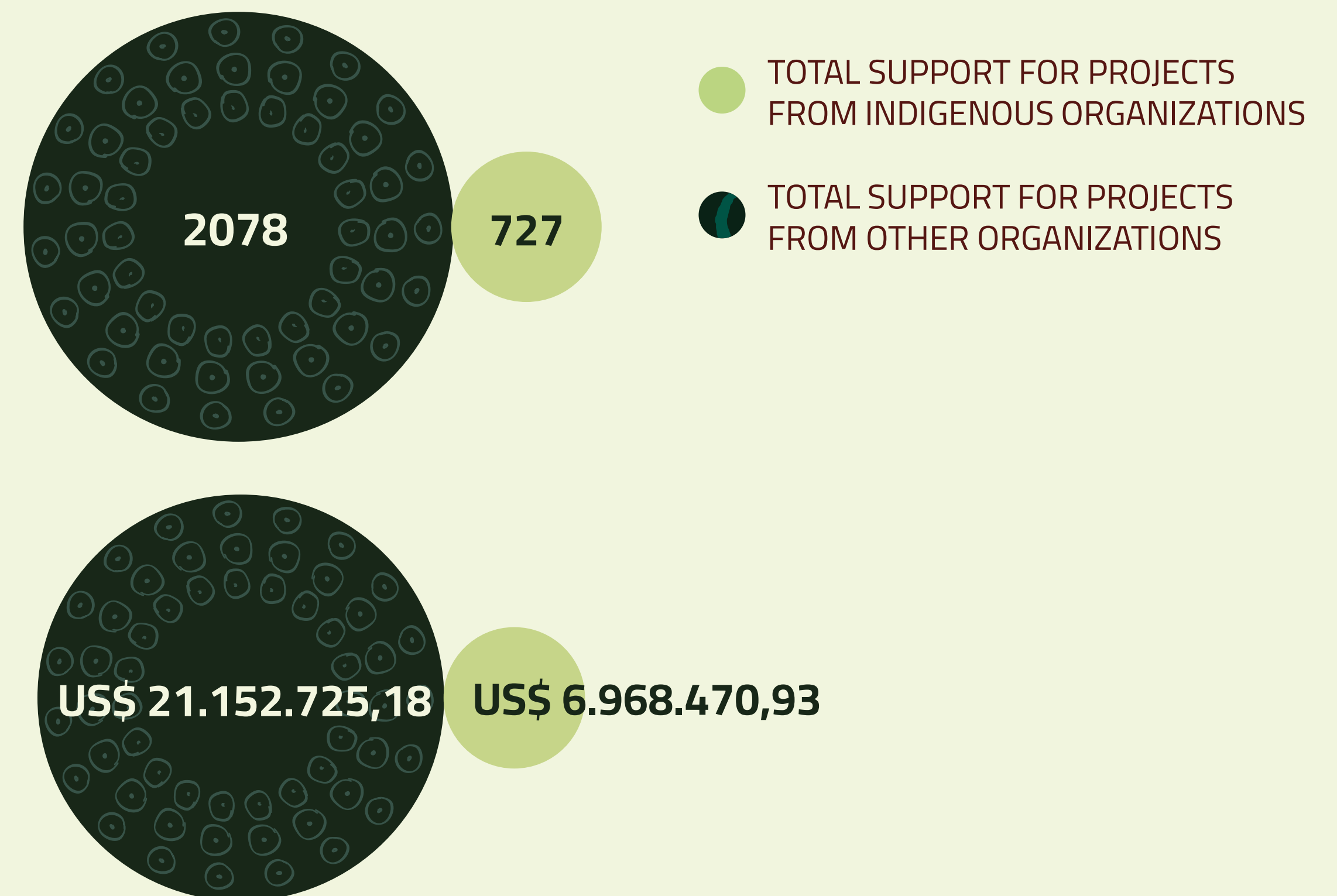
The former saw community groups in large biomes as irrelevant to their protection, or at most objects of studies on cultural behavior that could inform their relationship with nature, feeding the scientific theories produced. The second was based on the idea that indigenous peoples needed someone to look after them, through intermediary institutions created by non-indigenous people for this purpose.

Intending to support certain peoples in certain regions, those initiatives divided themselves territorially, virtually monopolizing any resources available to indigenous peoples, with the justification that they were unwilling or unable to manage financial resources directly. This is not to diminish their work or to suggest that they were not legitimate, or even that they did not do important work in favor of indigenous causes; of course, they did. We are simply highlighting the fact that, until recently, resources did not reach indigenous peoples directly so that they could take hold of the tools that would make them more autonomous and independent.

Although this reality persisted in many ways, in the 1980s many new indigenous leaders emerged demanding autonomy. They took part in the entire process of guaranteeing their rights in the Brazilian constitution of 1988 and managed to change — in a historic achievement — their status as wards of the Brazilian state to having their capacity for self-determination and autonomy recognized.

**In this context of year-long struggles for the indigenous peoples, since 2000 the Casa Fund has supported a total of 727 projects totaling BRL 31,890,442.25, equivalent to around US\$ 6.9 million.**

**GRAPH 2 — NUMBER OF SUPPORTED PROJECTS AND TOTAL VALUE OF SUPPORT (2000-2023)**







As is evident, despite our efforts, we were able to support only a few indigenous organizations in our first ten years. This was mainly due to our difficulty in convincing funders of the crucial importance of indigenous peoples having a protagonist role and autonomy in the protection and conservation of biomes. But finally, from 2015 onwards, the Casa Fund began to be able to secure resources on a larger scale to support them.

From 2018 onwards, the Casa Fund created more specific support programs aimed at organizations **funded and led** by indigenous peoples.

**In a period of six years, therefore, which runs from 2018 to 2023, a significant figure of 645 indigenous projects was supported, totaling US\$ 6,522,166.43.**

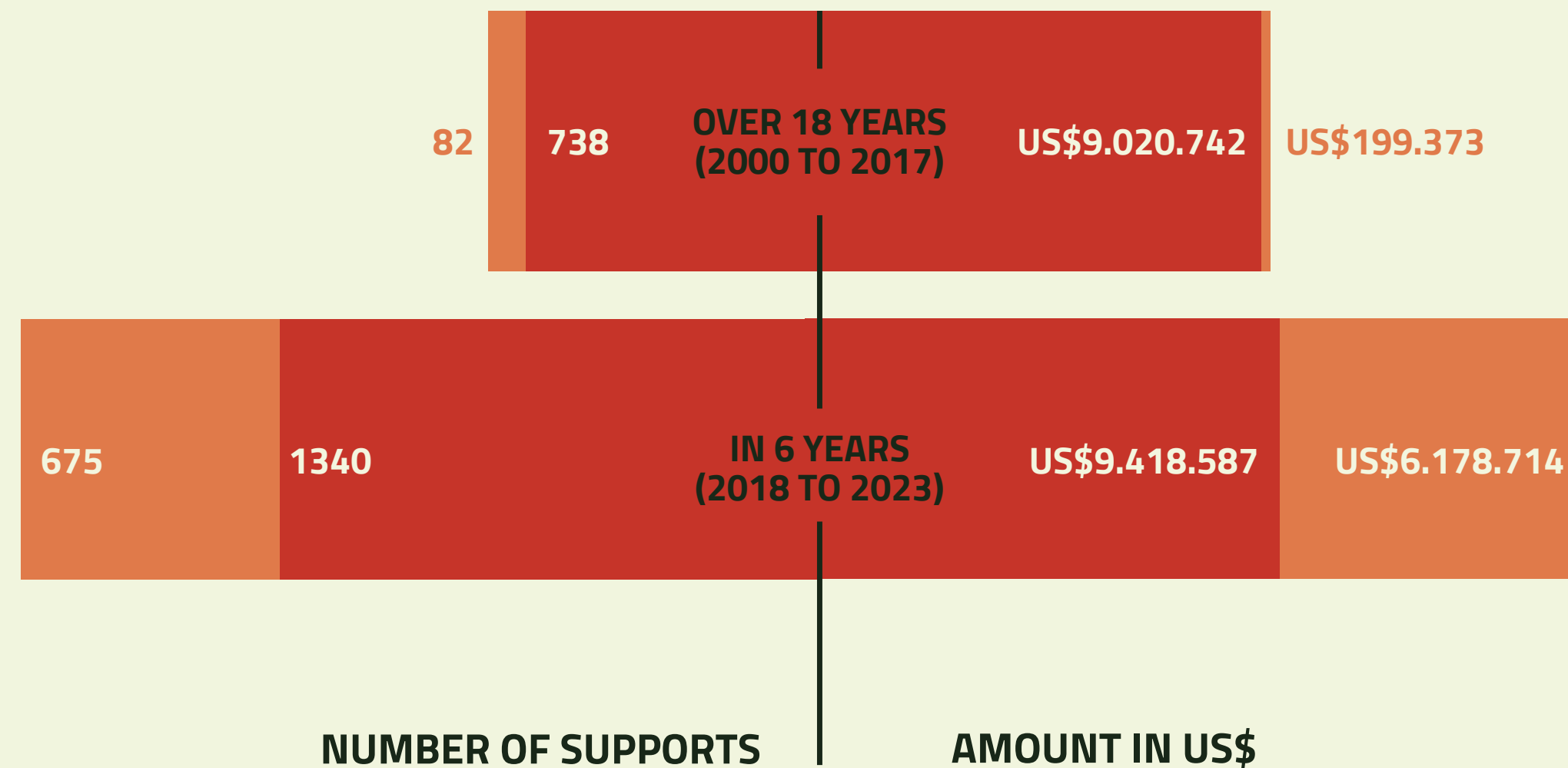
**This represents around 40% of all the resources donated by the Casa Fund in this period,** demonstrating the institution's commitment to indigenous peoples, and to the need to support changes in public policies and to respect and strengthen traditional ways of life.

Photo: Tashka Peshaho Yawanawa

Yawanawa Sociocultural Association - ASCY,  
Yawanawa people - Acre.



**GRAPH 3 — SUPPORT GRANTED TO INDIGENOUS VERSUS NON-INDIGENOUS GROUPS SUPPORTED BY THE CASA FUND IN TWO DISTINCT PERIODS**



INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS

NON-INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

**40% of the total resources distributed by Casa Fund from 2018 to 2023 were directed to indigenous organizations or projects with an indigenous audience, a total of US\$ 6,522,166.43 in support over 6 years.**

In the previous 18 years, total support for indigenous groups represented 10% of the total number of projects supported and approximately 2% of the total funds donated. In the last six years, in addition to the increase from 10 to 32% of the total number of projects supported, indigenous projects have accounted for 40 percent of the funds donated.

“Our partnership with Casa has been very special, it's a more humane partnership model, which is what we need nowadays. As well as providing resources for the different needs of our people, Casa has been a family, a community we can count on in difficult times.”

YAWANAWA SOCIOCULTURAL ASSOCIATION — ASCY



## UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT OF PHILANTHROPY FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE WORK OF THE CASA FUND

As indigenous organizations become more autonomous, this direct demand from their associations grows. The Casa Fund opens, annually, between 8 and 12 calls for proposals with different perspectives, territories, and focuses, including some specific ones that only involve indigenous peoples. Between 2022 and 2023, there is an increase in direct demand from indigenous associations for support that they can propose and implement themselves. **Between 2015 and 2023, this demand increased almost 20-fold.**

The Casa Fund's ability to respond to demands is directly related to its ability to mobilize resources from international philanthropy. Within Brazilian philanthropy, the donation of resources to respond to the demands of indigenous peoples is still incipient at best. However, recent studies led by the Human Rights Funders Network show that,

**despite the proven management capacity of funds and other institutions located in the Global South and East, more than 75% of donations destined for these regions of the world remain in the hands of organizations located in the Global North both for them to execute or regrant.**



Photo: Gabriel Uchida

Paiteer Surui people - Rondônia.



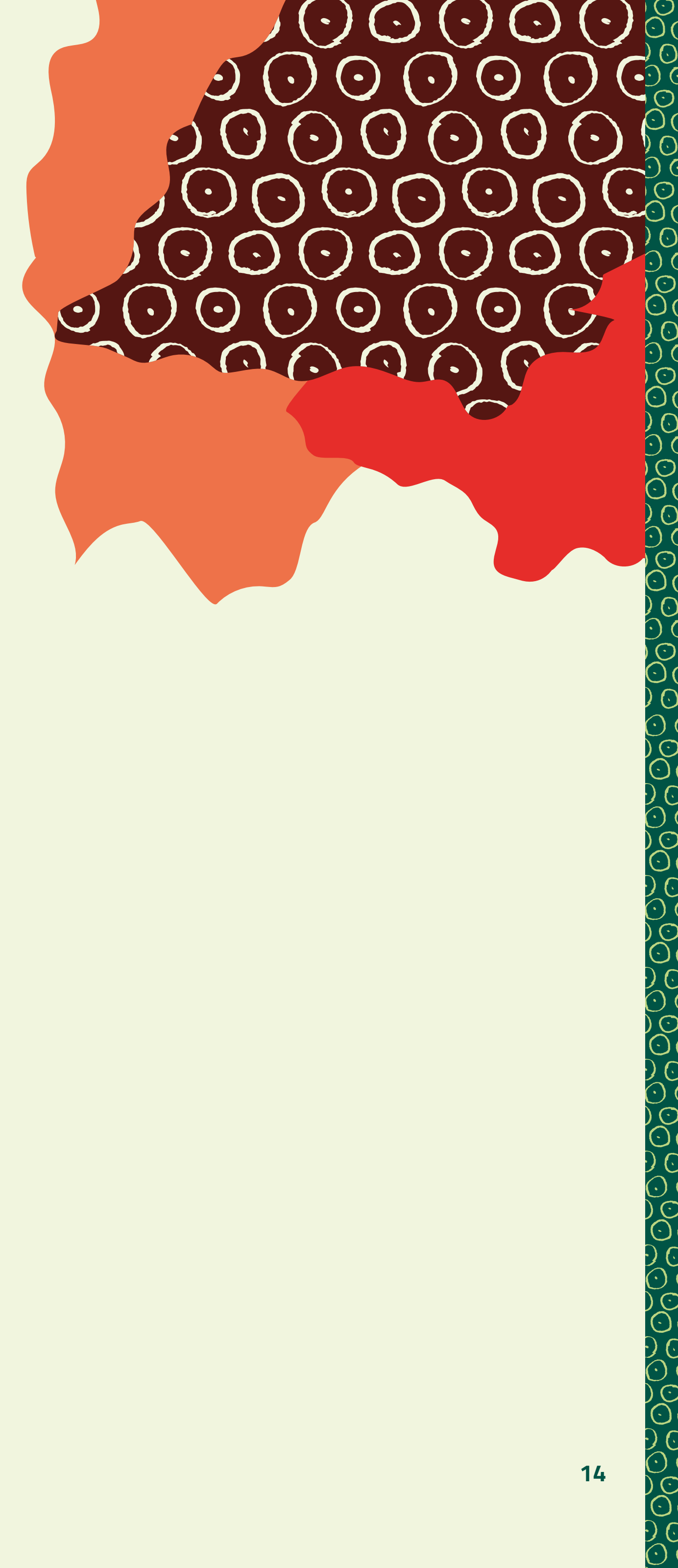
The study primarily looks at donations related to international philanthropy for human rights. In the area of “environmental conservation”, the percentage that comes directly is certainly much lower. In the field of conservation philanthropy, the history of focusing large sums on a few large NGOs has been the most widely used practice. Only in the last five years have we seen a slight change in this scenario. This is due to guidelines based on consultancies for the sector, which demonstrate that to effectively preserve important biomes, local populations also need to be included as direct recipients of financial resources.

**This change in scenario is directly reflected in the Casa Fund’s increased capacity to respond to the growing demand from indigenous peoples for more autonomy in the solutions they want for their territories,**

be they in self-management processes for territorial protection, in strengthening sustainable management practices for their biodiversity, or in maintaining their ancestral culture and practices, which are the main reasons their territories are still so well preserved.

Another reason for the increase in the availability of resources for this level of action is due to the worrying change in the political landscape that took place in 2018. The election of a candidate who was openly anti-indigenous, anti-preservationist, and aggressively developmentalist, combined with new guidelines for the field of conservation philanthropy that pointed to the fundamental role of indigenous peoples in conservation, led to the creation, by large conservation foundations, of new programs specific for indigenous peoples that did not exist before. The offer of resources directly targeted at communities, combined with the experience and methodology of the Casa Fund to reach these groups in a broad, comprehensive way, has enabled a leap in its ability to access these resources.

Also notable in recent years has been the growing capacity of indigenous populations to organize and mobilize to defend their rights and take their causes to new heights. Well-articulated and far-reaching movements at regional and national levels, as well as the efforts of many leaders to take their voices to the world, have become increasingly evident. The visibility they have achieved has greatly contributed to the increased interest of international philanthropy in their causes and struggles.

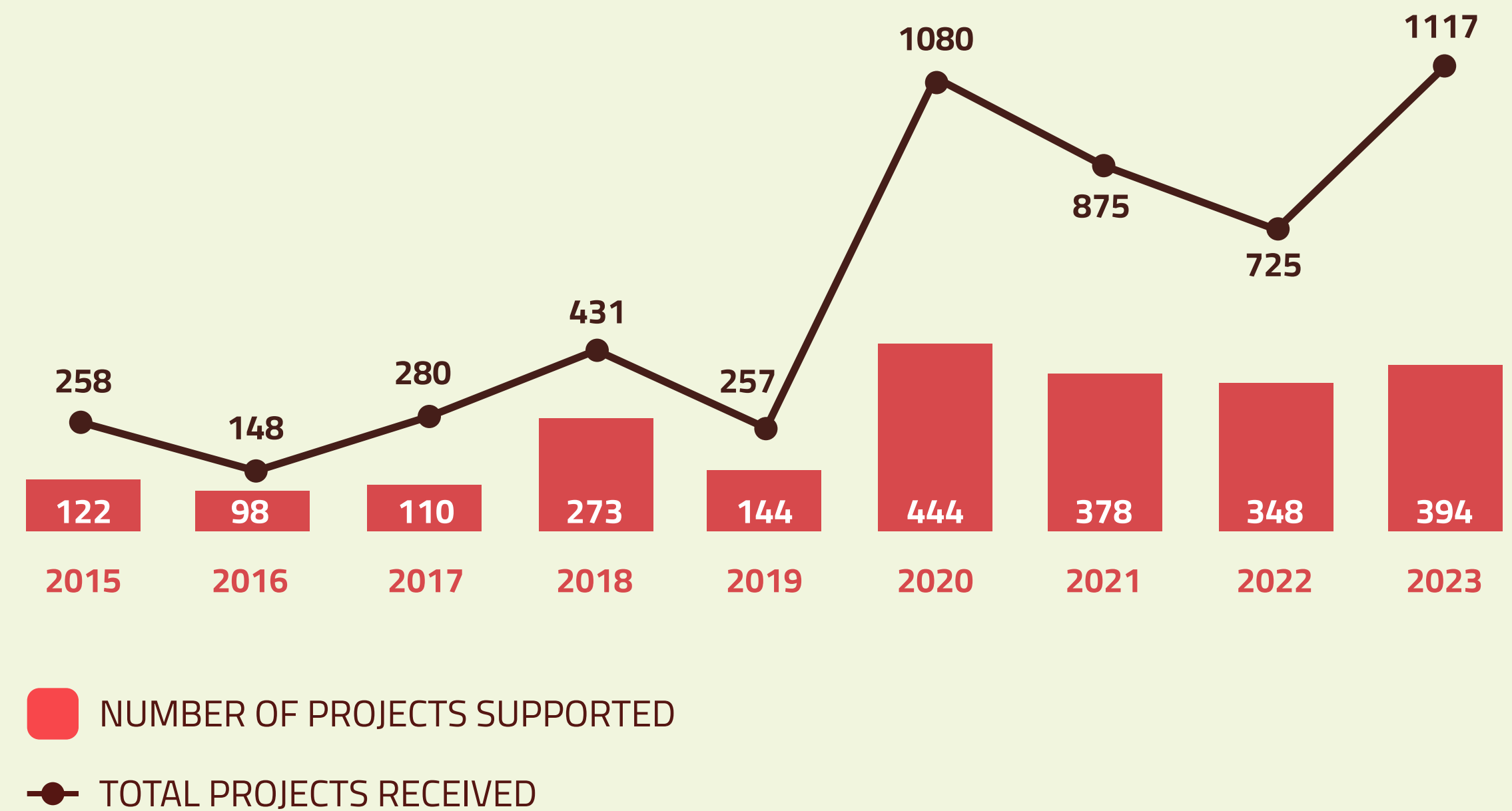




Furthermore, the **voluntary climate agreements** signed since COP-26 have also increased the volume of resources for indigenous populations. With this, the Casa Fund can better fulfill two roles: (1) to support foundations interested in this issue — that alone are unable to provide these kinds of grants directly — to access forest peoples and, at the same time, (2) to respond to the growing demands of indigenous associations for resources to execute their own projects. With this possibility, the programs took shape, grew, and established themselves within the structure of the Casa Fund with a focus on the increasingly urgent needs of the guardians of the forests and other biomes in the region.

With ample management capacity to quickly absorb the newfound interest from foundations, and a methodology for large-scale outreach, the Casa Fund finally found itself able to increase its support for this public to which it had always been so committed. The fact that it has reached more than half of the indigenous ethnic groups in such a short time and in such an incisive way demonstrates the efficiency of its model, which displays know-how, technical capacity, reach, and capillarity.

**GRAPH 4 — NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT AND NUMBER OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE CASA FUND FROM 2015 TO 2023**



From 2015 to 2023, Casa Fund received requests for general support amounting to US\$4.1.8 million (equivalent to 5,171 projects). During this same period, we were able to provide grants in the total amount of US\$16.9 million (equivalent to 2,309 projects), which represents meeting 40% of the total requests for resources and 45% of the projects received.

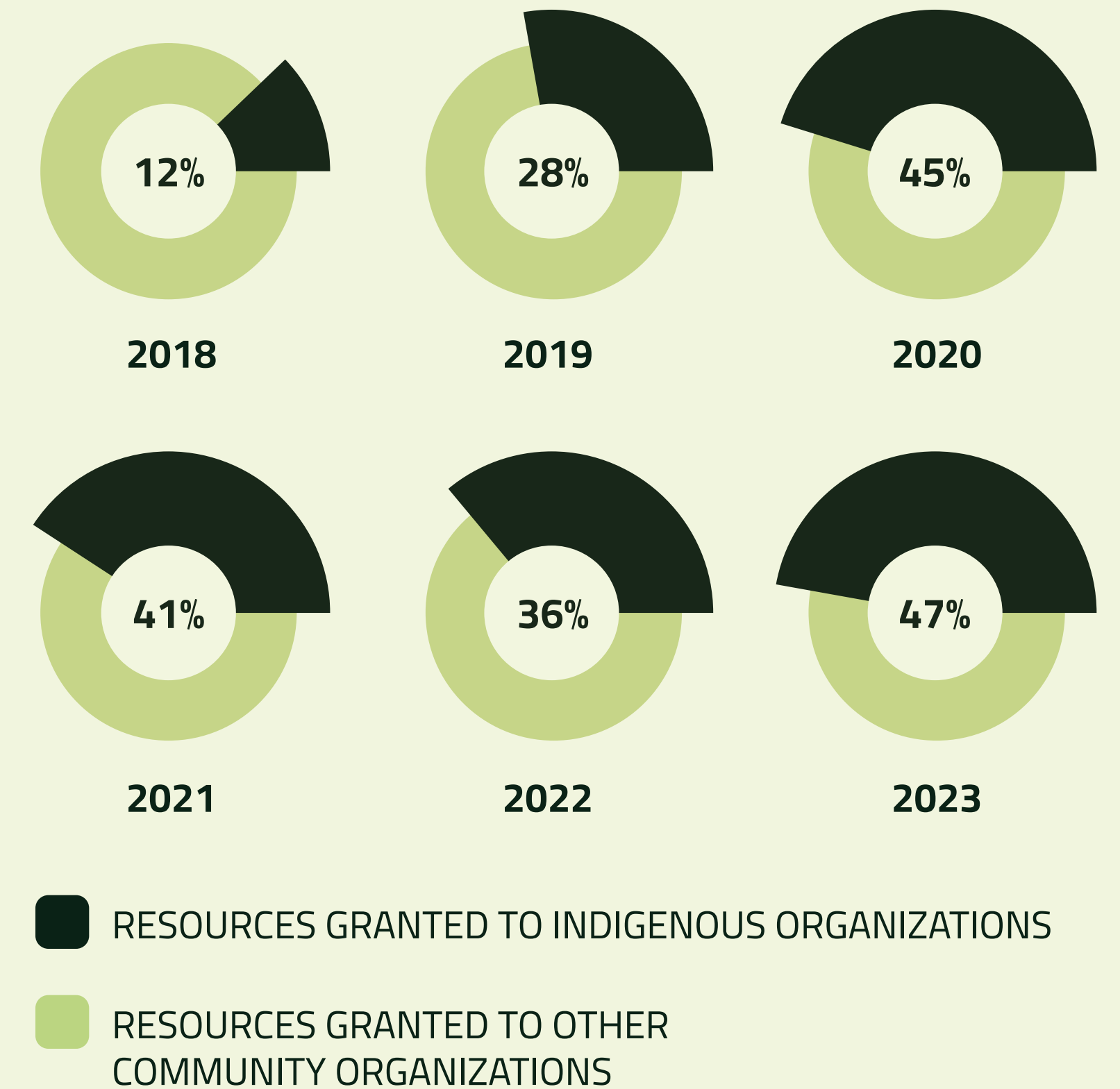


**GRAPH 5 — TOTAL AMOUNT DONATED BY THE CASA FUND AND AMOUNT DONATED TO INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS FROM 2018 TO 2023**



**In 2023, the value of donations granted to indigenous organizations was almost half of the total resources donated by the Casa Fund.**

**GRAPH 6 — PERCENTAGE OF THE AMOUNT DONATED TO INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS BY THE CASA FUND**



Between 2018 and 2023, the proportion of funds destined to support indigenous projects rose from 12% to 47% of the total donated by the Casa Fund. In absolute numbers, **this figure grew more than 14 times** in the period analyzed, going from around US\$140,000 to more than US\$2 million.



