



fundo casa
SOCIOAMBIENTAL
Casa Socio-Environmental Fund

GUARDIANS OF THE FORESTS

Financing for climate resilience

*Lessons learned about providing
financial and other support directly
to traditional and local communities*

GUARDIANS OF THE FORESTS – FINANCING FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE

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“Traditional communities are at the forefront of both the impacts of the climate crisis and the fairest and most innovative adaptation and mitigation solutions we have. These are social technologies implemented in many territories

where the state is not present and the most basic public policies cannot be fully implemented. In this sense, financial support such as those provided by the Casa Socioambiental Fund with a focus on communities that defend territories are essential to catalyze the impact of protecting the biomes that these groups already exercise, further improving the quality of life of these people and increasingly empowering these groups.”

**JOÃO
HENRIQUE**

Election Climate

**MARCOS
WESLEY
PEDROSO**

Tapajós de Fato

“Climate change affects everyone, some social groups, such as forest peoples, who suffer the effects and often fail to relate changes in the natural environment as a reflection of the destruction due to climate change. **The importance of the Casa Fund support for Tapajós de Fato has been essential to promote a democratization of access to information on climate change in the Tapajós and lower Amazonas region.** The process of informing and raising awareness contributes to the preservation of rivers and forests, and, consequently, the well-being of local peoples.”

INTRODUCTION

The transformations of the planet's climate have intensified in recent years, the temperatures of the oceans and the atmosphere have increased and generated extreme and atypical climate around the world. Heat waves, droughts and wildfires have intensified, as could be seen in the summer of 2022, especially in Europe. According to the United Nations Environment Program - UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization - WMO [1], the last six years were the warmest recorded since 1880, with 2016, 2019 and 2020 being the first three on this list. The year 2020 was 1.2°C above the temperatures of the pre-industrial era (1880). The WMO predicts that there is a 20