### GRAPH 7 — NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED BY THE CASA FUND

The Casa Fund went from supporting 3 **indigenous organizations** in 2015 to 146 in 2023 alone. The graph shows that from 2020 onwards there was a rise in the number of indigenous organizations supported. The number of organizations supported in 2023 is almost seven times higher than in 2019. Between 2015 and 2023, the Casa Fund received projects from **690 different indigenous organizations**; of these, it supported 402 (65%), some of them more than once, making the total number of projects supported higher. **This is an important snapshot of the Casa Fund's capacity and capillarity in accessing indigenous organizations in their communities.**

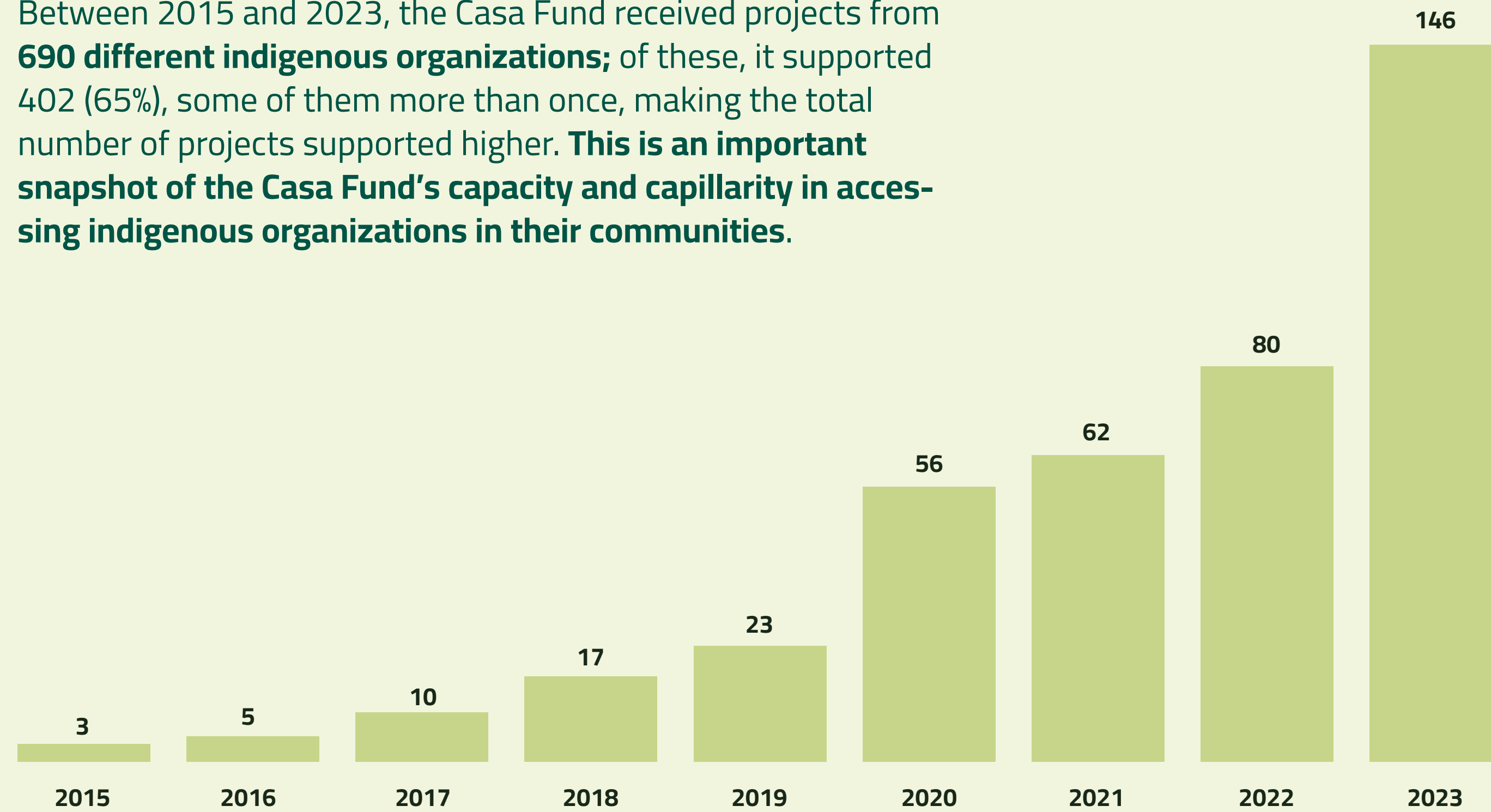


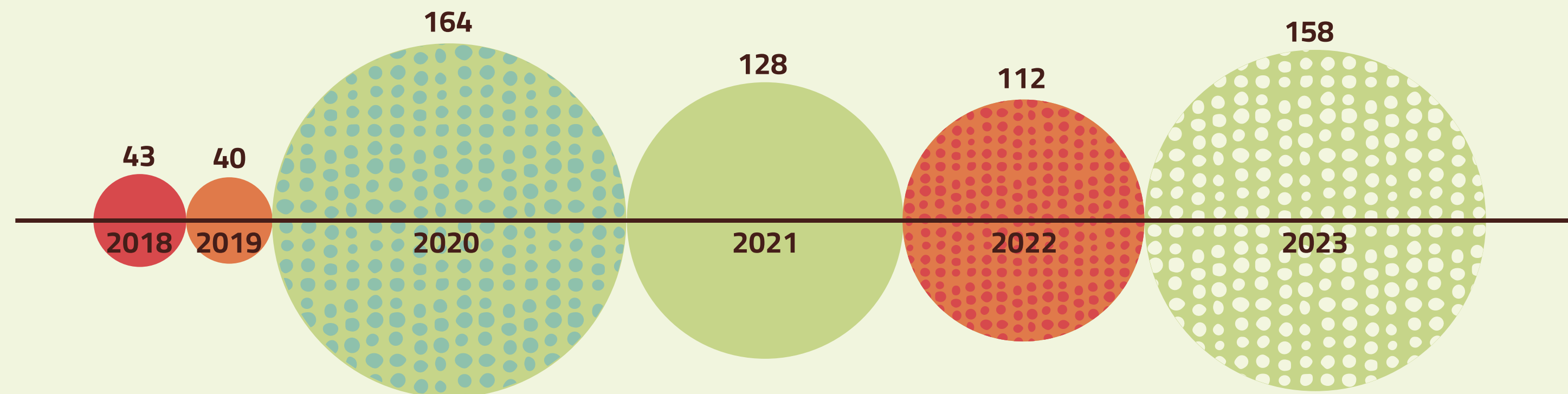
Photo: Kamiikia Kisêdjê

Associação Indígena Kisêdjê,  
Kisêdjê people - Mato Grosso.

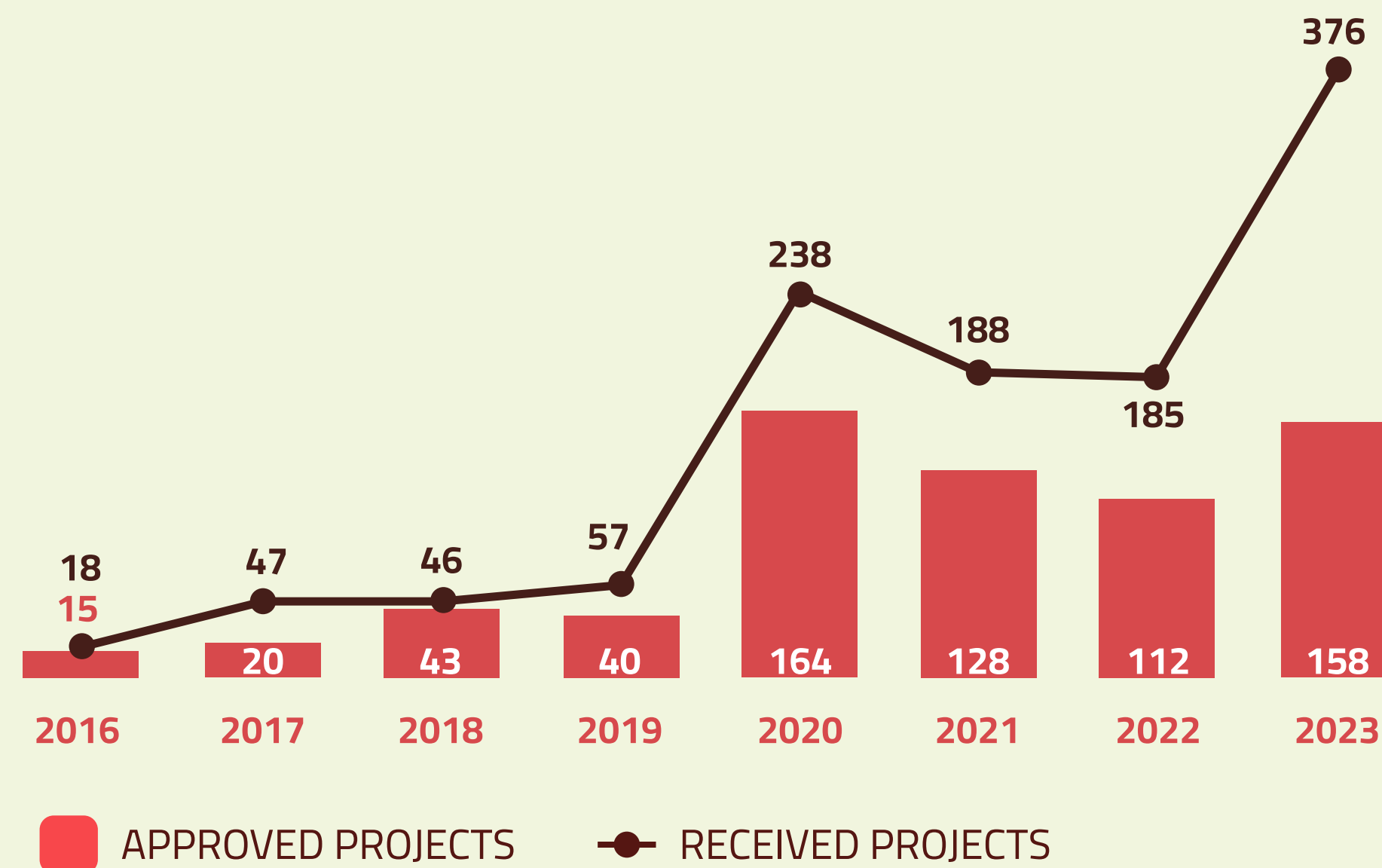




**GRAPH 8 — NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS PROJECTS SUPPORTED EACH YEAR BETWEEN 2018 AND 2023**



**GRAPH 9 — NUMBER OF PROJECTS FROM INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVED VERSUS PROJECTS APPROVED FROM 2016 TO 2023**



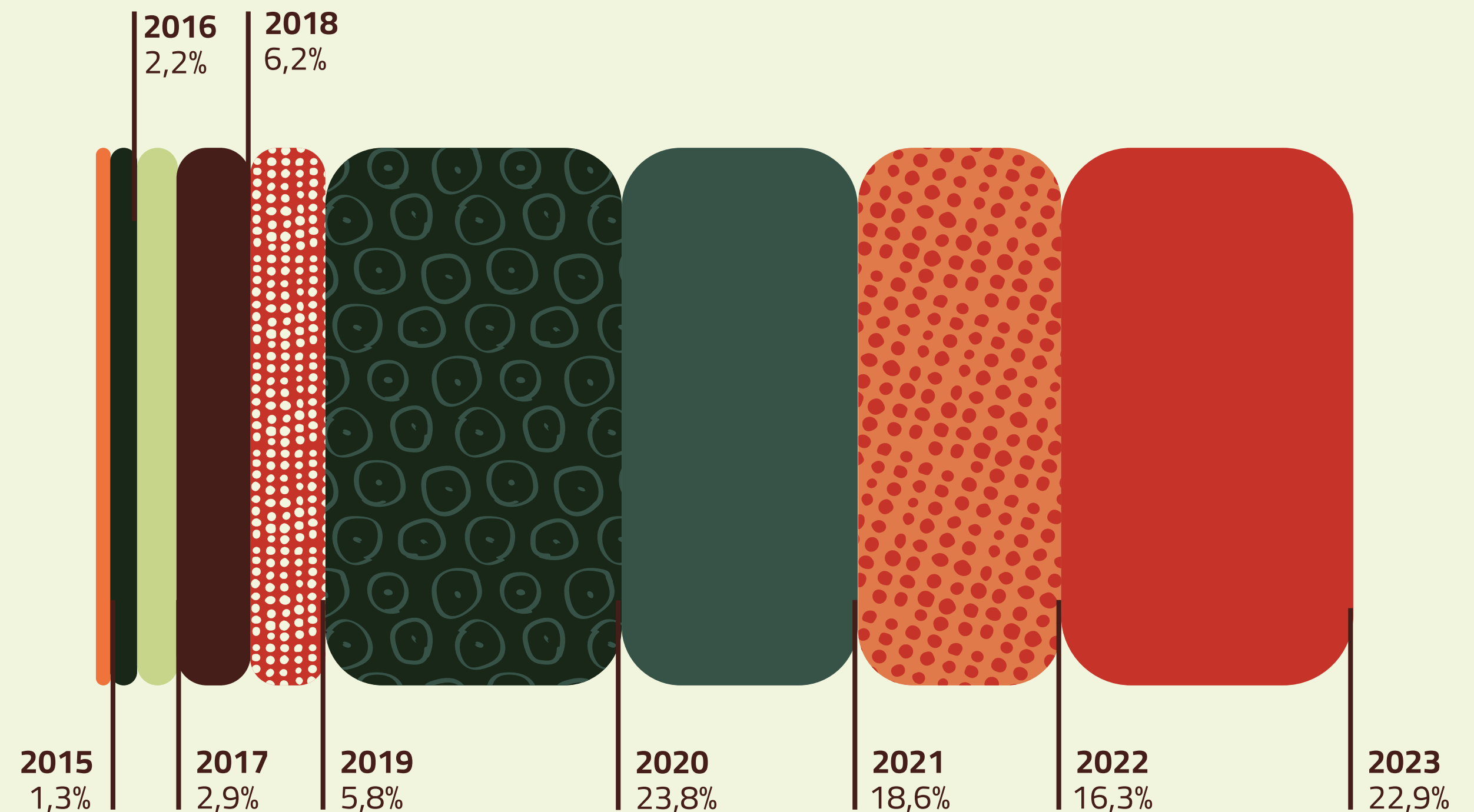
**In the last six years alone, 645 projects by indigenous organizations have been supported. Note that from 2019 to 2020, this number of grants increased more than fourfold.**



The graph aside shows the proportion of indigenous organizations of each year in the volume of projects supported from 2015 to 2023.

**It shows the increased capacity of Casa Fund to support indigenous projects from 2020 onwards: 82% of the support given to indigenous organizations by the Casa Fund took place between 2020 and 2023. In terms of the volume of donations, 93% of the funds donated to indigenous projects since 2015 are concentrated between 2020 and 2023.**

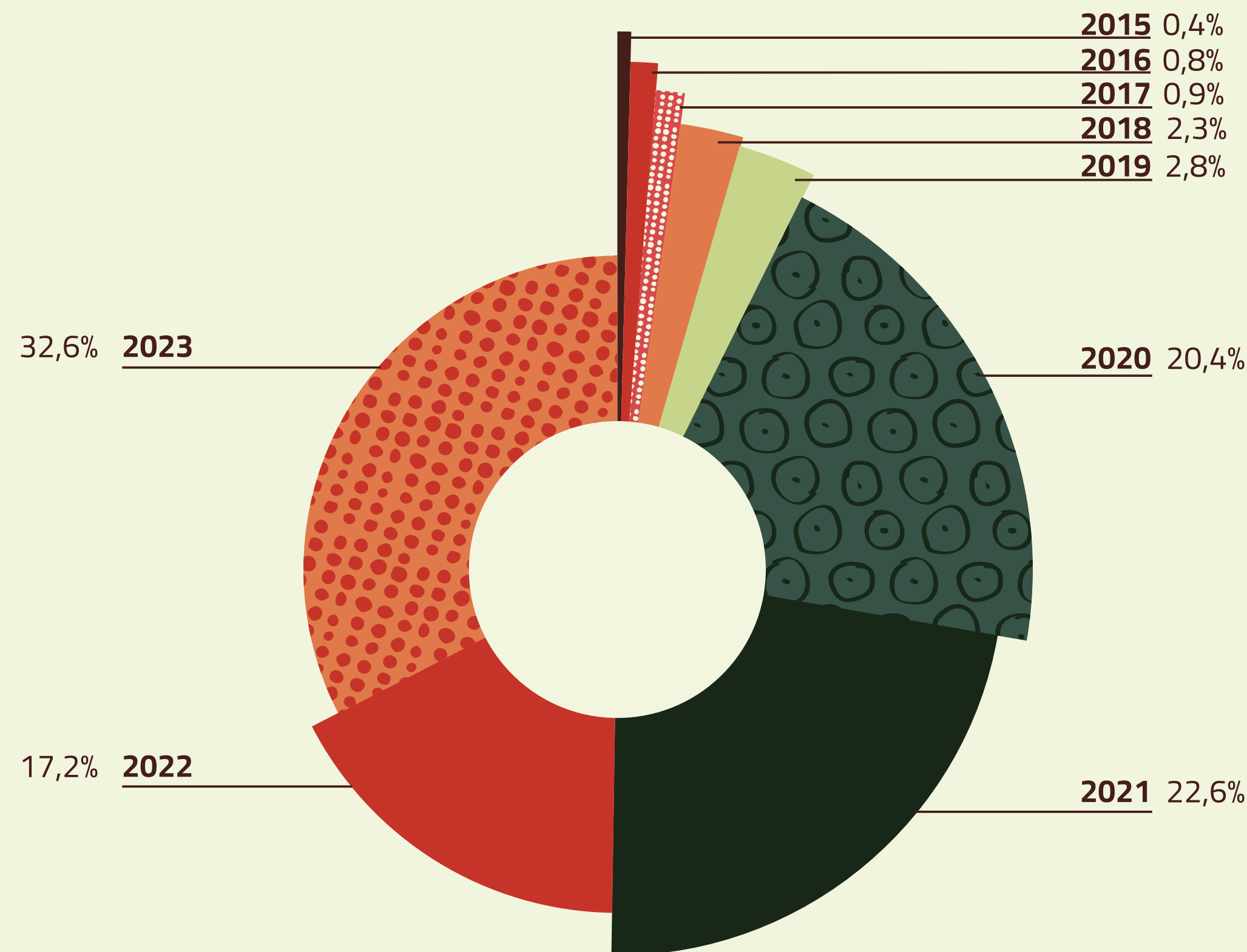
**GRAPH 10 — PROPORTION OF THE NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS PROJECTS SUPPORTED YEAR BY YEAR, FROM 2015 TO 2023**





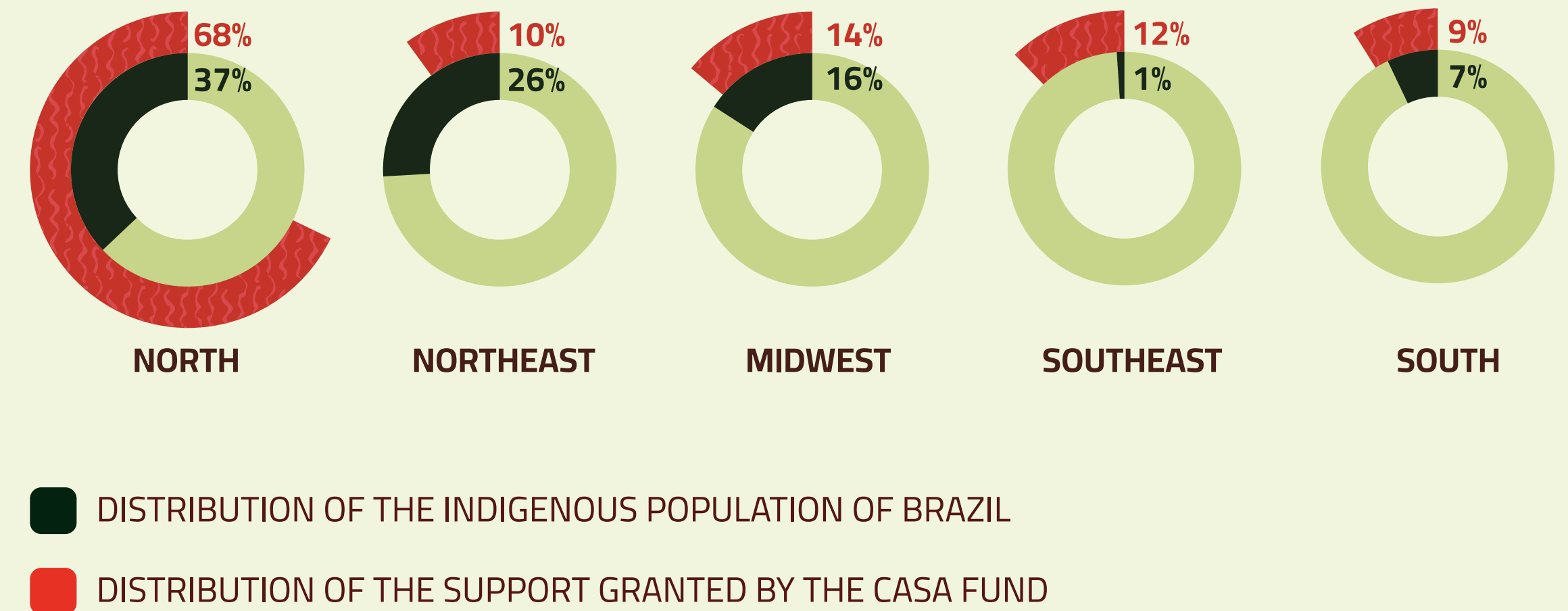
The graph shows Casa Fund's support in relation to the proportion of the indigenous population and the total population of each region, also according to the 2022 Census. The data reveals the importance of support in the Northern and Central-Western regions, where the proportion of recognized territories and indigenous population is higher than in the rest of the country. However, it should be noted that the data also reveals a greater interest in the Amazon region on the part of Casa Fund's donors, with offers of funds restricted to the region.

**GRAPH 11 — DONATION OF FUNDS FOR PROJECTS OF INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS FROM 2015 TO 2023**



This donor restriction imposed on the Casa Fund throughout its history has been one of our great challenges, especially when it concerns indigenous peoples. These peoples are fighting a common battle across all territories and biomes. There are certain regions where the pressure is as great or greater on them than in some of the Amazonian regions. While fulfilling its contract with its funders, the Casa Fund also acts as an educator in the field, always seeking to expand its understanding of the major challenges and the interconnection between the biomes and their most vulnerable populations.

**GRAPH 12 — DONATION OF RESOURCES TO PROJECTS BY INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN 2015**





# 1

## CASA FUND DIRECT SUPPORT STRATEGY

**A methodology that leads to autonomy and independence through direct support for indigenous peoples**



**The Casa Fund will complete 20 years of operation in 2025 and during this time it has built a grantmaking strategy capable of reaching the most remote places and supporting groups that have never received financial resources before.**

The concepts that guide Casa Fund's actions are listening, respect, trust, unity, connection, and collaboration. Based on this, we receive projects through "calls for proposals" or through active search for specific cases, territories, populations, public, and/or approaches. The projects we receive are then analyzed by an Analysis Committee and, if there are any doubts, a broad network of representatives from partner organizations is consulted. Then, once the projects have been ratified by the Board, contracts are signed and, finally, funds are transferred directly to the local associations. In some cases where the groups do not yet have their own organizations, they can select a partner organization they trust to receive the funds, which will still be managed by them and their partners in order to transfer capacities.

“The project has allowed us to strengthen the management of the Tato'a Indigenous Association and seek new partnerships through other projects. Through this project, the Tato'a Association prepared a project for the Dema Fund's Call for Proposals 'Territories of Life: Climate Emergency and Popular Sovereignty in the Amazon', the project was called 'XINGU: Territorial Protection and Indigenous Governance in the Apyterewa Village, Altamira, PA', and it was approved and was funded in BRL 50,000 (US\$10,000).”



The analysis process takes place in a comprehensive way, with a systemic look at the territory, observing, **in addition to the project that was presented**, the territorial challenges, the strategic importance of the association as a local political actor, and the networks with which the association is involved both locally and regionally.

Our priority is to offer the grants to **small and medium-sized community-based organizations** of traditional populations, defending rights and citizenship and dealing with socio-environmental issues and the sustainability of human development; **groups** advocating for and monitoring the formulation of public policies, social mobilization, and the connection of local, national and international work; **organizations that work collectively** in networks, forums, consortia, and alliances; groups aimed at training new leaders, **with the participation of youth; groups** that strongly consider gender balance.

Casa Fund provides direct financial support to communities through a **horizontal relationship**. It also offers **Good Practices Workshops** aimed at project management and institutional management in which the capacities for the success of the project in question are strengthened. This generates a low level of default in the submission of reports and the rendering of accounts

Casa Fund has developed a **management system that uses a database** where all the projects received are entered, organizing all the data that the projects and reports provide. In this way, the Casa Fund can have an overview of the territories and demands of these peoples, thus helping them to strengthen and equip themselves, as well as improve territorial management tools and protect traditional knowledge.

Photo: Tashka Peshaho Yawanawa

Associação Sociocultural Yawanawa - ASCY,  
Yawanawa people - Acre.





This Data Management Base has also brought professionalism and provided security for the management and monitoring of supported projects, enabling us to monitor the submission of reports, carry out numerous cross-checks of information by theme, region, and state, as well as providing important financial studies in the support process.

**We have built up a history of each supported association or group that includes: submission of reports, relationship with the group, success in project execution, among other important aspects.**

Given this strategy, the projects selected by the Casa Fund form a large web, significantly contributing to the creation of a resilient “social fabric” that increases the capacity of communities to adapt, recover, and strengthen themselves in the face of challenges, crises, and adversities involving their territories. In other words, projects are not selected randomly and disconnectedly but are treated in a unique, singular, and respectful way, considering the context and its challenges.



**“This project is a great achievement for our people because we've been fighting for the betterment of the community for over 20 years and there have been few achievements like this. It brings us a feeling of gratitude and renews our strength to continue fighting for a better life for the members of our village, and to ensure our rights guaranteed in the Federal Constitution. We also hope that this will serve as encouragement to our relatives who are living outside the village due to persecution and the precarious living conditions in which we used to live so that they can return to the village.”**

ORGANIZATION OF THE MURA HARABAGADY INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF ITAPARANÃ — OPIMHAI — KANAWARY







Photo: Raissa Azeredo

General assembly of the Iakiô Association, 2023, Panará people - Mato Grosso.

## PAVING THE WAY THROUGH TRADITION

When village yards turn into assemblies, when leaders begin to meet, exchange information, and discuss the reality of their territories, it becomes clear that there are many common issues and that this is the path to diagnosing problems, to the autonomy of territories, to self-control over the physical and cultural heritage of these peoples.

And this movement expands, reaching all the indigenous lands, building up strength like a great river that swells from the waters that arrive from the small streams. This indigenous movement that begins organically, following natural paths, with the collective, without owners, without political parties, without foreign ideologies, manifests itself through powerful dances and chants, traditional speeches in their mother tongues, with clubs, bows and arrows, colorful head-dresses and body paint.

From their villages they reach the Ministries Esplanade, the Congress Building, getting media coverage, impressing and moving people. Indigenous peoples occupy spaces and reveal themselves in all their power and wisdom.

**It has been a memorable battle fought by many peoples, by people of all genders and ages, signaling the fight for rights that encompass different identities, always with beauty and spiritual strength.**

Indigenous peoples have been taking over tools from the world of the “foreigners”, of the “white men” so that they can act more and more autonomously in the fight for their rights. The creation of Indigenous Associations



enables access to governmental and non-governmental resources, in an unprecedented move, since until recently Funai's (National Indigenous Foundation) tutelage sought to prevent the villages' financial autonomy and access to partnerships and projects in their interests. The new technologies that are emerging, such as video, GPS, and satellite phones, are connecting communities and opening up new communication channels and facilities.

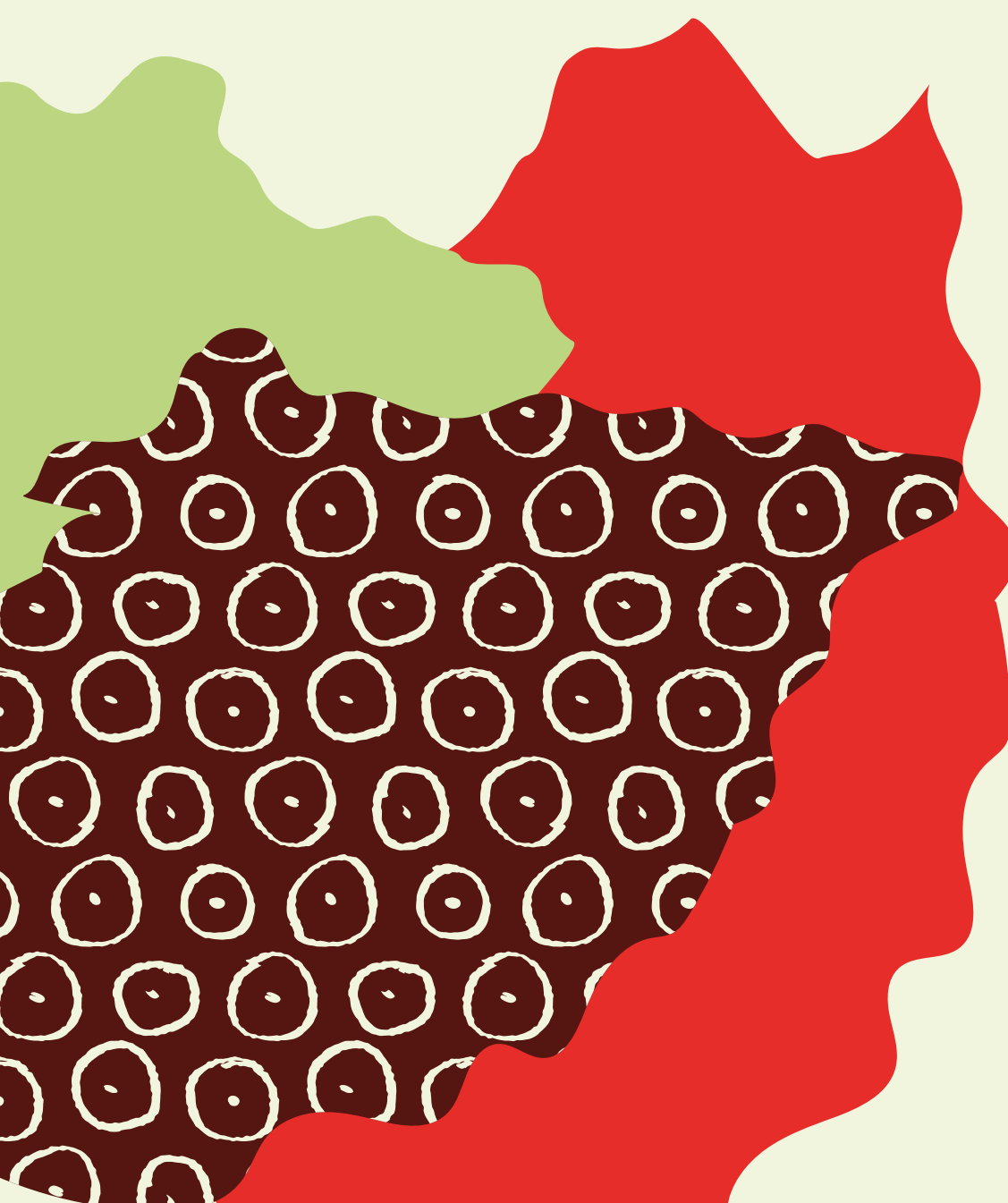
This path of knowledge, sharing, and alliances has been gaining strength over the 40 years since this pioneering movement began. With moments of progress and setbacks, great achievements, but also reversals — as we have seen in recent years — without ever losing focus on autonomy and on the strengthening of identity and traditional knowledge, they have bravely carried on.

And it is by learning from this process, respecting their time, their cultures, their autonomy, and the vast knowledge of their places of origin, that the Casa Fund makes itself available to listen, learn, and support the demands that arise.

Still from the point of view of strategy of grant-making, it is important to highlight that the Casa Fund prioritizes support for organizations and projects led by women and projects in which women play a leading role in decision-making.

Similarly, in the last two years, youth have also become a priority audience, especially in projects that connect rights, grassroots communication, territorial defense, and climate justice.

**In this sense, within the Casa Fund's portfolio of support for indigenous groups, the data shows that there is still plenty of room for growth in support for these two audiences. See the graphs below:**

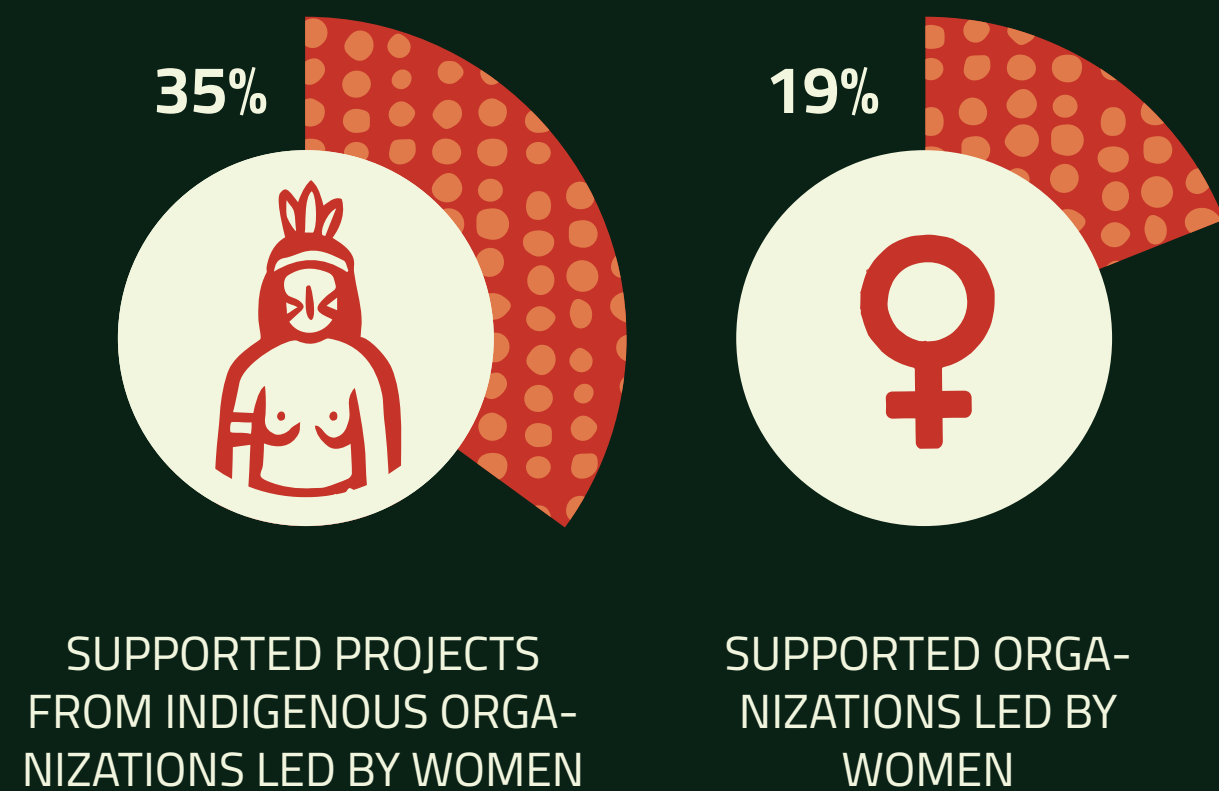




## GENDER BALANCE

Of the 645 projects from indigenous organizations we have provided support for, 232 (35%) were led by women. Seventy-seven of the 402 organizations supported (19% of the total) are led by women.

GRAPH 13 — REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN SUPPORTED PROJECTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

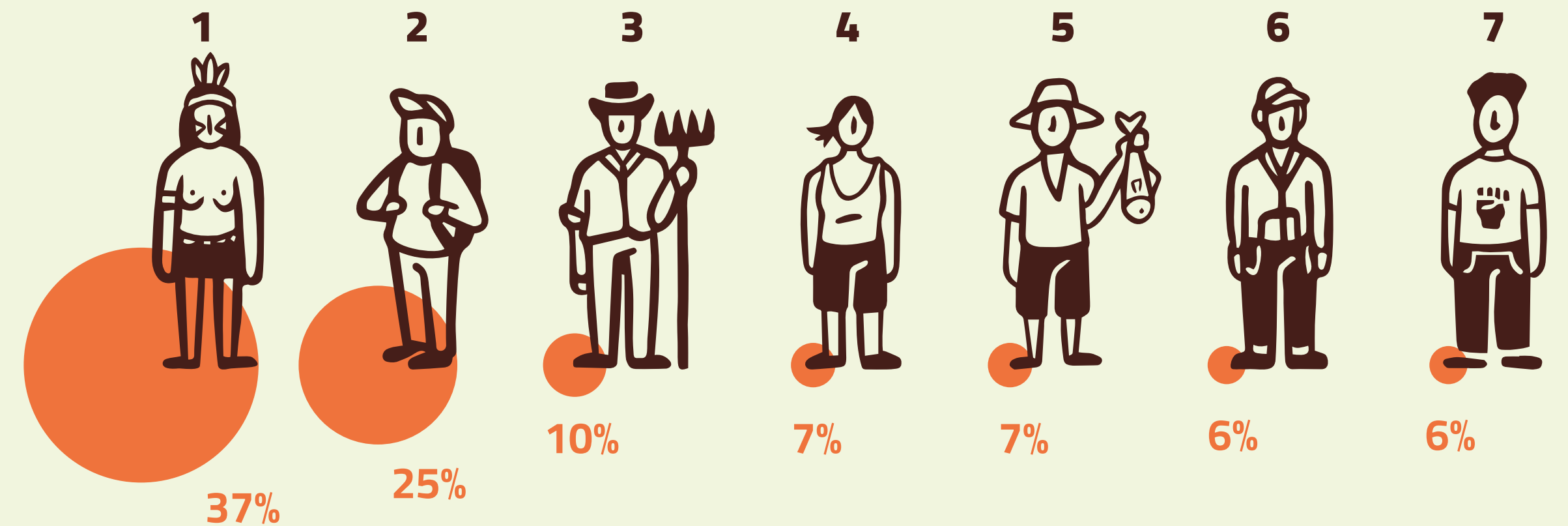


☺ ☺ ☺ "It is women who are strengthening other women and creating networks of women in the villages with the creation of a women's department with the Waypa Association; today they are strengthening women and creating opportunities for women and defending the territory from illegalities and the advance of agribusiness."

ASSOCIATION OF INDIGENOUS WARRIOR WOMEN OF RONDÔNIA

Among the youth organizations supported by the Casa Fund, the largest proportion is of indigenous organizations, accounting for 37% of total support for youth.

GRAPH 14 — PROPORTION OF THE BENEFICIARY PUBLIC AMONG YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED BY THE CASA FUND



☺ ☺ ☺ "During the course of the project, there were numerous conversations proposing the inclusion of young people. At the beginning of the project's activities, young people didn't want to take part because it was too far from the demarcated areas. During the activities, specific work was carried out to integrate these youth, and they became involved and interested."

1. INDIGENOUS
2. CITIZEN ACTIVISTS
3. FARMERS
4. LOCAL RESIDENTS
5. FISHERS/RIVERINE COMMUNITIES
6. EXTRACTIVE COMMUNITIES
7. QUILOMBOLAS

PYJAHYRY INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION PYJAHYRY



# 2

## AN OVERVIEW OF CASA FUND'S DONATIONS TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



“Other (funding) organizations impose their own goals and make it difficult to strengthen our autonomy. The Casa Fund really works with the autonomy of the organizations it supports, so that they can grow.”

WAKOBORUN MUNDURUKU  
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Casa Fund is also concerned with the production of knowledge, both for its **own internal decision-making and to collaborate with the philanthropic field** and engage more donors in supporting local communities.

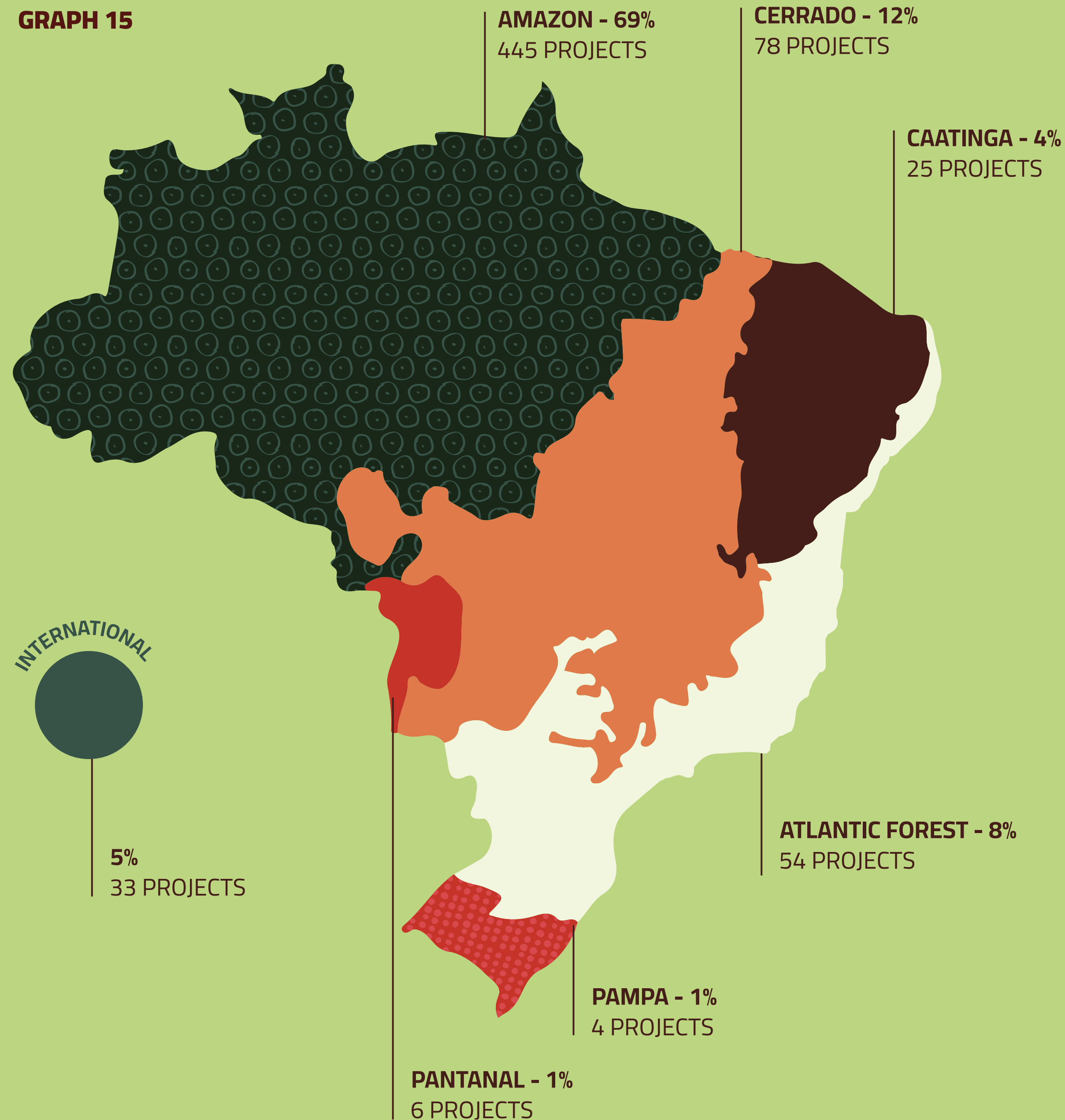
In this way, the Casa Fund **Data Management Base** stores valuable information. The forms filled out when submitting proposals are designed to more accurately portray the context that generates the need for the projects, the history of indigenous organizations, their location and reach, the most important themes for the communities, the involvement of women and youth, the difficulties and achievements of the projects. This information generated between 2018 and 2023 and contained in the project forms and reports was analyzed, cross-referenced, and compared, creating a snapshot of the Casa Fund's support.

It is into these impressive figures that we are now going to dive to see more precisely the reality of the indigenous projects we have supported over the last six years.



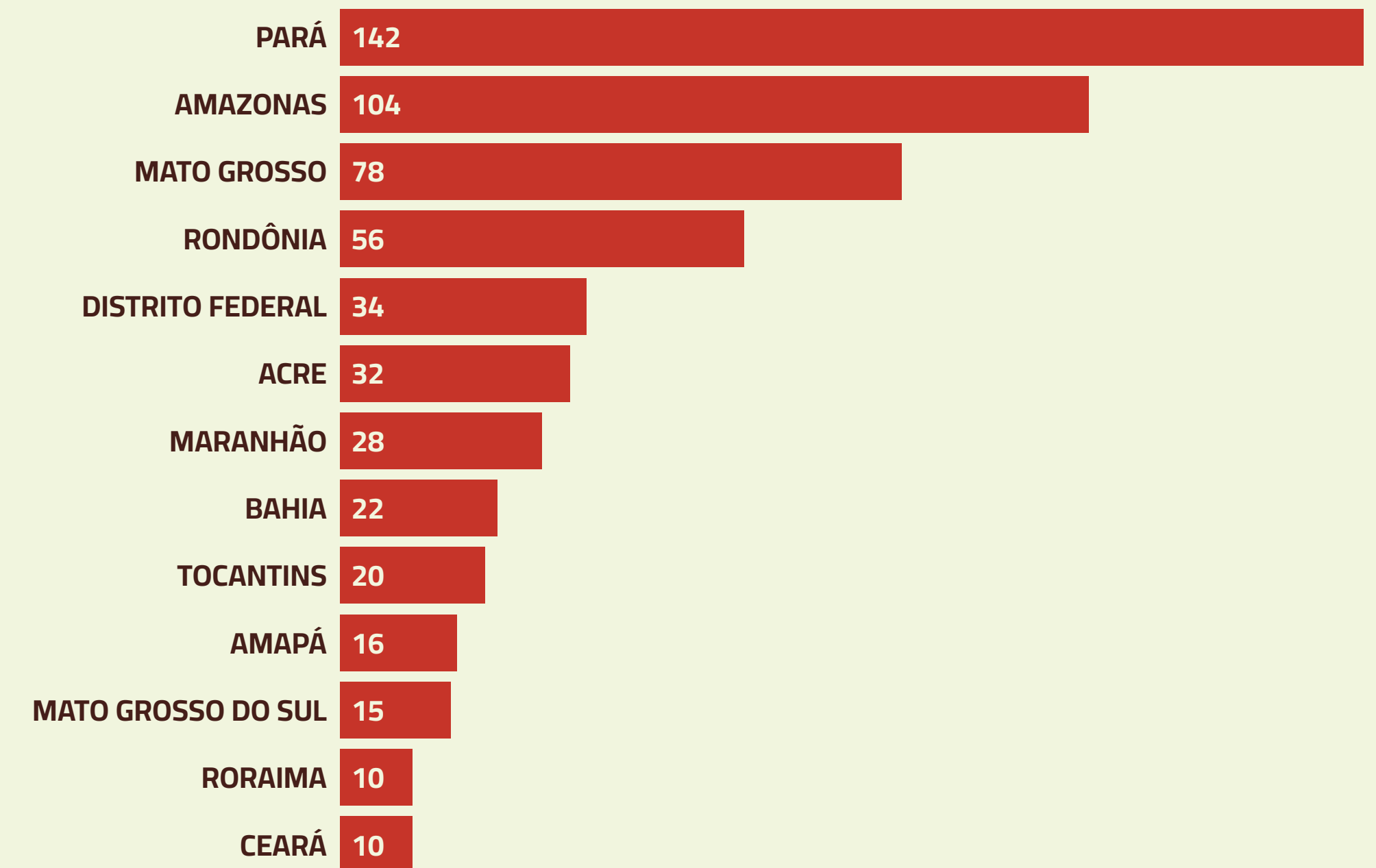
# LOCATION OF SUPPORTED PROJECTS

GRAPH 15



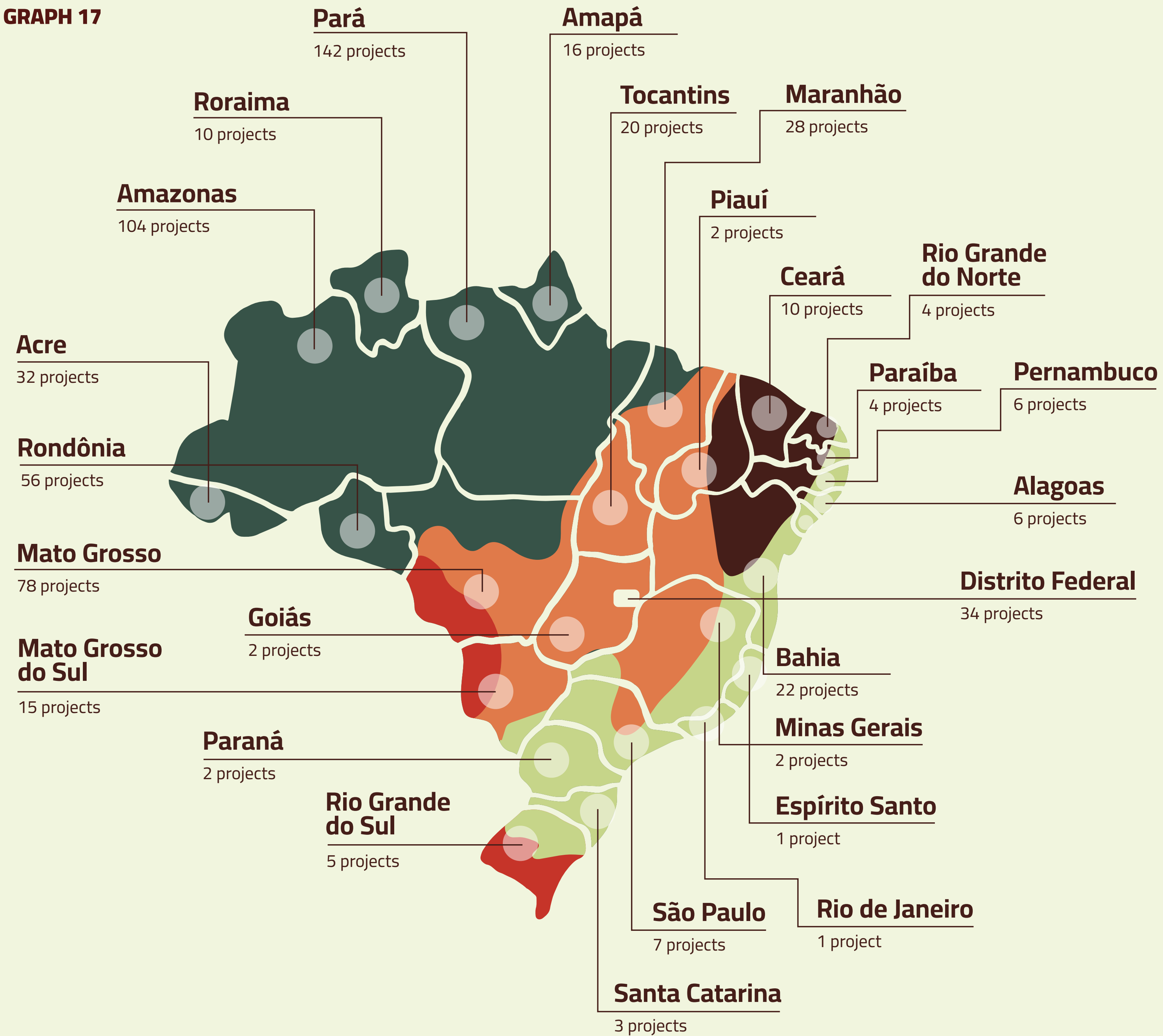
Indigenous organizations have been supported in 26 of Brazil's 27 federative units. Below, we highlight the states with the highest volume of support.

GRAPH 16 — STATES WITH TEN OR MORE SUPPORTED PROJECTS (2018 TO 2023)





**GRAPH 17**



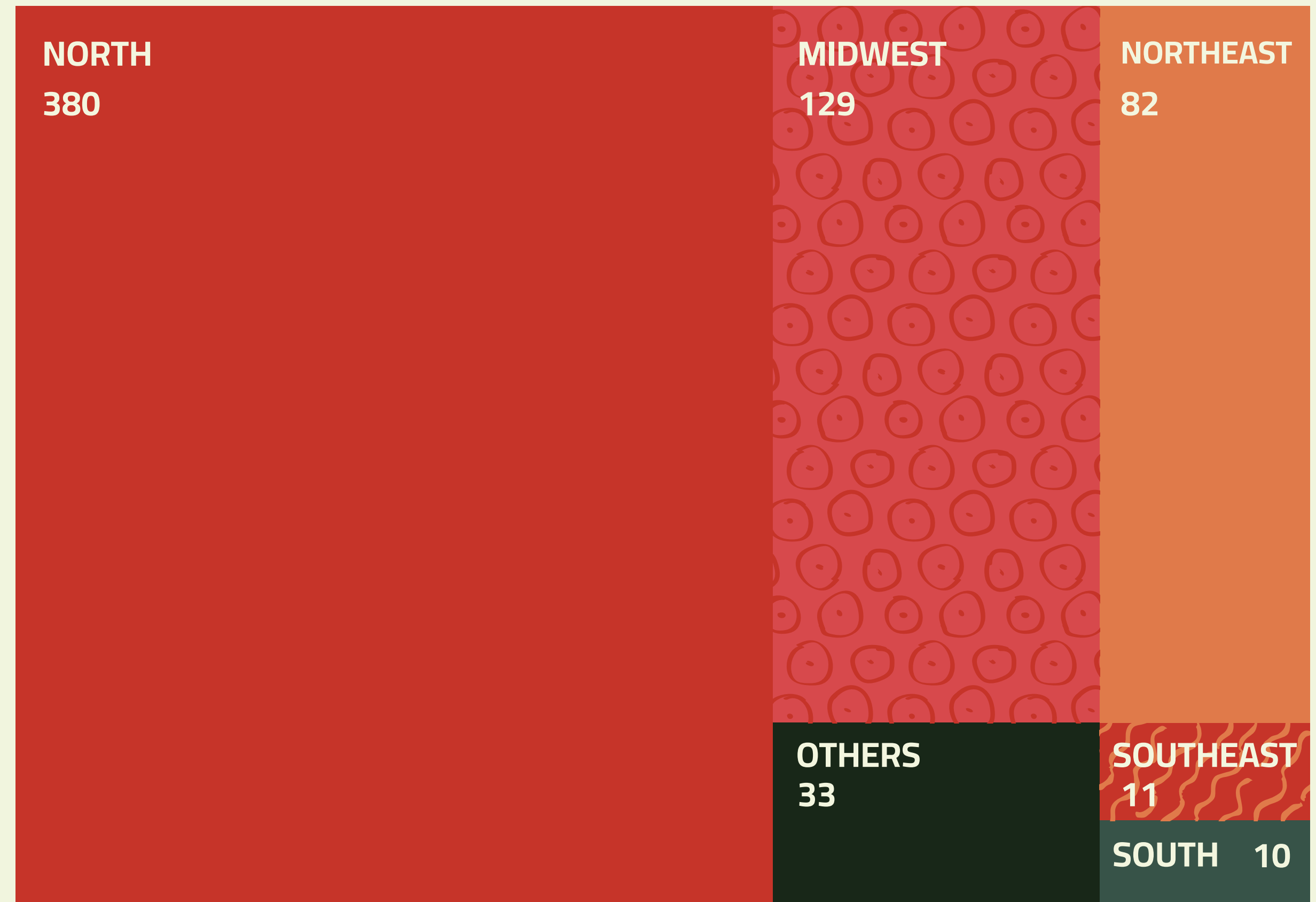


**GRAPH 18 — REPRESENTATION OF SUPPORT BY REGION**

As shown in the graph below, between 2018 and 2023 support was concentrated mainly in indigenous communities in the Northern region (Amazon). The Central-Western region comes next, accounting for 71% of the support provided, leaving only 21% for support to indigenous organizations in other regions. The difference is gigantic, and this unbalanced concentration is mainly due to the focus of the Casa Fund's financial partners, who have prioritized the Amazon region since it is under great threat and presents direct impacts on climate change affecting the entire planet, especially in the field of mitigation.

However, this concentration is also due to a more superficial understanding on the part of these same donors, who have some difficulty envisioning the deep relationships between the biomes and seeing the indigenous struggle as one. The greater visibility of the Amazon biome outside Brazil is also responsible for this preference.

We would, nevertheless, point out inconsistencies in the priorities of international philanthropy. Let us look at the issue of renewable energies and **just and inclusive energy transition**. It is an important topic from a climate perspective that is taking place in Brazil's Northeastern region, from where the Casa Fund received **183 projects from 109 indigenous organizations** and managed to provide support to only 45% of them, that is, 82 grants.





# 3

## PROFILE OF SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS

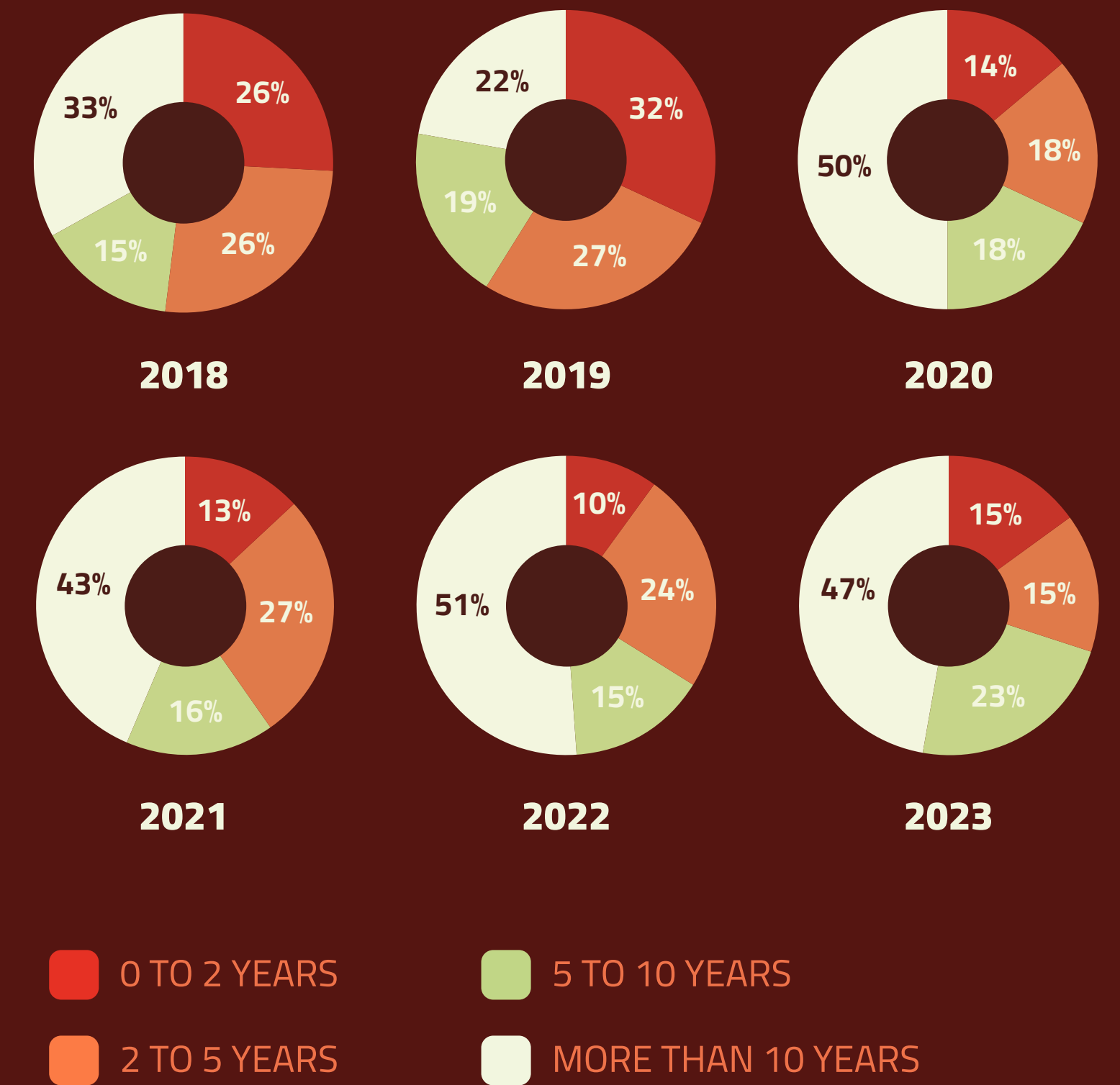
**Strengthening the capacity of indigenous associations: promoting autonomy for the protection of territories**



Until 2020, the organizations supported by the Casa Fund were mostly small local associations, many of which had the Casa Fund as their first or only resource and were still strengthening themselves to seek new partnerships and sources of support. By analyzing the reports, we realized that the trust and support guaranteed by the Casa Fund to these associations allows them to gain autonomy and access new resources, establish new institutional partnerships, engage in political advocacy with government agencies, and achieve a new level of performance.

However, as the graph aside shows, from 2020 onwards the profile of the supported organizations has changed and the percentage of organizations that had been created more than ten years ago was around 50%. This is mainly because more grants are being allocated to regional or local organizations that are already well-established. We should also consider that regional organizations have remained active over time, while other local organizations, in some cases, have had difficulty maintaining their work, mainly due to problems with bureaucracy and technological updating. Casa Fund's support has enabled the legal regularization of old associations that have been able to resume their activity, as well as the opening of new associations and the strengthening of those already consolidated.

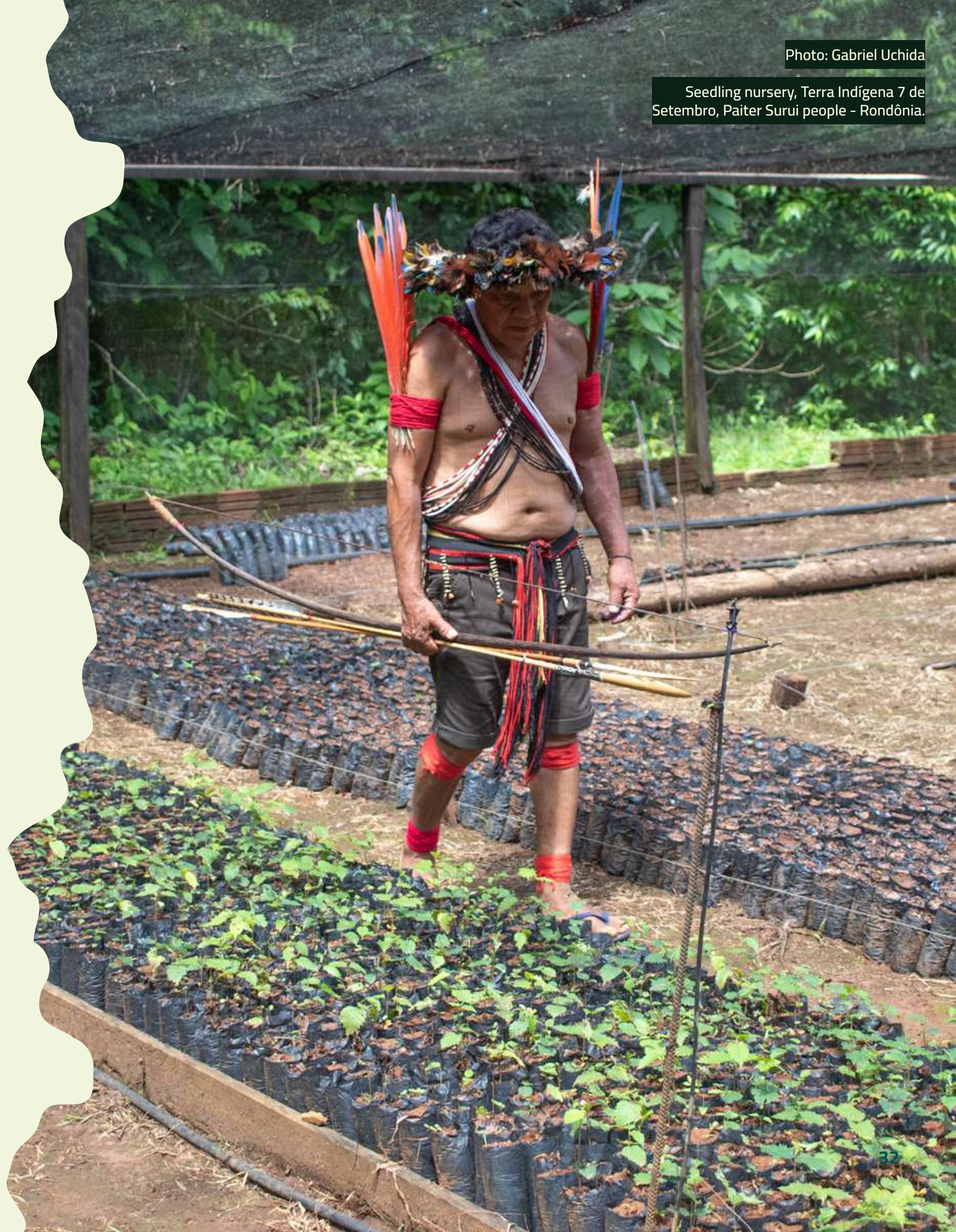
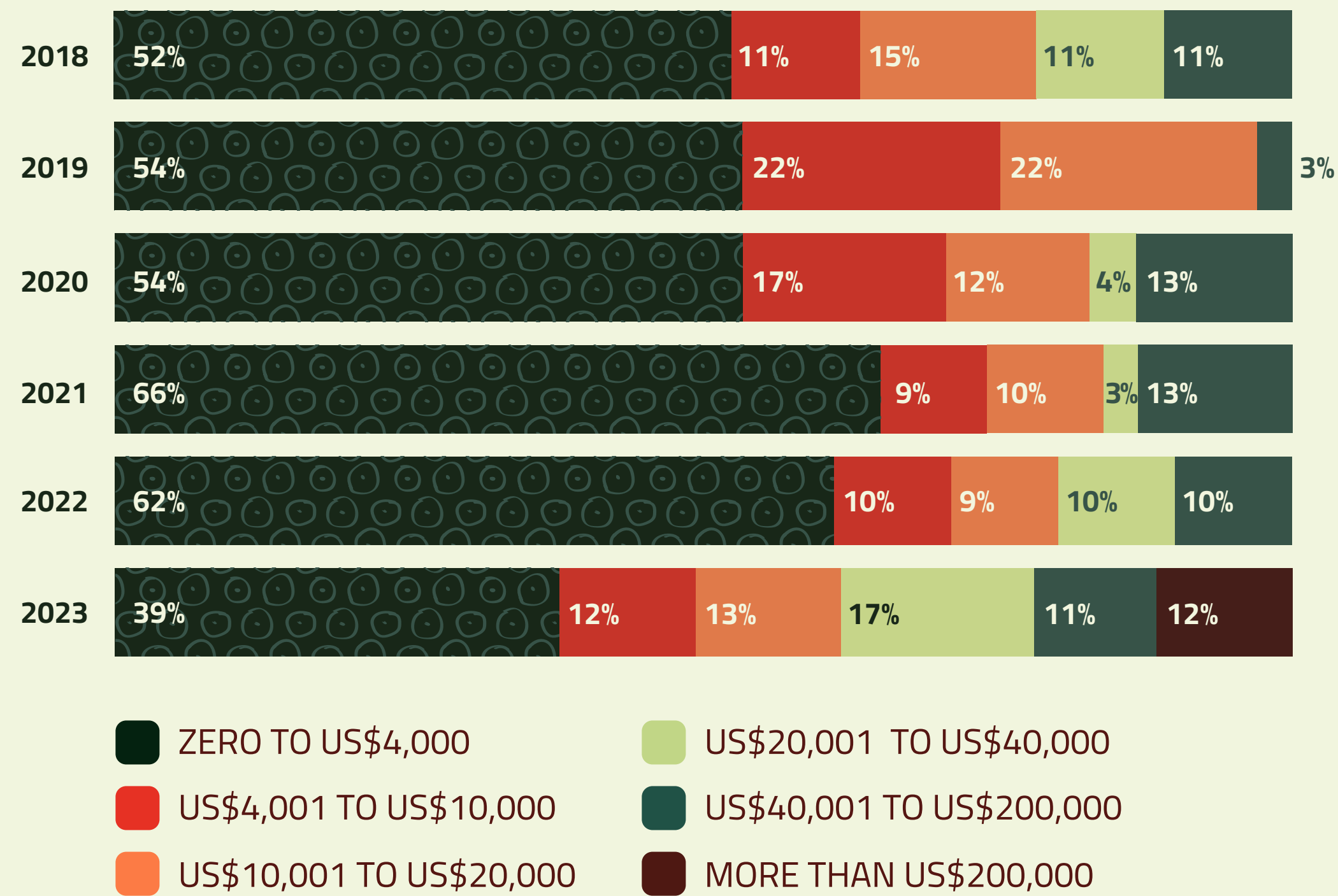
**GRAPH 19 — LENGTH OF TIME SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS EXIST**





The graph below shows that even though the number of grants for older organizations has grown, they don't necessarily have larger budgets, as most grants continue to go to organizations with an annual budget of less than BRL 50,000.00 (US\$ 10,000.00).

**GRAPH 20 — PROPORTION OF SUPPORT BY ORGANIZATION SIZE (ANNUAL BUDGET)**



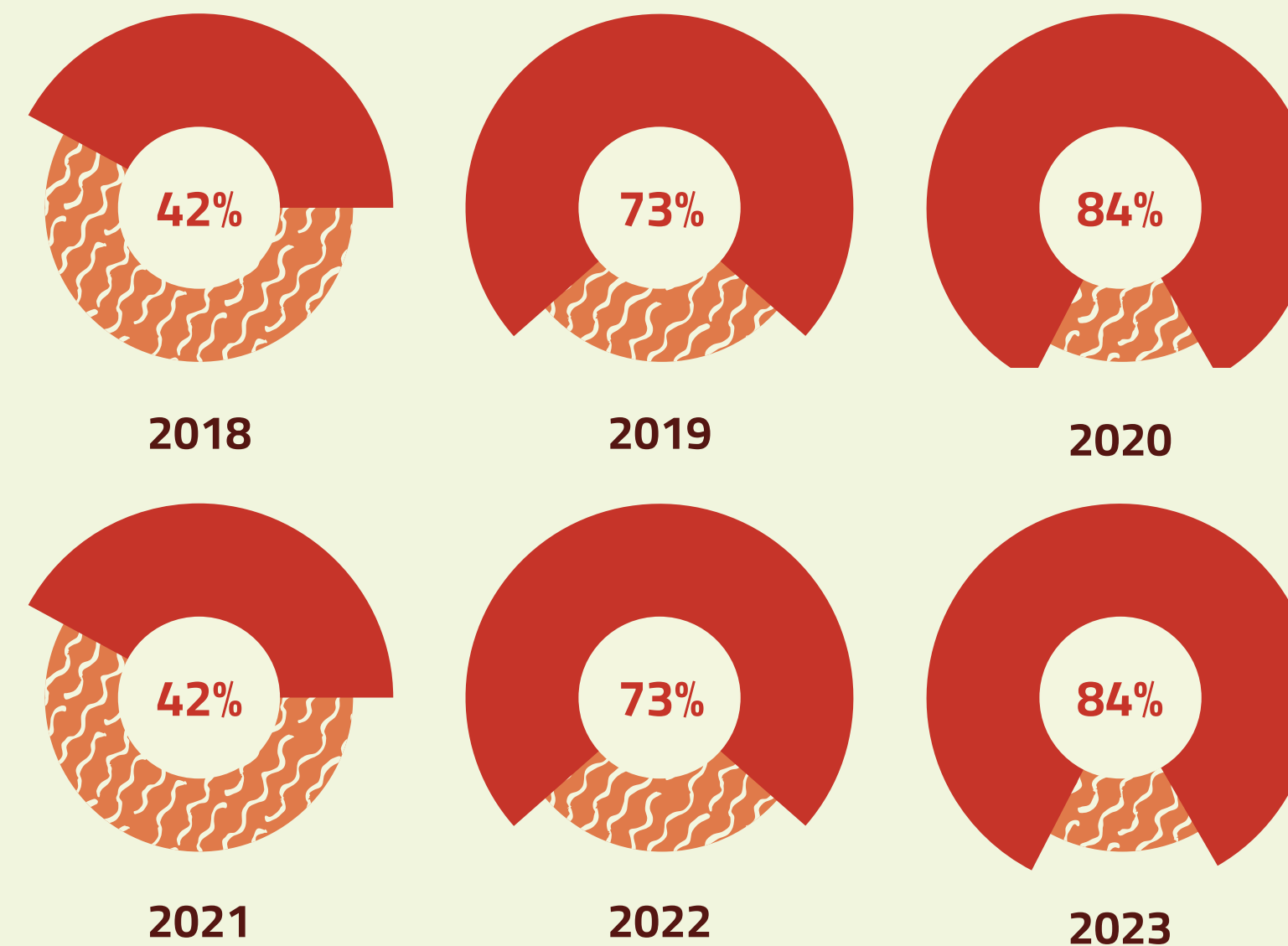


## LEGAL FORMALIZATION STATUS OF SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS

One of the major challenges for local organizations, in general, is legal formalization, as the process of becoming an organization with a CNPJ number (National Registry of Legal Entities, which is a nationwide registry of corporations, partnerships, foundations, and other legal entities, created and maintained by the Brazilian Federal Revenue Service) is quite bureaucratic and costly, as it involves professionals such as lawyers, accountants, and notary public offices. Considering the local infrastructure where indigenous organizations are located, this becomes even more difficult.

Therefore, the Casa Fund has a support model that does not require organizations to have a CNPJ, and a collective can receive funds through a partner organization. In the last six years, however, the number of indigenous organizations formalized with a CNPJ number receiving support from the Casa Fund has increased from 42% to 87%; they have moved from the category of **networks, collectives, and forums** to become **associations**. Many of these achievements occurred with the support of the Casa Fund for the creation or regularization of indigenous organizations. In this way, organized, equipped, and with access to information, these organizations gain autonomy, expand partnerships, and raise funds.

**GRAPH 21 — TOTAL SUPPORT FOR PROJECTS BY ORGANIZATIONS WITH A CNPJ NUMBER (BRAZILIAN LEGAL ENTITY REGISTRATION)**



**GRAPH 22 — FUNDING SOURCES FOR SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS**

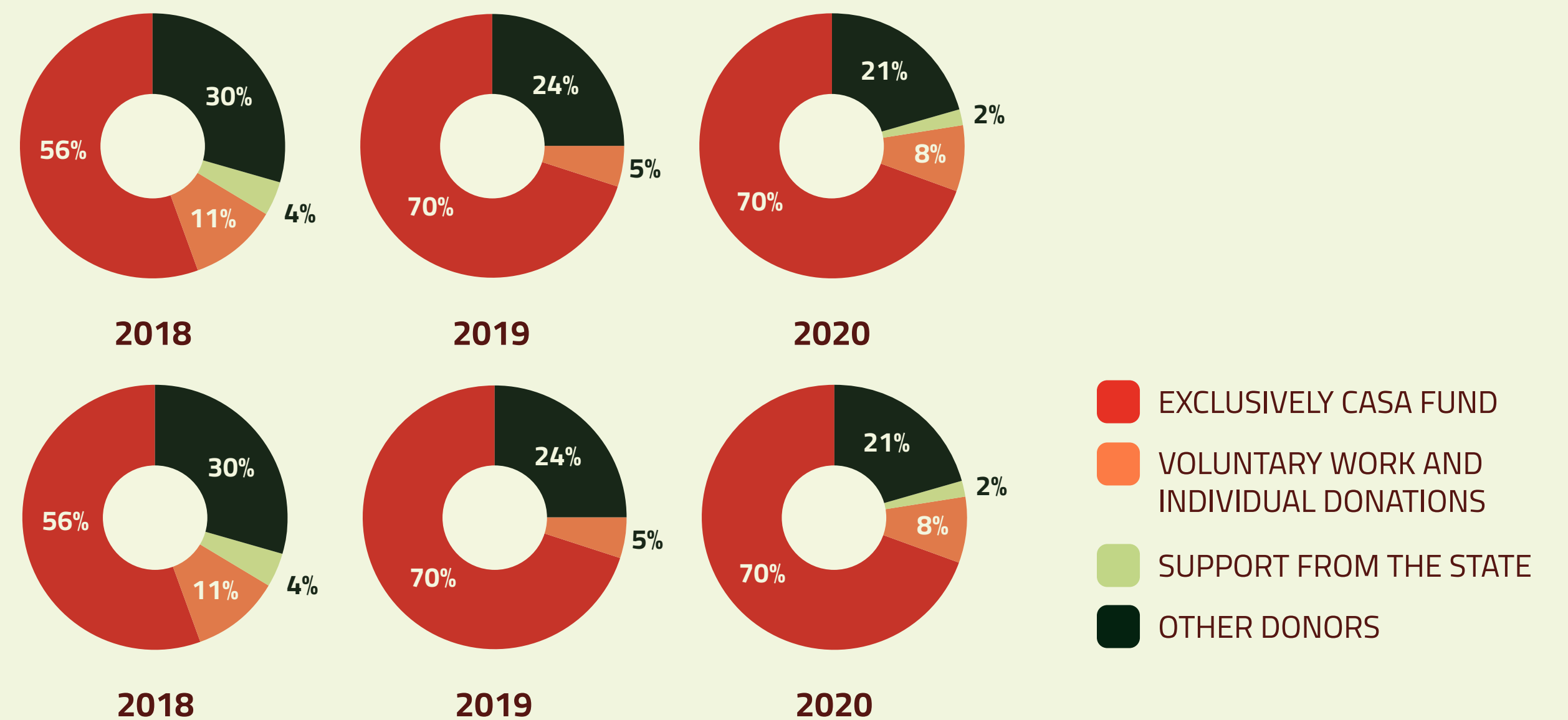




Photo: Dace Indigenous Association  
General meeting of the Dace

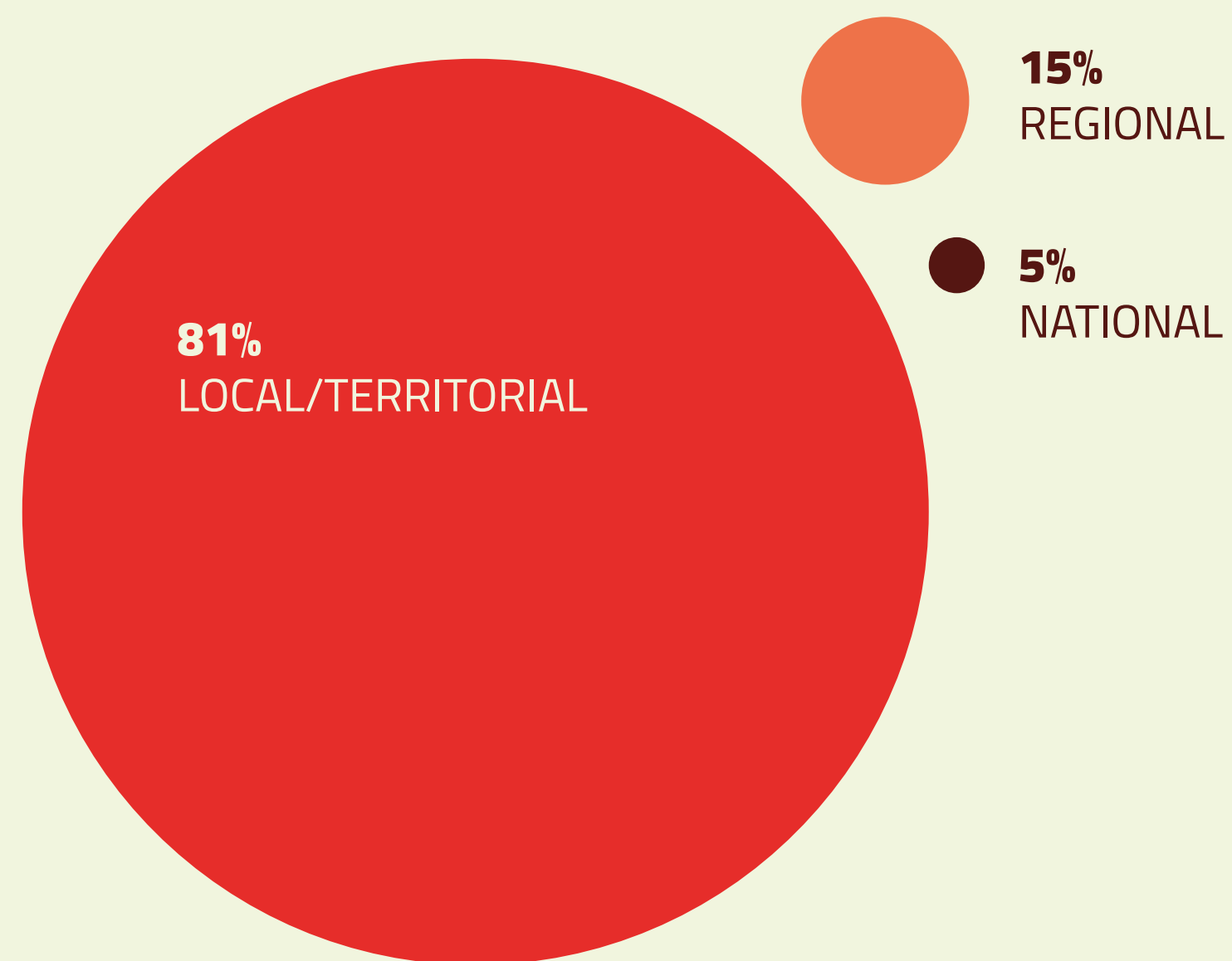
Indigenous Association, Mundukuru  
people - Pará.



Finally, we bring information on the scope of the supported organizations' activities. This is an important piece of information because the Casa Fund was created to support small organizations, and associations with local operations, promoting the democratization of access to resources, whether from philanthropy or international cooperation.

In this sense, the data below shows that resources from the Casa Fund are indeed reaching local associations and that they have been able to submit their projects, manage the resources, and render accounts (as shown in the Report Submission item).

**GRAPH 23 — SCOPE OF ACTION OF THE SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS**





# 4

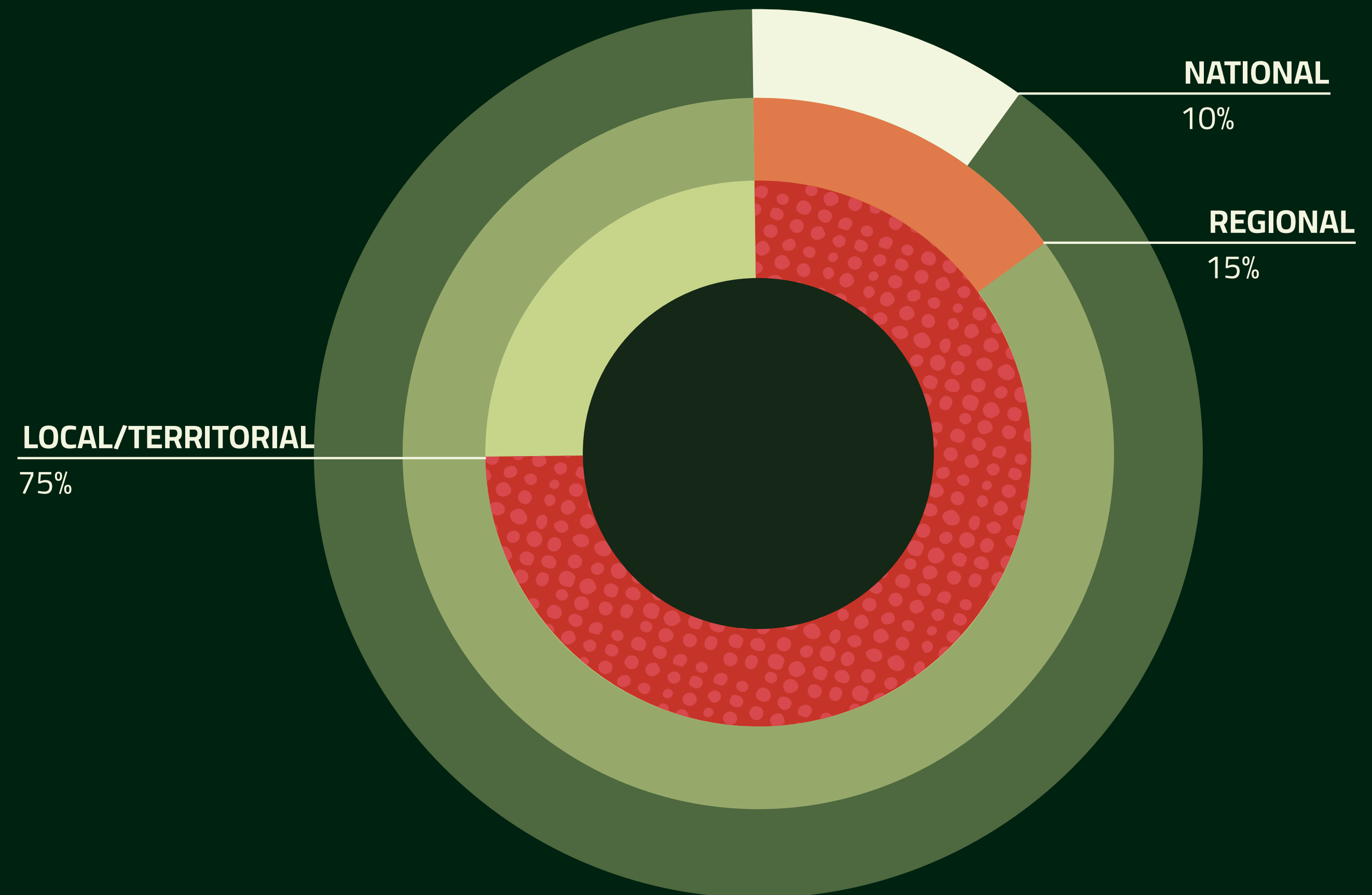
## PROFILE OF THE SUPPORTED PROJECTS

### Scope of the projects



In a sample of 407 supported organizations, we found that most of them carry out their projects in their own territories. This shows the importance of having financial resources available for these locations, since, as we can see, the demand exists and the proposals reach us.

GRAPH 24 — SCOPE OF ACTION OF SUPPORTED PROJECTS





## MAIN THEMES AND INTERSECTIONS

There are several technical and analytical possibilities for determining the thematic framework for the projects supported. The Casa Fund identifies the themes during the process of analyzing the projects to be supported and conducts an in-depth analysis of the context and circumstances in which the project intends to carry out its activities.

Local projects have different interfaces in the territories, so **we also highlight here the different intersections between the themes identified in most projects**, i.e. a single project can be strongly connected to several themes. The graph below shows the main themes supported between 2018 and 2023:

**TABLE 01 — MAIN THEMES SUPPORTED BETWEEN 2018 AND 2013**

	N° OF PROJECTS
DEFENSE OF INDIGENOUS RIGHTS	283
IMPACTS OF ENERGY MEGAPROJECTS	128
LEGAL ADVICE	12
CONSULTATION PROTOCOL	41
EVENTS & ADVOCACY	26
RECOVERING & STRENGTHENING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE	265
COMBATTING FOREST FIRES	42
CAPACITY BUILDING	275
FIGHTING COVID	120
PRODUCTIVE PROJECTS	90
EDUCATION	31
FAIR, SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS	99
PROTECTION OF FORESTS AND LIVELIHOODS	266
ACCESS TO AND PROTECTION OF WATER/SANITATION	55
FOOD SECURITY AND THE RECOVERY OF KNOWLEDGE IN FOOD PRODUCTION	208
RENEWABLE ENERGY	17
INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING	275
PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE JUSTICE DEFENDERS	172



To make it easier to understand the intersection highlighted above, we have grouped the themes of the supported projects into axes and their connections:

 <p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AXIS</b></p>	 <p><b>SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS AXIS</b></p>	 <p><b>FOOD SOVEREIGNTY/ SECURITY AXIS</b></p>	 <p><b>ENERGY AXIS</b></p>
<p>FREE, PRIOR, AND INFORMED CONSULTATION PROTOCOL</p> <p>LEGAL ADVICE</p> <p>PROTECTION OF FORESTS AND LIVELIHOODS</p> <p>GOVERNANCE AND TERRITORIAL MONITORING</p>	<p>FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS</p> <p>ACCESS TO AND PROTECTION OF WATER</p> <p>SANITATION</p>	<p>AGROECOLOGY, FAMILY FARMING, AND/OR AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS</p> <p>RECOVERY OF TRADITIONAL FOOD PRODUCTION</p>	<p>IMPACTS CAUSED BY ENERGY MEGAPROJECTS AND/OR JUST ENERGY TRANSITION</p> <p>RENEWABLE ENERGY: ACCESS TO ENERGY</p>
 <p><b>SOCIAL CONTROL AND PUBLIC POLICIES AXIS</b></p>	 <p><b>FOOD SYSTEMS/ INCOME GENERATION AXIS</b></p>	 <p><b>INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING OF LOCAL INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS AXIS</b></p>	 <p><b>EMERGENCIES AXIS</b></p>
<p>STRENGTHENING OF ADVOCACY CAPACITY</p> <p>MOBILIZATIONS: RIGHTS OF TRADITIONAL POPULATIONS</p> <p>PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS AND CONFERENCES</p>	<p>INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF PRODUCTION CHAINS, CERTIFICATION AND/OR MARKETING</p> <p>SOCIO-BIODIVERSITY ECONOMY</p>	<p>HIRING OF TEAMS</p> <p>TRAINING COURSES</p> <p>REGULARIZATION OF INSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS</p> <p>INSTITUTIONAL COMMUNICATION</p>	<p>FIGHTING COVID</p> <p>COMBATING FOREST FIRES</p> <p>EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS</p>





Photo: Denise Farias

ATL - Free Land Camp in Brasília - 2023

Among the themes that received support, three deserve special mention: climate change, the defense of indigenous rights, and the protection of defenders. The first two intersect with each other:

The theme of **climate change** pervades most projects, whether from the perspective of mitigation, adaptation, or climate emergency. Taking a broader view, in which environmental protection actions and the strengthening of traditional practices are seen as integral aspects of the climate issue, it can be said that the indigenous projects supported by the Casa Fund also contribute to building the groups' climate resilience and to developing solutions to the climate challenges that threaten the planet.

We also observe the theme of **defense of rights** permeating most of the projects. The most diverse activities carried out by the projects within indigenous territories result in the defense of indigenous rights, whether by encouraging people to learn about their individual rights or by rallying the community to protect the territory, strengthen traditional knowledge and culture, exchange knowledge with other communities, or advocate and mobilize in national or international public bodies.

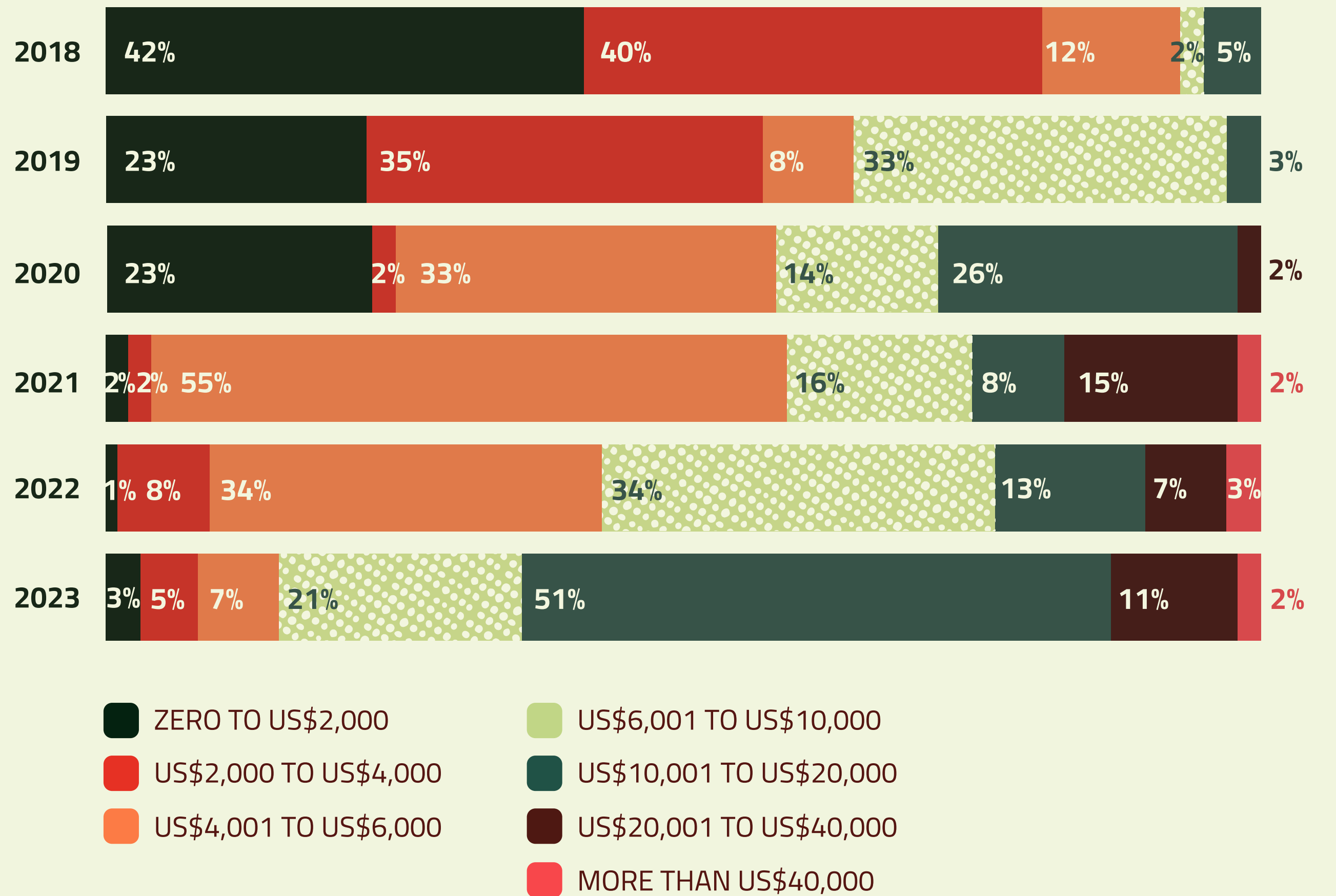
In the field of **protecting environmental and climate justice defenders**, the Casa Fund has developed a Rapid Response Fund with the main objective of saving the lives of those who defend their territories, their ways of life, and the standing forest. In 2019, we granted a total of 172 individual rapid response supports; of these, 46 were for indigenous leaders, which corresponds to 27% of the supports provided.



# GRANT SIZES

Until 2020, the amount of grants provided by the Casa Fund was up to BRL 25,000.00 (US\$5,000). As of 2020, there was a percentage increase in grants of up to BRL 60,000.00 (US\$12,000) for local associations and grants above BRL 150,000.00 (US\$30,000) for regional and state organizations. Projects must be carried out within 12 months; however, it is not uncommon for associations to request an extension of up to 16 months.

**GRAPH 25 — PREDOMINANCE OF SUPPORT RANGE FOR INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS**





# 5 ACHIEVED RESULTS

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS

In 2018 the Casa Fund developed a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan, based on extensive internal discussion and with the collaboration of several consultants. This plan is undergoing continuous improvements based on the lessons learned over time.

Casa Fund used the following indicators: process, result, and impact. They are developed along the following axes:

- **OPERATION:** Efficiency, Performance, and Result
- **TRANSFORMATION:** Impact and Learning

**TABLE 02 — DIMENSIONS**

		INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
		Internal impacts on the organization itself: institutional strengthening of supported groups, collectives, movements, and organizations	Strengthening of local groups such as actors of transformation in the territories and protectors of forests, generating environmental conservation and territorial protection
AXES	Operation	Efficiency Indicators (process) Performance Indicators (process)	Result Indicators
	Transformation	Learning Indicators	Impact Indicators



**Our main challenge is to work on aggregate data related to the support provided in the territories without losing the individual importance of each support, each group, and each people, after all, we are talking about 727 supported projects.**

In this sense, the Plan gave us the path of what data would be needed to feed our indicators, and our Data Management Base was extremely important for carrying out these analyses.

The production of data and information provided by the reports and the ongoing relationship with the supported groups, added to the qualitative analyses of specific external evaluations, enables us to produce a publication like this.

We cannot fail to mention the importance of Casa Fund's communication team which, by listening to the groups' stories, produces narratives that also add important information to the monitoring and bring emotions and feelings to the hard data compiled.

From this point onwards, through this monitoring and evaluation system, we will present a series of analyses and graphs that show the main results of the supported projects.

The results presented here are divided into **two dimensions**:

**INTERNAL DIMENSION** – Internal impacts on the organization itself: institutional strengthening of supported groups, collectives, movements, and organizations.

**EXTERNAL DIMENSION**– External impacts on the territory in terms of environmental conservation and territorial protection: strengthening of local groups as actors of transformation in the territories and protectors of the forests.

Below is an **analysis of the relationship between the Casa Fund and the indigenous associations** it supports, a relationship built up over these years of funding.



## INTERNAL DIMENSION – INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

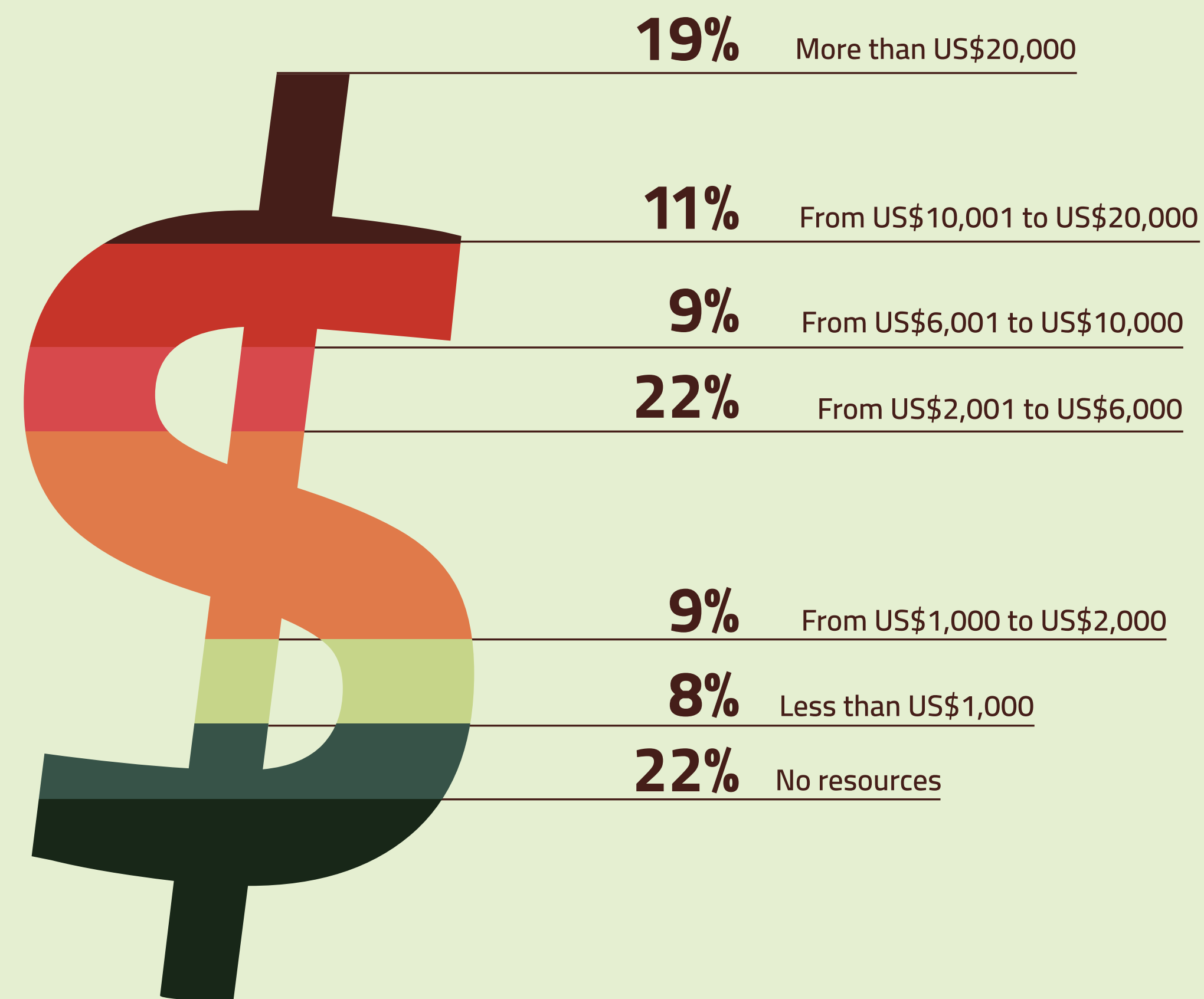
To evaluate this dimension, analytical studies were carried out on our database of projects and narrative reports and rendering of accounts from projects supported between 2018 and 2023. This evaluation was conducted by an external consultancy with the aid of Casa Fund’s technical team.

As we have shown previously, institutional strengthening is an important axis regarding the supports since it aims to consolidate local associations so that they can develop their projects, expand and manage their resources, and become more recognized as protagonists in their territories. Included in this axis is the ability to submit Activity Reports and Financial Reports.

Therefore, the analyses below show a series of graphs regarding this issue and how valuable the support received was for the organizations.

Concerning resource mobilization, 78% of the supported organizations mobilized other financial resources in addition to the grants from the Casa Fund, 30% with grants above US\$10,000(19% of these 30% were over US\$20,000). By being able to mobilize more resources in addition to support from the Casa Fund, these organizations have increased their capacity to continue and expand their actions, as well as their potential for financial sustainability.

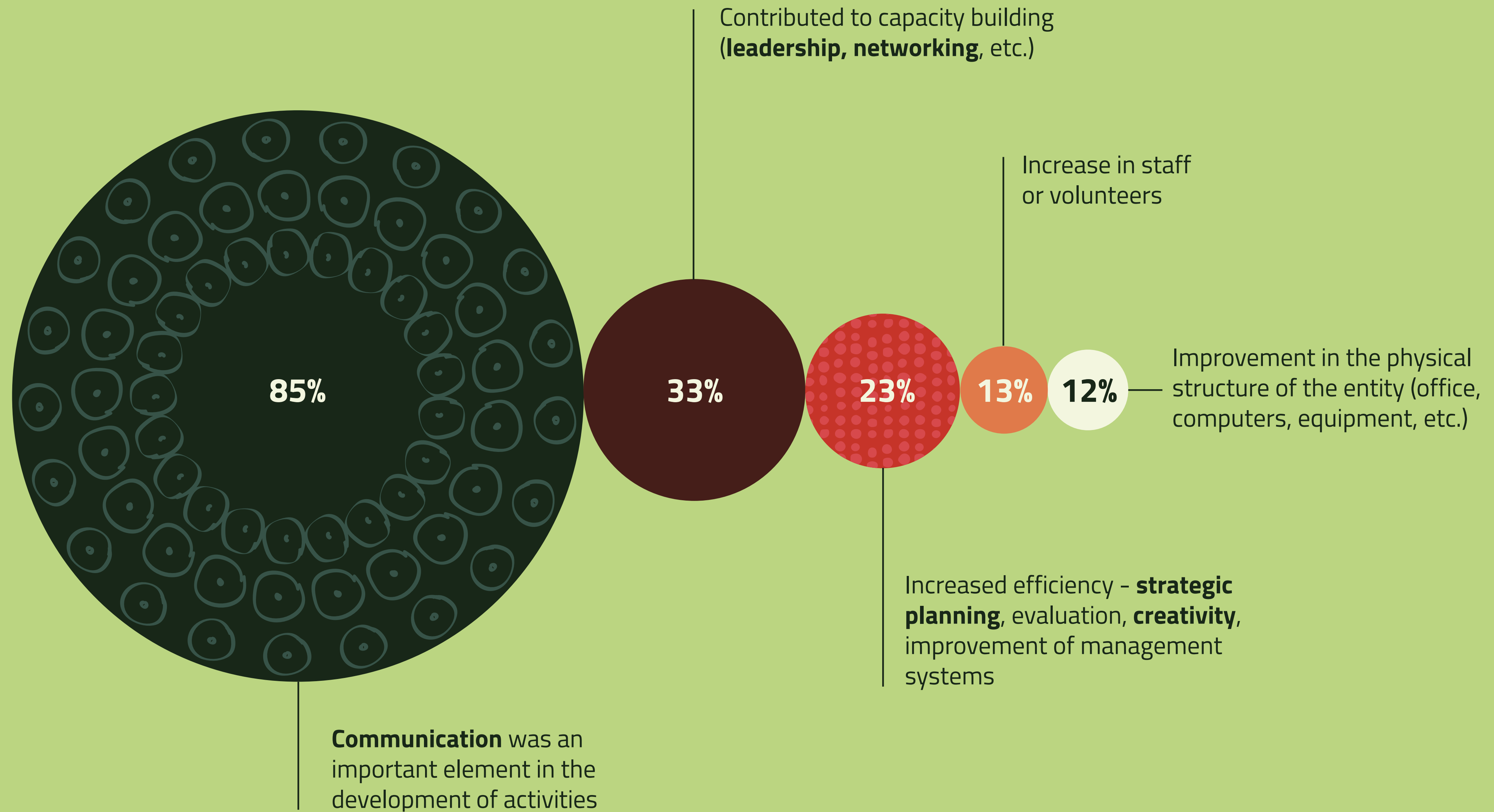
**GRAPH 26 — MOBILIZATION OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES  
DURING CASA FUND SUPPORT**



We can also change the narrative from scarcity to abundance, because not only do communities have their own potential to mobilize funds within their means when a project is approved in a Call for Proposals, but they also raise their self-esteem and gain the trust of those around them and, thus, new partners can approach them with different types of support. We see this not only in indigenous projects but in all the other supports we provide.



**GRAPH 27 — PERCEPTION OF SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT**





**GRAPH 28 — PERCEPTION OF SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS ON THE EMPOWERMENT OF ORGANIZATION MEMBERS AND/OR BENEFICIARIES**

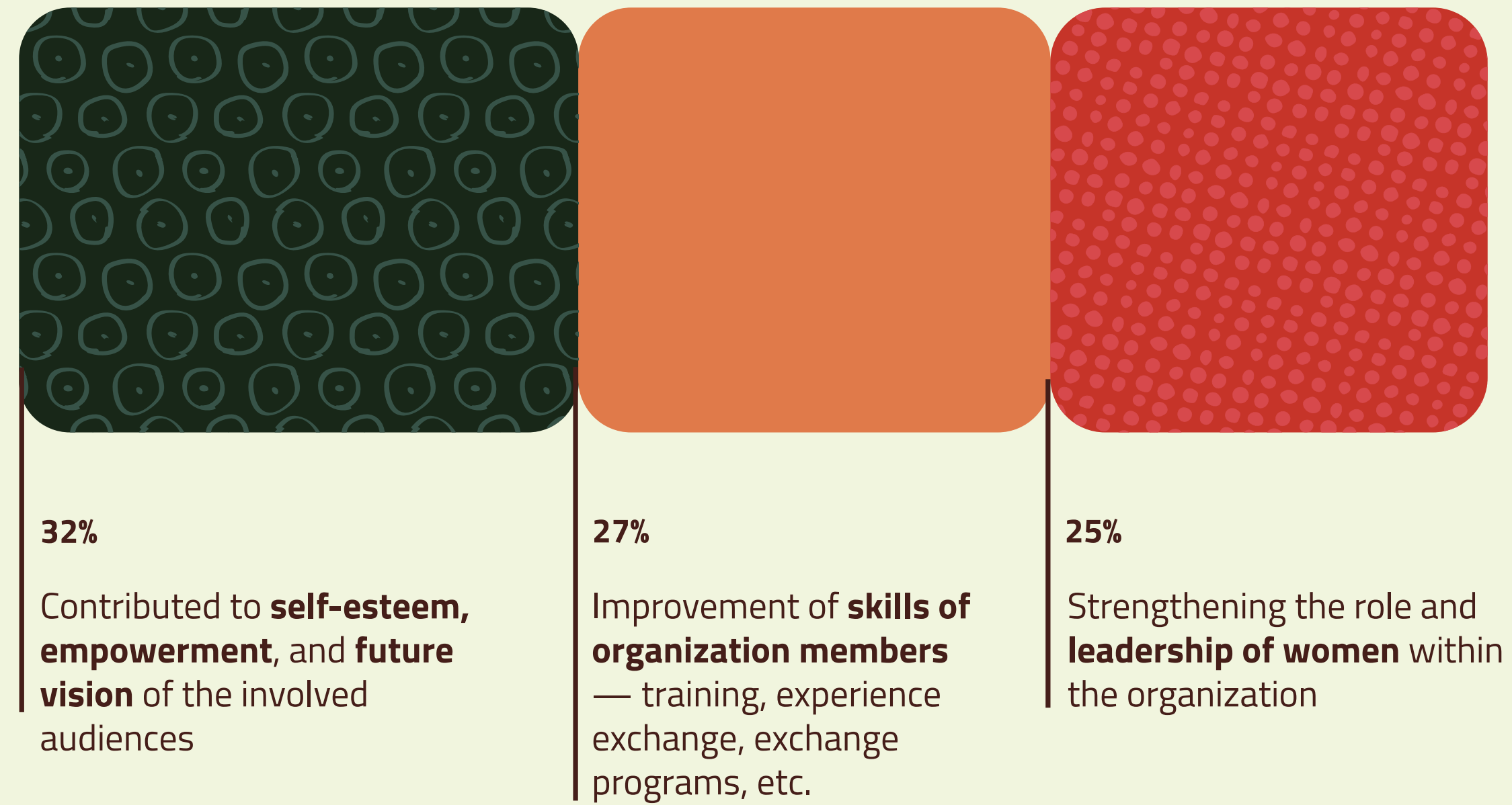


Photo: Bruno Kelly

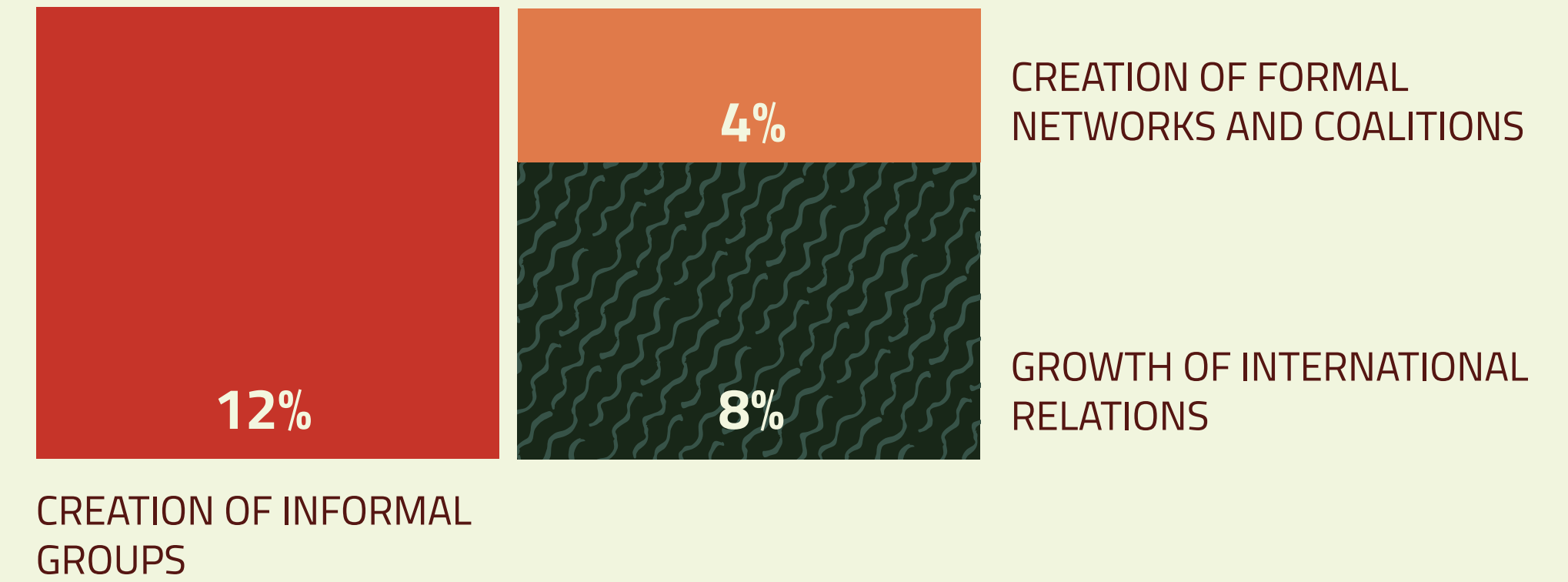
The Apinajé Women's Brigade is the first volunteer women's brigade in the Amazon and was created with the support of the Casa - Tocantins Fund.



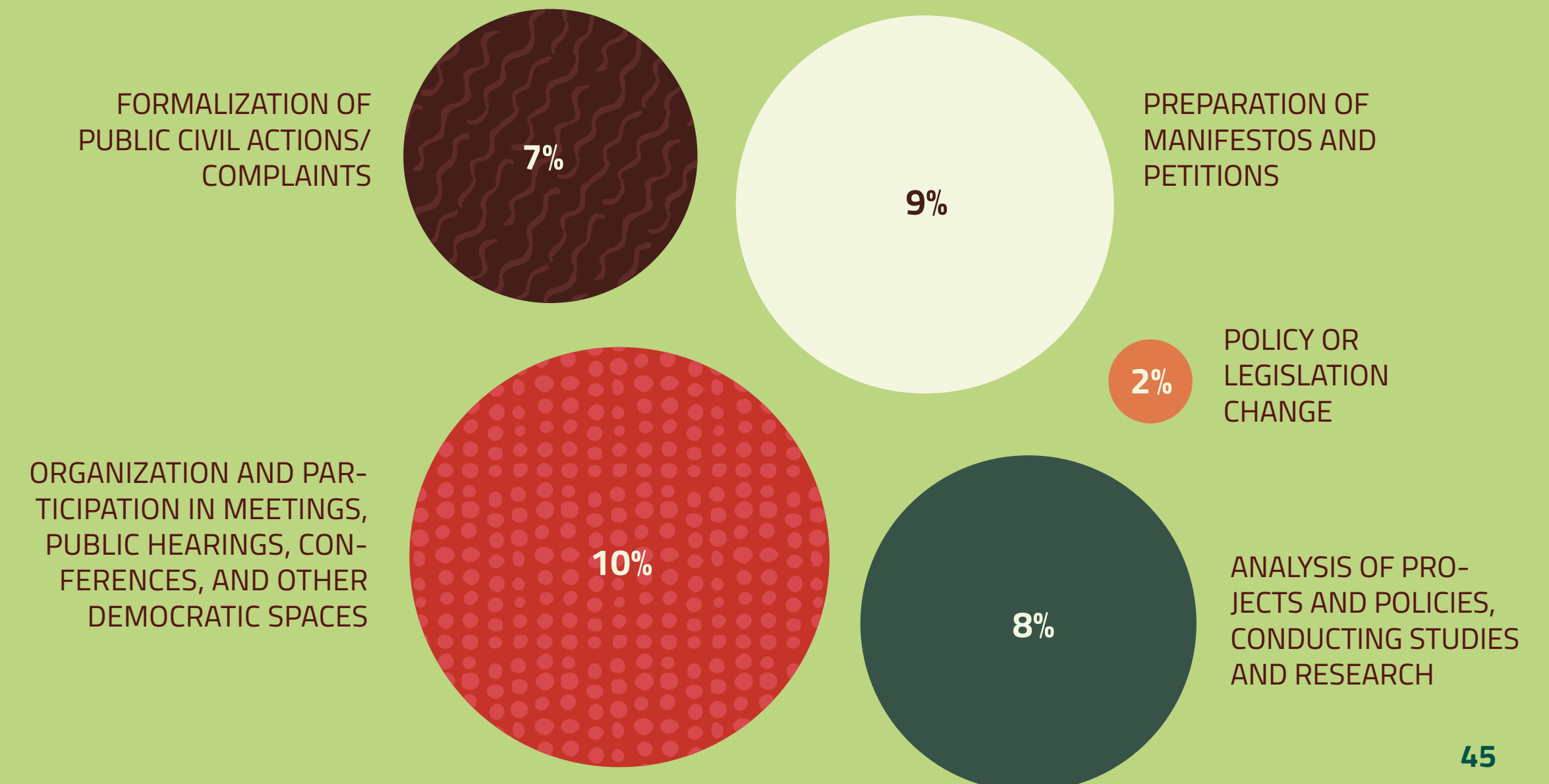
**GRAPH 29 — PERCEPTION OF SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS ON INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND INCREASED REACH OF ACTIONS**



**GRAPH 30 — ADVANCES IN NETWORKS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND COLLABORATIONS AMONG ORGANIZATIONS**

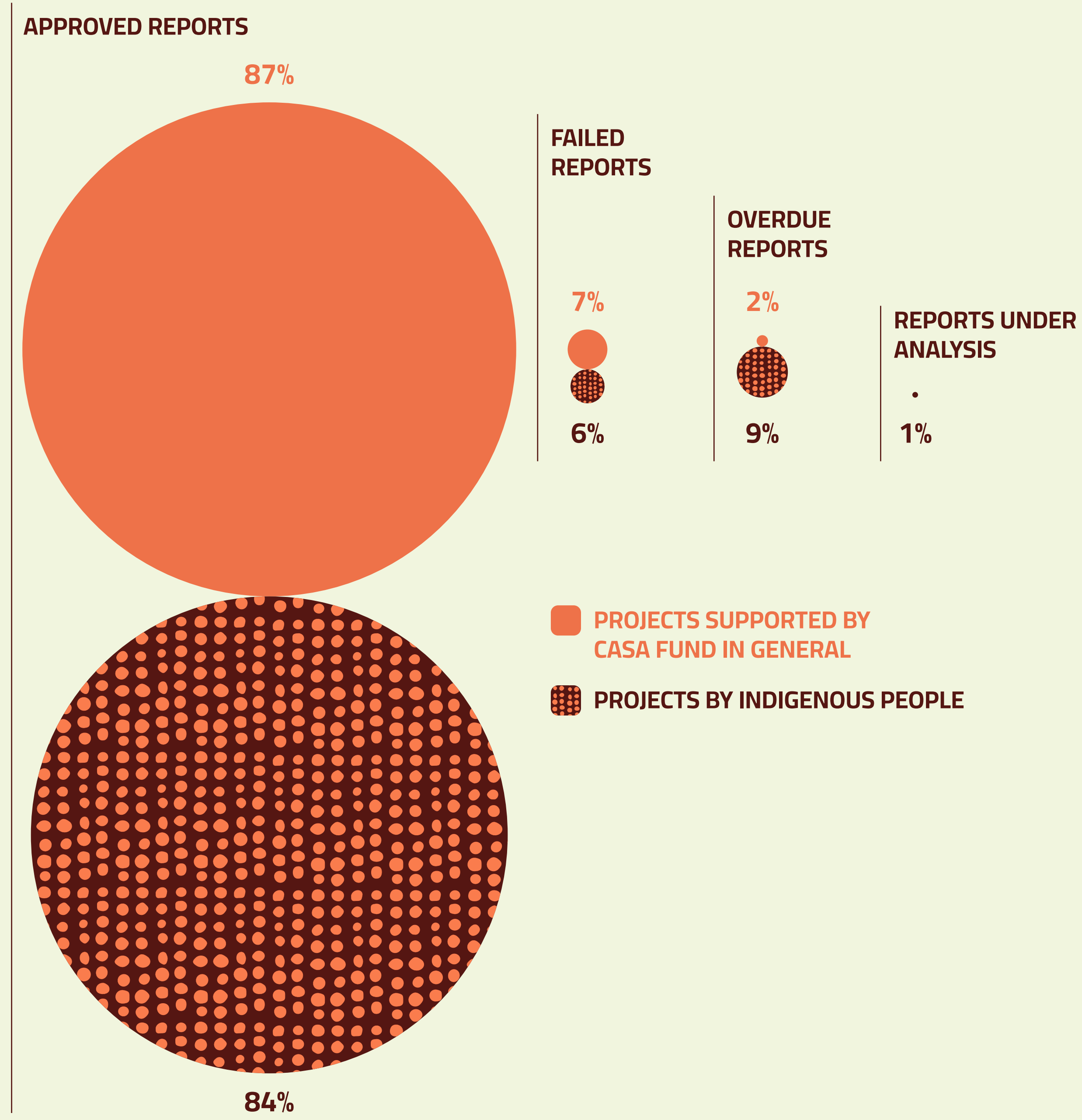


**GRAPH 31 — CHANGES THAT OCCURRED IN THE ORGANIZATION DUE TO THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**





**GRAPH 32 — STATUS OF REPORTS FROM INDIGENOUS PROJECTS VERSUS PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE CASA FUND IN GENERAL**



The graph above reveals important information about the indigenous associations' ability to execute projects, bearing in mind that the Casa Fund, in its support methodology, is concerned with building an environment that strengthens their ability to fulfill their planned deliverables.

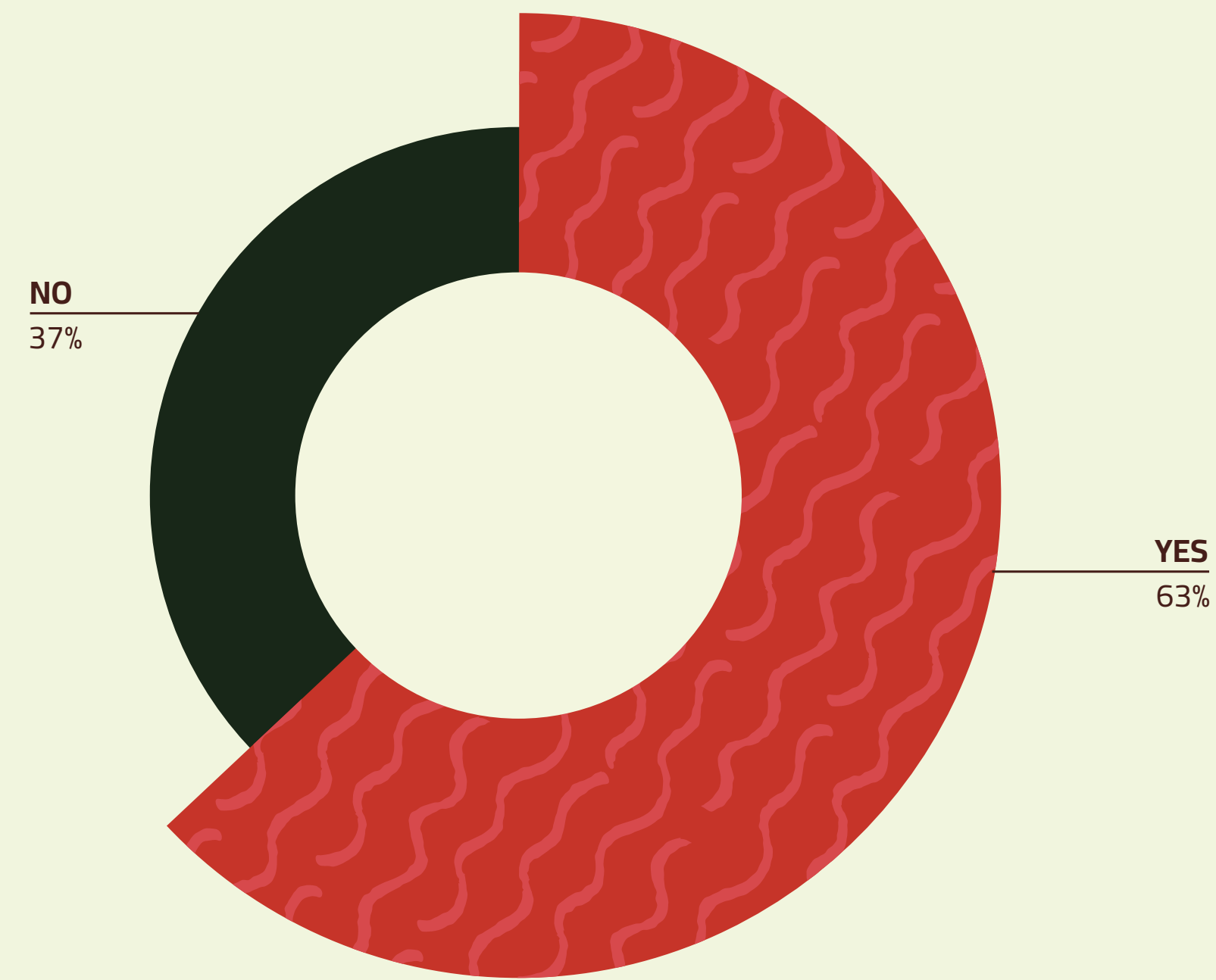
We must mention two important aspects: flexibility — especially in terms of execution time and budget adjustments to the real needs of the groups — and very close monitoring for the successful delivery of reports.

If we compare this with the delivery of reports from other Casa Fund audiences, the figures are practically the same and show a high success rate from the supported projects in terms of compliance with the delivery of reports.

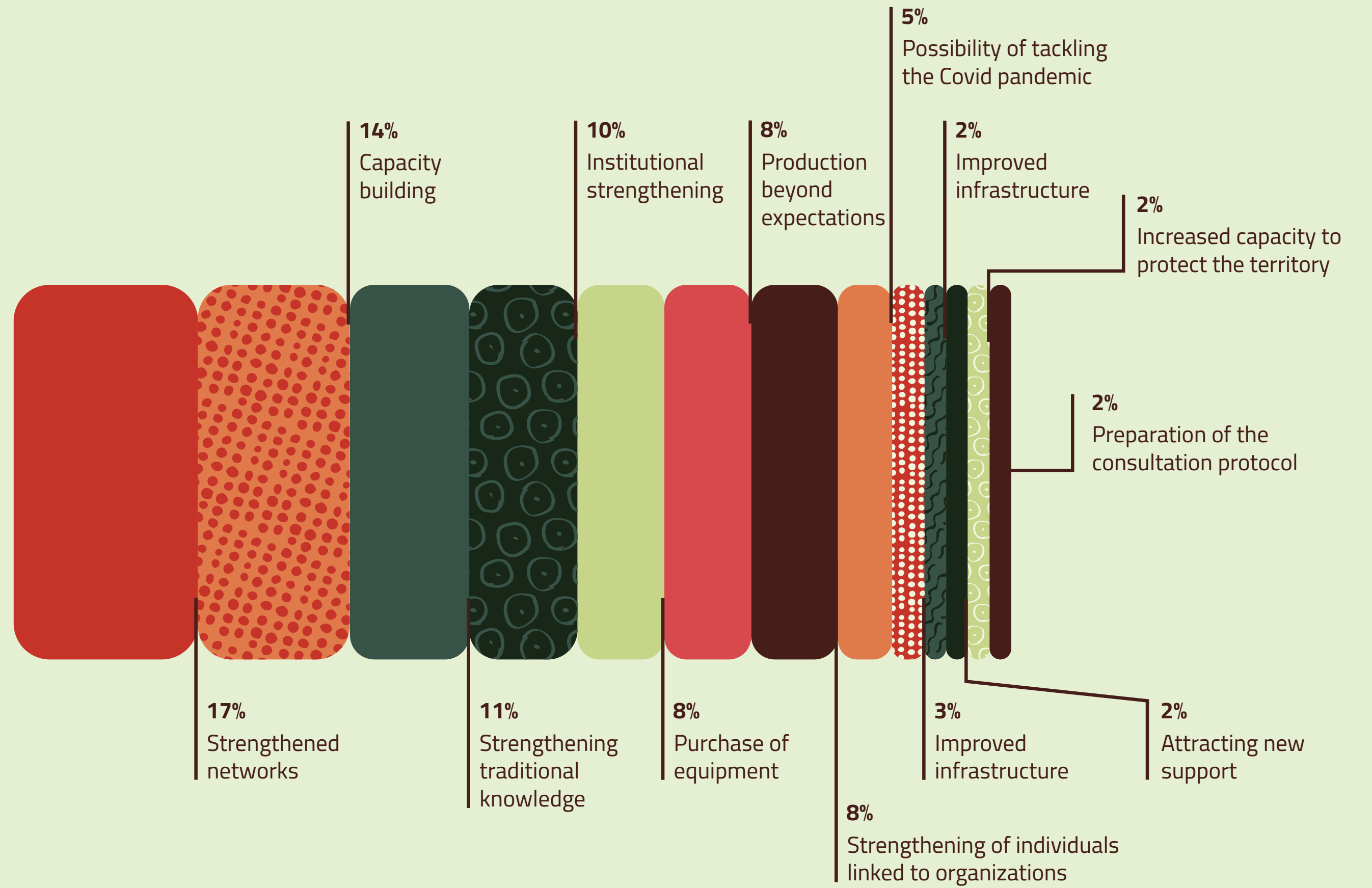
Finally, in this axis, we present the positive results obtained beyond those expected: the study revealed that 63% of completed projects presented results that were above those initially expected. This is important information because, as we have already mentioned, when a territory is supported, other potentials are unlocked in the groups, and many of them carry out many more actions than those initially planned.



**GRAPH 33 — WERE THERE ANY RESULTS ACHIEVED BEYOND WHAT WAS PLANNED BY THE PROJECT?**



**GRAPH 34 — TYPES OF UNEXPECTED RESULTS ACHIEVED**





## A TRANSFORMING DIALOGUE

BY SEVERIÁ IDIORIÊ – DAUGHTER OF THE KARAJÁ AND JAVAÉ, INY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE BANANAL ISLAND. HOLDS A MASTER'S IN EDUCATION FROM IFMT/CUIABÁ. SHE SPECIALIZES IN INDIGENOUS SCHOOL EDUCATION AND IS A TEACHER AT THE SAMUEL SAHUTUWE INDIGENOUS SCHOOL OF BASIC EDUCATION IN THE VILLAGE OF ETENHIRITIPA, IL PIMENTEL BARBOSA, CANARANA, STATE OF MATO GROSSO (MT). SHE IS ALSO AN ADVISOR FOR THE CASA FUND AND THE ICV (INSTITUTO CENTRO DE VIDA) – MT.

It's a joy for me to be able to share my thoughts on the Casa Fund in this important publication. Mainly because I've followed its history from the beginning, as an indigenous member of the Karajá-Javaé ethnic group and, more recently, as a member of the Deliberative Council.

I realize that the Casa Fund, in its relationship with indigenous peoples, lives a process of dialogue with the peoples, seeking greater, deeper, denser knowledge. In this way, the funds raised by the Casa Fund support these peoples and the indigenous organizations, positively impacting the lives of the guardians and defenders of the Amazon and other biomes.

The Casa Fund has a responsibility that's been built together with the indigenous peoples in that it knows them, listens to their demands. Also, having indigenous people among its service providers and on the Board, the possibility of getting it right is higher.

The Casa Fund knows that the protection of territories goes far beyond the protection of a piece of land: it is the protection of the ancestral knowledge of these peoples. This results in an increase in the capacity of

these territories; in the use of traditional technologies alongside new non-indigenous technologies; in the means to carry out monitoring and reporting operations, and in the engagement of women and youth within these communities, strengthening the struggle that has been going on for a long time, ever since the non-indigenous arrived here.

The Casa Fund therefore favors solutions that maintain the protection of lives in the territories, the traditional knowledges, and the new technologies that ensure life. This all happens in a scenario where public policies and the way we relate to the government, especially in recent years, have caused immense problems for our people.

There's no point in us being here, in our territories, carrying out our traditional practices, if the surroundings and the laws have a negative impact on our lives. And when we talk about protecting territories and forests in the Amazon, this means, for example, oxygen emissions that protect everyone and even contribute to reducing many respiratory diseases in big cities. Another example is actions to protect water sources.



When we talk about the Casa Fund, supporting indigenous peoples with resources, it may seem like it's just about money. Not necessarily. Our experience shows that we must go further, ensuring the tradition, philosophy, and cosmovision of these peoples in protecting their territories as a place of life not only for them but also for other peoples.

With the resources from Casa Fund, the communities and organizations themselves can show everyone,

☺ ☺ ☺ **"Look, once we have support, once we have resources, once our ideas are recognized, once the resources are invested in the Forest, in the waters, in institutional strengthening, we have the possibility of continuing to live well because our House is well because our children are well because our youth are well because they'll grow up knowing their way of life at the same time as they learn about new technological possibilities for ensuring this quality of life."**

The results of Casa Fund's support for indigenous peoples show impressive figures and it is essential to make this visible: the quantity and quality of the projects supported, the indigenous organizations that are being supported, in which biomes, and with what results. This data is important for us to see the national panorama and also for donors who need to be aware of what they are supporting and feel motivated to continue with this support.

The continuity of projects from indigenous peoples, riverine communities, and traditional peoples who are really defending the protection of their territories, all over Brazil, in the Amazon, the Cerrado, and other biomes that are also under threat, has everything to do with the Casa Fund.



**SEVERIÁ IDIORIÊ,**  
Board member of the Casa Socioambiental Fund.

Photo: Clara Idioriê

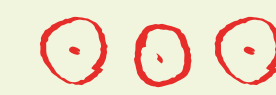


## EXTERNAL DIMENSION – FOREST PROTECTION AND ENSURING CLIMATE BALANCE

To evaluate this dimension, analytical studies were carried out on a sample made up of 56 projects and narrative and financial reports from 48 indigenous associations. The evaluation was conducted by an external consultancy with the support of Casa Fund's technical team.

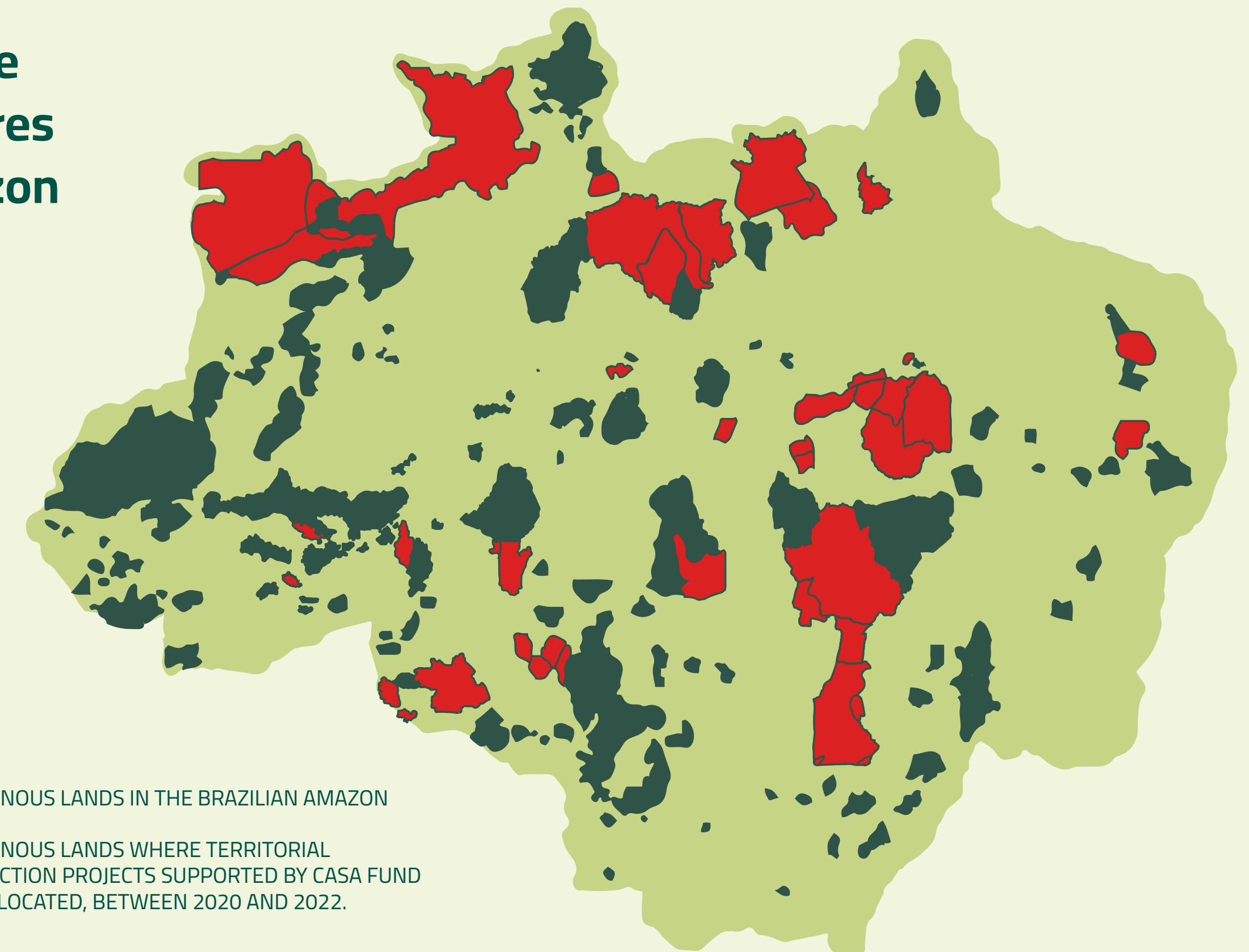
These associations are located in 36 Indigenous Lands in the Madeira-Purus, Rio Negro, Rondônia-Acre, Xingu, and Northern Pará territories. These are places where there is significant environmental integrity.

**The projects contributed to the protection of 63 million hectares of forest in the Brazilian Amazon between 2020 and 2022.**



**"Our constant presence, and the opening of trails and the establishment of footholds have already discouraged the presence of invaders."**

PAITER WAGÔH PAKOB INDIGENOUS CULTURAL CENTRE

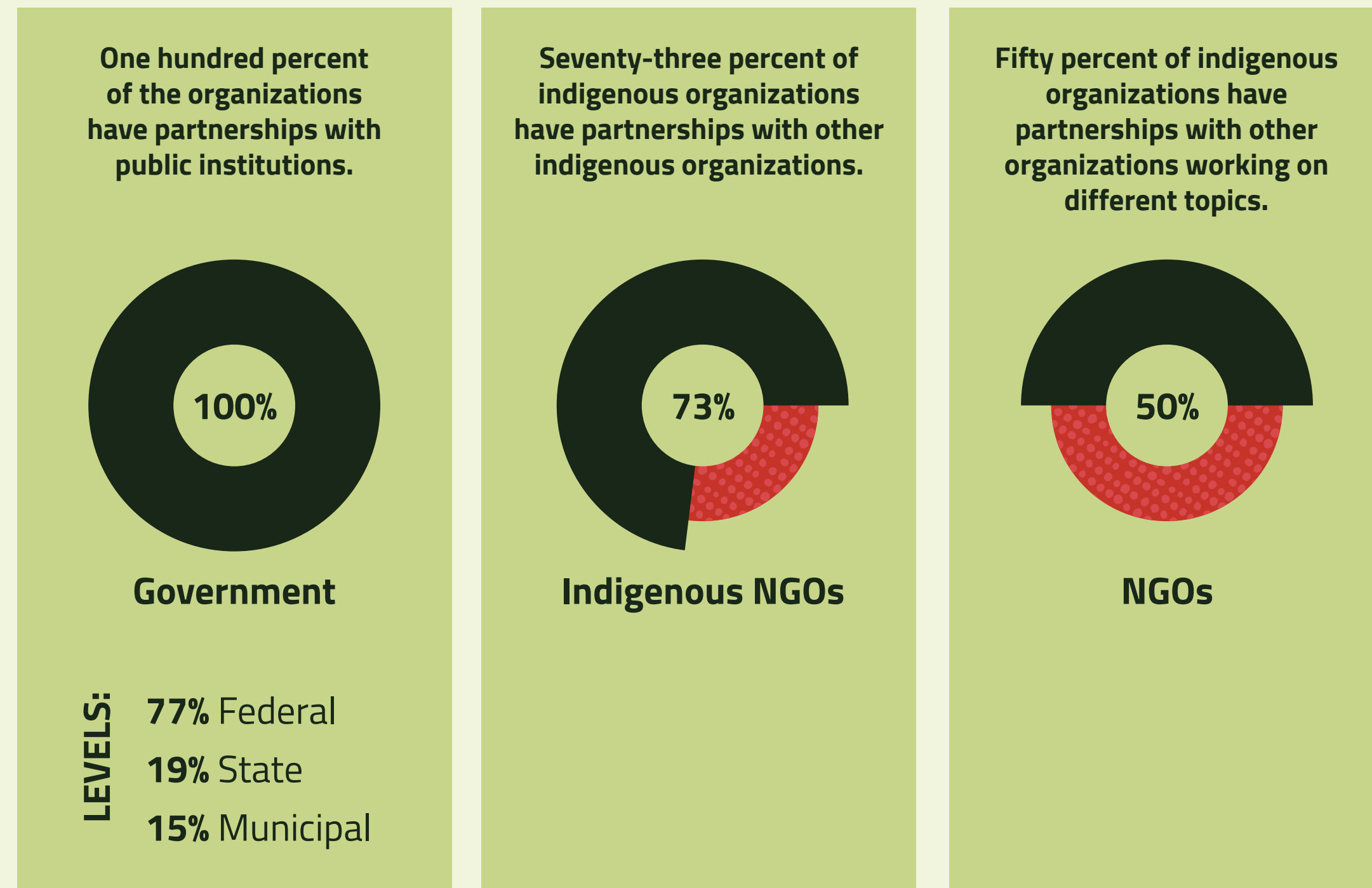




Expanding the territorial integrity of indigenous lands in the Amazon and forest protection is another important axis regarding the grants we make: strengthening the capacity of associations to act to protect their territories and their way of life. This is also intrinsically connected to the capacity of local communities to achieve greater territorial governance and carry out security and surveillance of their territories.

**Next we will present graphs and analyses that demonstrate the associations' perception regarding the expansion of their capacities to implement projects that achieve significant impacts in this dimension and the strategies used.**

**GRAPH 35 — PARTNERSHIPS MADE BY THE ASSOCIATIONS IN THE TERRITORIES**



Indigenous populations have taken on the tough commitment of protecting their territories, and over time they have become excellent liaison agents for carrying out this task. These graphs show their partnership arrangements, which help them gain more strength in their actions. Seventy-seven percent of them have some kind of partnership with the federal government.

It is important to note that 78% of the organizations that are the focus of this analysis have an annual budget of less than BRL 50,000.00 (US\$ 10,000.00).

☺ ☺ ☺ **"The project was so important that it opened up other partnerships and grants to further strengthen our work. Through other calls for proposals, we have obtained more resources to complement our work."**

PAITER WAGÔH PAKOB  
INDIGENOUS CULTURAL CENTRE



By analyzing the graph above, we can identify the diversity of actions that have been carried out and their complementarities, which function as institutional strategies for territorial protection.

**GRAPH 36 — INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR PROTECTING THE TERRITORY**



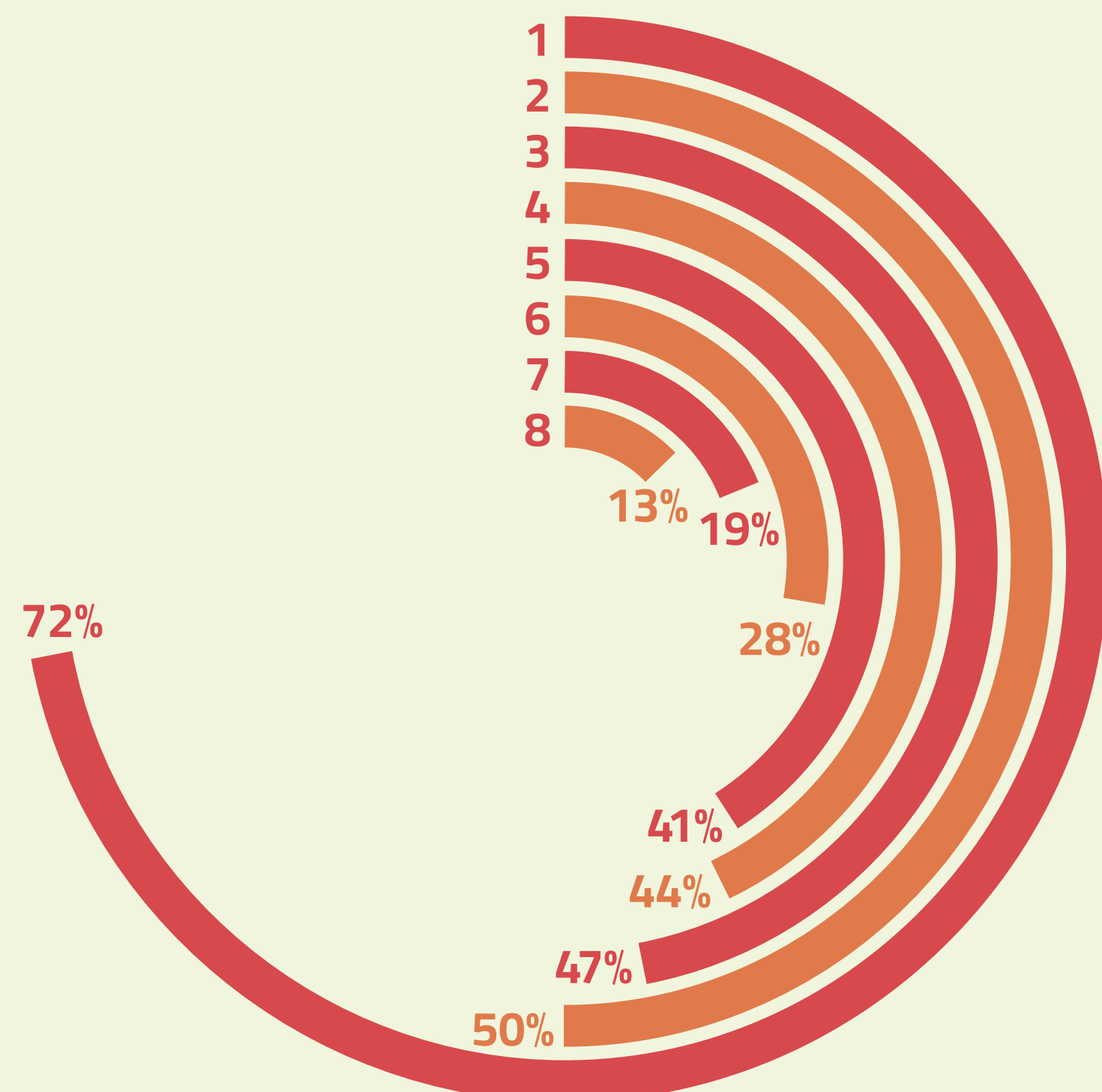
Photo: Alexandre Cruz Noronha

Mariri Yawanawa Festival 2023,  
Yawanawa people - Acre.





**GRAPH 37 — IMPACTS NOTED BY ORGANIZATIONS**



1. Increased institutional capacity for project management and execution, accounting, reporting, monitoring and evaluation
2. Increased knowledge of security and protection
3. Increased knowledge of territorial rights and land protection
4. Increased capacity of the organization to guarantee the protection and security of the territory and the people
5. New strategies applied to protect the territory
6. The initiative implemented covered a significant part of the territory
7. The initiative implemented was limited to a small number of communities/families
8. Execution of actions related to land regularization

In the two graphs above, we can see **that for most of the organizations, the project has managed to increase their institutional and technical capacity in carrying out activities to protect the territory in the above areas.**

Casa Fund's support ensured that most of the institutions strengthened their capacity to protect territories and people.

Seventy-four percent believe that the project has contributed to increasing their capacity to protect their territories.

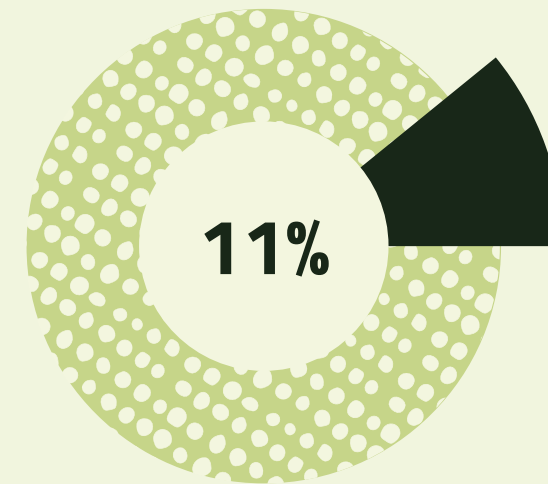




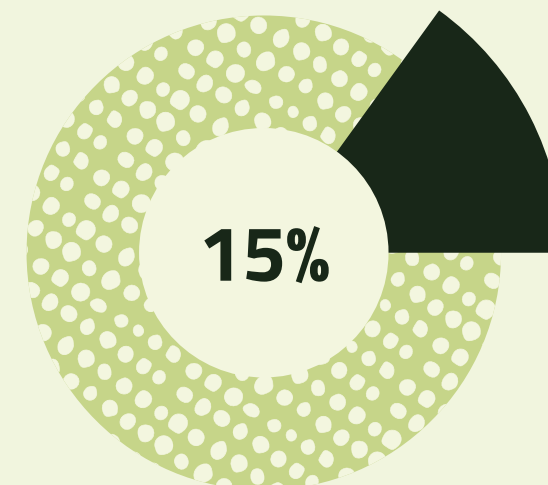
**“For us, the project in partnership with the Casa Fund was very important. This was our first project in our own name and was done almost exclusively by us. We had support from our partner lepê with the documents and accounts, but the work itself was all done by us, in our own ways. This is very important for our development as an association and has given us more confidence to carry out new projects.”**

ASSOCIATION OF THE WAI-WAI  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (APIW)

### ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE PROJECT



**Legal support** to contribute to land regularization processes and the defense of territorial rights.



Contributions to the **preparation for the use of Consultation Protocols.**

### CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE ACTIVITIES

- Learning and updating administrative/institutional knowledge
- Liaison with government bodies to submit complaints

- Strengthening both the trust in the association and the community's collective spirit
- Raising awareness about indigenous rights and territorial management
- The community became more engaged in collective discussions





Photo: Janeraka Institute collection

Map of the Awaete territory, Awaete territorial mapping workshop held by the Janeraka Institute, 2023 - Pará.

There has been a process of strengthening internal legal competences and structures to follow up complaints and demands with public bodies, which are slow to act in the context of threats to indigenous rights and territories. There has also been growing community engagement in drawing up and using management instruments, such as the Consultation Protocol.

### **INTERNAL TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING: POLITICAL ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Fifty percent of the organizations say they have gained more understanding of security, land protection, and territorial rights.

In addition to acquiring new knowledge, the community has become more aware — through the project's activities — of the threats present in the territory. Together with the transmission of knowledge, mobilization strategies to discuss collective issues and build protection mechanisms have proved important.

The community also notices the work of the associations, which strengthens their institutional and representation capacity.

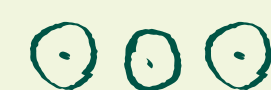
### **CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE PROJECT'S ACTIVITIES:**

- Workshops held during the project become knowledge that is absorbed by the entire community;
- The construction of training spaces helps systematize traditional knowledge and allows organizing documentation that is used to defend rights and present collective demands;
- Percepção geral de que a organização da comunidade e articulação com outros povos é fundamental para defender os direitos indígenas;
- Women and youth became more engaged in discussions and actions to defend indigenous rights.



**EXCHANGE BETWEEN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES: ORGANIZING AND/OR PARTICIPATING IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

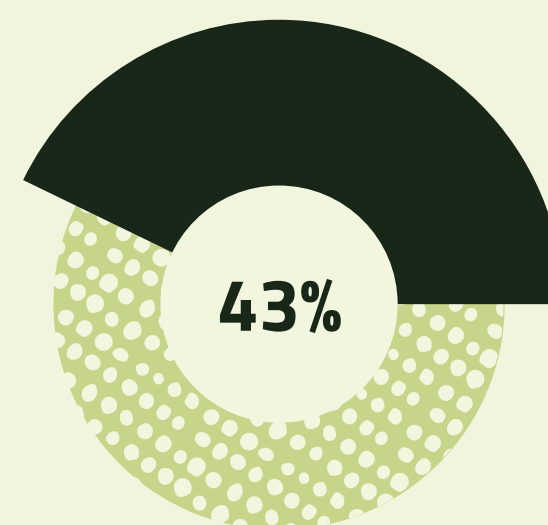
The exchange between different communities has made it possible to share knowledge and identify common demands and has increased the mobilization network in defense of indigenous rights.



**“Important areas of the Jiahui Territory are being visited by local surveillance teams, seeking the presence of the Jiahui indigenous people, who have not been there for a long time due to a lack of structure and logistics to carry out monitoring actions.”**

ASSOCIATION OF THE JIAHUI INDIGENOUS PEOPLE – APIJ.

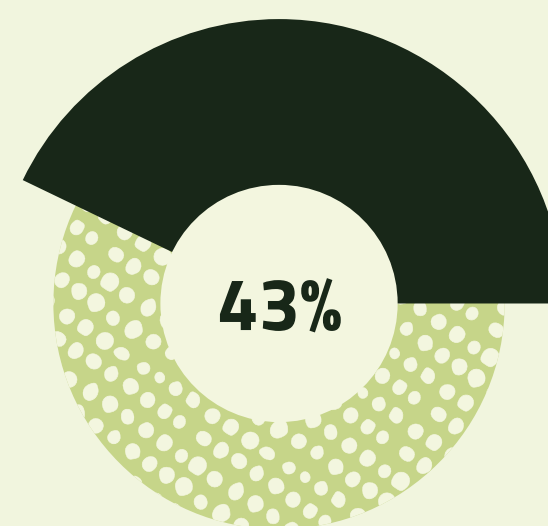
**ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE PROJECT**



**Meetings, assemblies, workshops, and seminars directly focused on territorial rights (definition of action strategies, identification of vulnerabilities, evaluation of practices, etc.).**

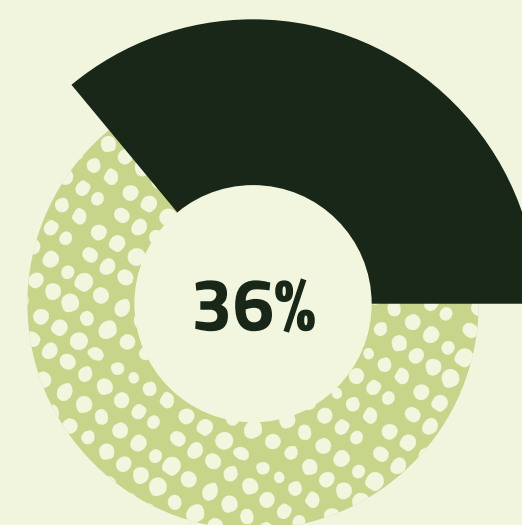
**CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE ACTIVITIES**

- Greater involvement in discussions and collective listening of demands;
- Increased mobilization capacity around the indigenous struggle.



**Advocacy actions by indigenous leaders at meetings, gatherings, and decision-making spaces where territorial rights are being discussed.**

- Learning from meetings with local leaders;
- Articulation with public bodies to present the community’s demands



**Campaigns, mobilization, and networking with other organizations to defend territorial rights.**

- Possibility of widely publicizing violations of indigenous rights;
- Circulation of information of interest between communities;
- Strengthened networking between organizations.



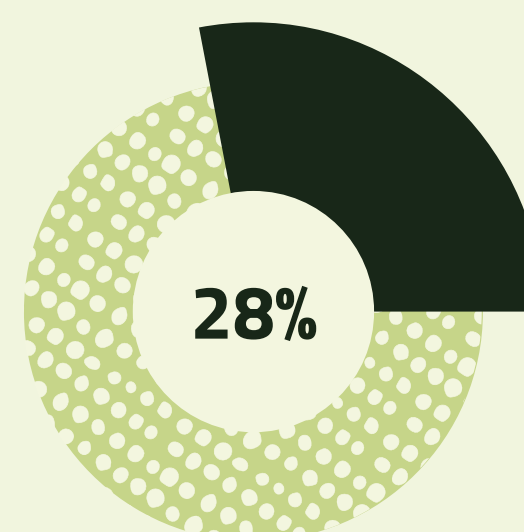
## SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING OPERATIONS

### Four out of ten organizations have managed to apply new tools to land monitoring.

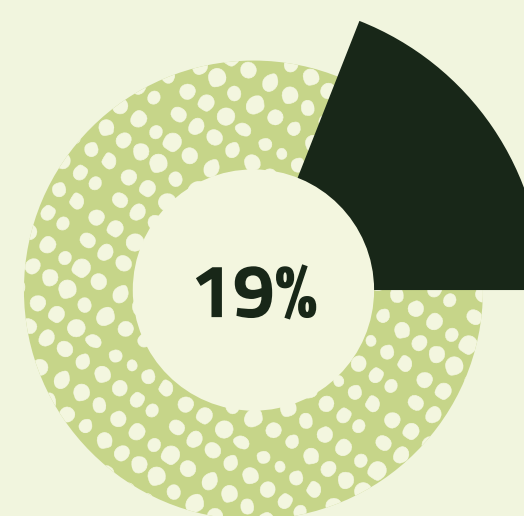
Guaranteeing a communication and technological structure has enabled new activities in the organizations' daily lives, such as the use of the internet to purchase materials, produce information, documentation, liaison with other organizations, and appropriation by the community itself.

It was common for organizations to realize the importance of support to ensure mobility in areas that are difficult to access and therefore more susceptible to lack of inspection. The support allowed organizations to continue their surveillance and monitoring operations.

## ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE PROJECT



Installation of **infrastructure and technologies** (cartography, use of GPS, communication, for example) to protect the territory.



**Development and/or use of technologies** that promote the defense and protection of territory, such as the use of collaborative applications, among others.

## CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE ACTIVITIES

- Use of the internet to purchase equipment and materials and hold meetings;
- Increased articulation and mobilization capacity.

- Mapping and production of qualified information about the territory;
- Community ownership, especially young people, in the use of technologies.



**“The project has changed the concept of working together with the communities, of monitoring the boundaries of the IL monthly. We’ve done a lot of monitoring with photos and coordinates, we’ve found a lot of timber being removed for illegal sale, so the grant has greatly strengthened the association and the Uru Eu Wau Wau indigenous communities. It’s also worth remembering that this was the first project carried out by the Jupaú Association, Jupaú Association’s first project. We learned a lot about project management and it strengthened our fight for autonomy.”**

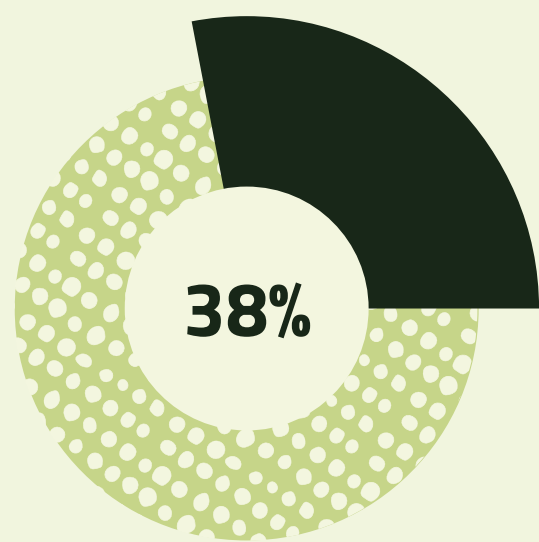
ASSOCIATION OF THE URU-EU-WAU-WAU/JUPAÚ INDIGENOUS PEOPLE





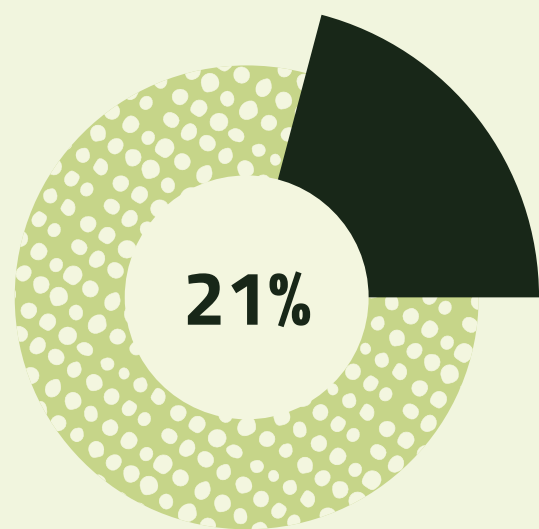
### ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE PROJECT

### CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE ACTIVITIES



**Territorial monitoring**, surveillance actions, expeditions, georeferencing, use of technology for monitoring (e.g. aerial images and use of drones).

- Greater knowledge about the territory and ability to protect it;
- Conducting training, training and recycling workshops to carry out field work.



**Practical and theoretical training initiatives in surveillance** and protection of territories (for territorial monitors, fire brigades, for example).

- Surveillance around the territory benefits other traditional populations.



"The data generated through monitoring is being used to discuss the actions needed to maintain life in the Volta Grande do Xingu region. This project has also enabled all the activities carried out on these piracema islands to be replicated from this year onwards (2022) in riverine communities. In addition, a publication and a platform are being prepared to publicize all the data collected throughout all the monitoring that has taken place in the Indigenous Land, including data collected during the implementation of this project. These results show how important this monitoring has been for the Volta Grande do Xingu region."

KORINA JURUNA INDIGENOUS ASSOCIATION OF PAKISSAMBA VILLAGE – AIKOJUPA



## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CASA FUND AND INDIGENOUS ASSOCIATIONS

The two evaluations used to support this publication assessed the organizations' relationship with and perception of the Casa Fund. This aspect is extremely relevant for an institution that is constantly re-evaluating its strategies.

In a spontaneous sample survey of the two studies evaluating the work carried out by the Casa Fund, the following considerations were made:

### **96% rate their relationship with the Casa Fund as satisfactory**

They point out that the demands were met and the information/guidance they received was clear and useful for the execution of the project.



Photo: Apiwtxa Archive

Meeting of Apiwtxa - Ashaninka Association of the Amônia River, Ashaninka people - Acre.



**POSITIVE POINTS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS:**

- Casa Fund was perceived as a responsible, reliable, and supportive organization;
- Easy communication with the team;
- Flexibility, and capacity for understanding and problem-solving;
- Agility in donation processes;
- Accessible documents;
- Casa Fund listens to local demands;
- Support for improving the management abilities of supported organizations;
- A relationship based on partnership;
- Sensitive to the specificities of indigenous populations;
- Consciously deals with the different levels of maturity of the associations;
- Directs resources to different lines of projects for indigenous populations;
- Flexible in project management while remaining loyal to its partners.

**NEGATIVE POINTS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS:**

- The deadline for submitting reports could be longer;
- The workshops could be held in person;
- Casa Fund makes it impossible to submit new proposals until ongoing projects have been completed.

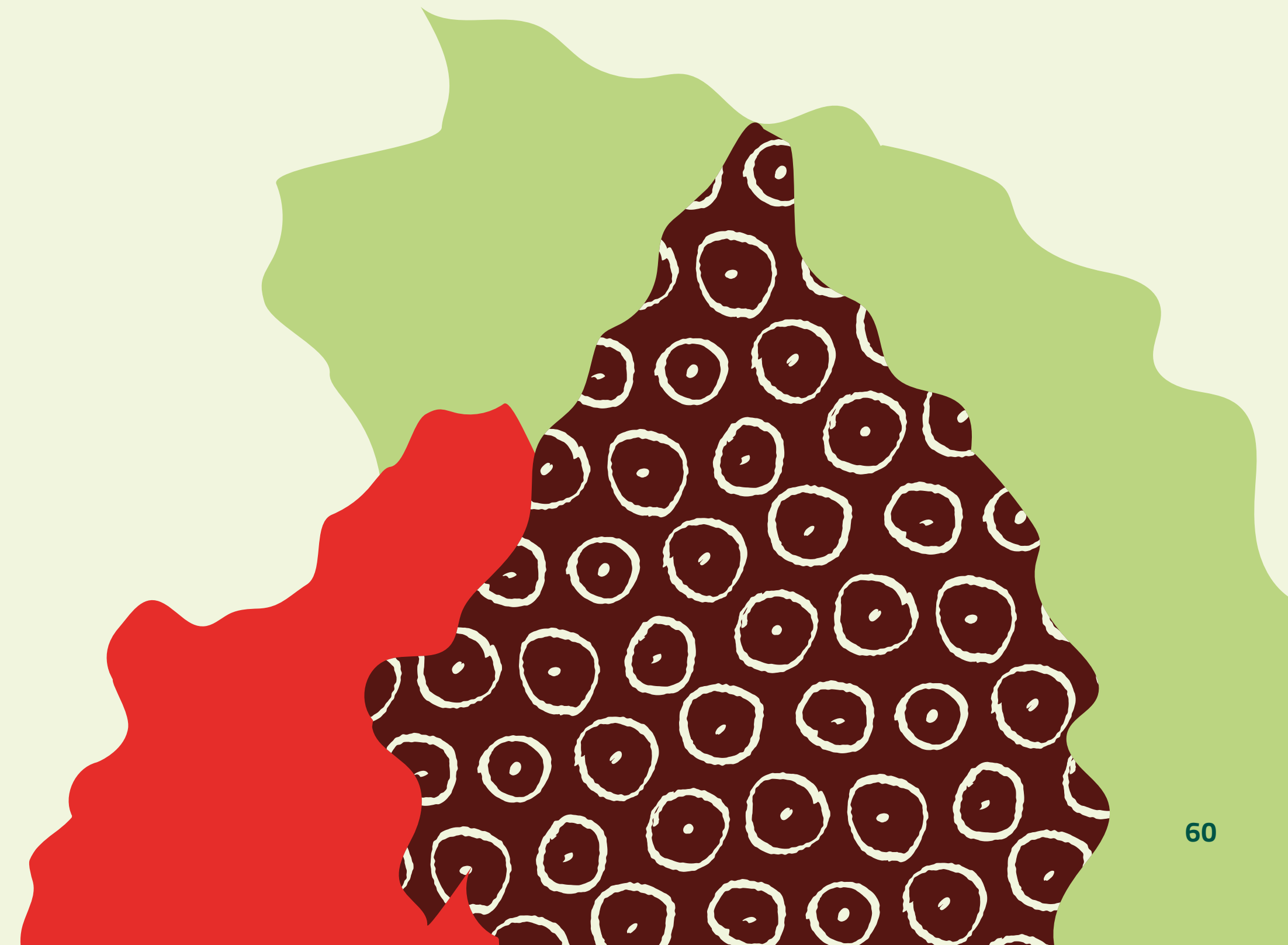






Photo: Marcinildo Saw Munduruku

Açaí harvest, Dace Indigenous Association - Pará.

## THE GROUPS' PERSPECTIVES AFTER RECEIVING THE SUPPORT

The studies showed that the organizations realize that the community is encouraged to continue activities after the project has been carried out, **but there are financial and logistical limitations that create the need to constantly look for other supports and partnerships.**

At this point, we emphasize the need for more permanent funding that is committed to the indigenous cause, taking into account the cultural aspects involved in indigenous support that have already been mentioned.

There is an urgent need to increase the volume of resources that reach the communities and to create safe conditions for this.

### CONTINUITY AND FORWARD-THINKING

There are many work fronts in which the groups are involved since life in the territory interfaces with various activities. The evaluations highlight some of them that need to be continued:

- Work with agriculture;
- Territorial protection with greater capacity for action;
- Internal policies for ongoing training and capacity-building — institutional strengthening, refresher workshops, etc;
- Dissemination of information to ensure visibility of activities related to territorial defense;
- Investment in institutional training;
- Greater participation by women and young people in collective discussions.



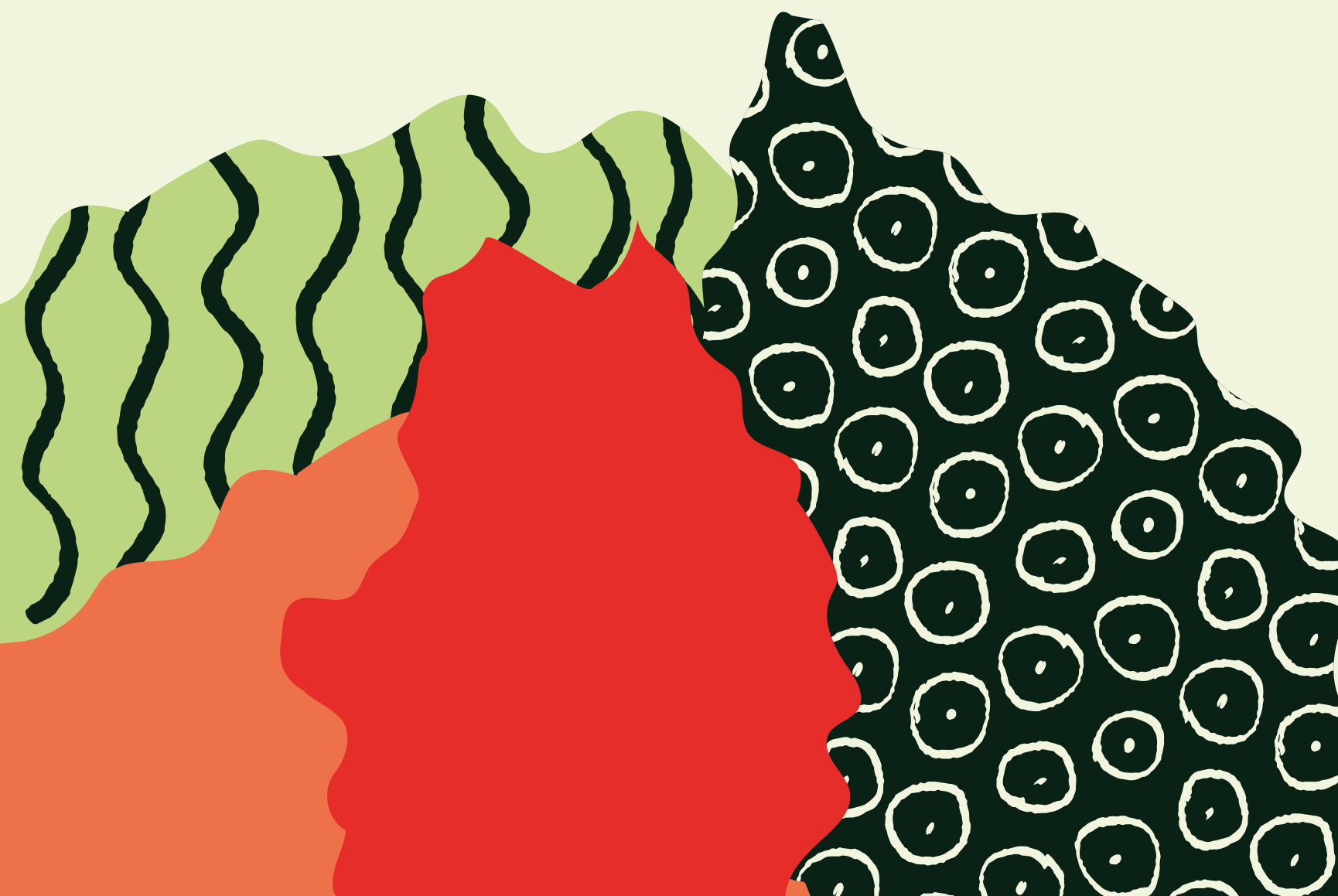
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## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study was an attempt to bring together all the experience of the Casa Fund, as well as all of its memorable, long-term dedication, in order to demonstrate that when there is a will, it is indeed possible to provide resources directly to indigenous populations in a careful and respectful way with their ancestral cultures and knowledge. It is also clear throughout the study that indigenous populations have an enormous interest in strengthening their autonomy and proposing and implementing projects that reflect their particular way of being in the world. In a quick recap, this is what we learned from this study:

Among the **positive factors brought by the support** and that were emphasized by most are increased participation in discussions of collective interest; the conduction of activities that strengthened the dialogue between the community, local leaders, and organizations, increasing the capacity for mobilization; the exchange of knowledge between different generations and communities; the strengthening of the relationship between indigenous movements and State actors, national and international organizations.

The **activities that were most frequently carried out** by the projects involved actions to protect and monitor territories with the use of surveillance initiatives, expeditions, geo-referencing, and the use of technology (such as aerial images and drones) for monitoring.





The **key results of the projects** are the exchange of knowledge between generations and greater knowledge about the territory; communities became more aware of indigenous rights and territorial management; strategic occupation within the IL boundaries; identification of places where irregularities occur; youth engaged with communication, action recording, and monitoring technologies; survey of plant species that have market potential; training of personnel in surveillance and territorial protection actions; documentation of the impacts of hydroelectric plants on aspects related to water resources such as river flow levels, water quality and fishing activity; greater autonomy to demand action from regulating agencies.

The **efficiency of local associations in carrying out the actions** proves that the vast majority of organizations (84%) have achieved the proposed objectives, demonstrating capacity, resolution, and collective awareness. Among the advances highlighted are the development of monitoring operations against invasion and illegal exploitation, as well as documentation of the threats posed by major construction projects; community engagement with the participation of women and young people in actions; the recovery of areas for the cultivation of crops; participation in external activities; the development of a consultation protocol; and the visibility of territorial defense activities.

In this way, we end this study by demonstrating that there are plenty of reasons to continue expanding donations to indigenous communities since they present low risk and numerous positive results.



Photo: Breno Terra

Detail of leaf ornament, Tikmũ'ün Forest School Village, Maxakali people - Minas Gerais.





## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS

After reflecting on the results of this study, especially as it relates to our work at the interface with the field of philanthropy, we agree that what becomes strikingly evident is something that has always been questioned, both by society and by the field of philanthropy in general. The study reveals that indigenous peoples do have the interest and capacity to propose and implement their own solutions, manage resources to fulfill their vision for the future and strengthen their institutions to achieve full autonomy. This is possible when there is the appropriate methodology, a deep understanding of the issues that affect the territories, the willingness to support the steps of this institutional consolidation, and, above all, attentive, sensitive listening to accommodate the challenges of the process and, ultimately, overcome them. It is precisely for this purpose that the Casa Fund has been meticulously designed over many years.

To directly support, in just six years, indigenous associations belonging to more than half of Brazil's ethnic groups is something unprecedented — from what we know of the philanthropic field, we are sure that this has never been done before at such an intensity and in such a short time. And it is no coincidence that it was the Casa Fund that achieved this goal, as it was from this profound holistic vision of the peoples themselves that it was born. Translating the forest peoples' way of inhabiting the planet, and their way of mobilizing and making resources available for the forests to thrive and flourish, is Casa Fund's greatest mission, its absolute purpose. This study indisputably demonstrates the combination of purpose and method, but it also shows the care and love that goes into this work.



As it becomes clear from the survey on the demand for support from indigenous peoples presented at the beginning of this study: “In six years (2018 to 2023) the Casa Fund received requests for support amounting to **US\$ 38,034,609.00**. During this same period, we were able to support a the total amount of US\$15.532.962.90,00, which represents meeting 41% of the total number of requests for funds.” This means that we have many challenges ahead of us to assemble all the funds to meet this demand; but also, as we have seen here, it is possible to meet it if the funds are available because the Casa Fund model can be easily expanded, as we have done over time.

This is a message to the field of philanthropy to reconsider its strategies and increase the availability of resources for this type of approach, starting with local funds, comprised of local actors who have a deep understanding of their realities. May studies such as those presented by the HRFN finally succeed in causing discomfort and questioning old habits that are no longer useful for the planet and humanity. May they show that there are new ways of financing the integral protection of our planet’s great biomes, based on the absolute recognition of the capacity of their guardians to guide us towards the prospect that all of humankind still has a future on this planet. Now is the time!

In recent years, there has been a new process that must be recognized: the emergence of funds for indigenous peoples and other traditional populations. Most are still taking their first steps, and some already have direct financial support from the Casa Fund. In addition to financial resources, however, the Casa Fund understands the difficulties of setting up and growing a local fund. That is why Casa Fund is ready to support each of these initiatives in any way it can. The closer a fund is to its audience, the more capable it is of understanding their actual demands and meeting them. But from our experience, we know the difficulties along the way. And just as we have stumbled so many times, we are now very pleased to be able to support these new paths of theirs. Our experience is particularly useful for social movements because that is where we came from. May legitimate initiatives that are rooted in their own communities and populations be born and flourish. We will be here to support them in whatever way we can.

We would like to thank our funding partners who have made it possible for more than US\$6 million to go directly into the hands of indigenous communities so that they can take back the reins of their lives, in some cases, or strengthen them in others, and protect their territories and fortify their paths to the future. We would like to thank our team, which is deeply dedicated to carrying out its work with respect



Photo: Collection Iauaretê District

Indigenous Women's Association





Photo: Denise Farias

ATL - Free Land Camp in  
Brasília, 2023.

and acceptance towards the communities with whom we have the privilege of working. And we are especially grateful to the indigenous associations that we were able to support, for their trust and partnership with the Casa Fund over the years, teaching us the best ways to achieve this great feat of bringing resources to strengthen their purposes. We hope to be able to do much more, and we hope that this study will serve as unquestionable evidence that this path is solid and must be expanded until all peoples and all ethnic groups are contemplated and strengthened to do what they do best: protect this planet for all of us.

**CRISTINA ORPHEO** – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**MARIA AMALIA SOUZA** – FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR  
OF STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT



## SOURCES

— **Casa Fund Data Management Base 2015-2023.**

— **Report 1 on the Evaluative Systematization of the project “Strengthening indigenous territorial rights in the Brazilian Amazon”:**

**Execution:** Rede Conhecimento Social.

**Methodology:** Participatory analysis of the materials sent by the Casa Fund through collaborative meetings with the team and interviews with indigenous leaders from supported organizations. The qualitative materials were evaluated, and the responses to the instruments were transformed into quantitative data.

**Sample:** C61 projects from associations supported as of February 2020, which should have lasted a year and a half, but 13 projects ended in December 2022.

— **Report 2 on the Evaluative Systematization of Indigenous Projects randomly selected from the**

**Database — supported by the Casa Fund until December 2023:**

**Execution:** Consultants Rodrigo Moreira, Guilherme Oliveira.

**Methodology:** Analysis of qualitative materials, transforming responses to instruments into quantitative data; analyses of projects, reports, and interviews with project leaders and the Casa Fund team.

**Sample:** This study analyzed a sample of 375 projects from the Casa Fund database (2018–2021), 120 reports, and interviews with 10 organizations.

— **Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN) study:** The trust gap: The Troubling Lack of Direct, Flexible Funding for Human Rights in the Global South and East. <https://www.hrfn.org/trust-gap/>





Foto: Alexandre Cruz-Noronha

Festival Mariri Yawanawa 2023, povo Yawanawa - Acre.





[WWW.CASA.ORG.BR/EN](http://WWW.CASA.ORG.BR/EN)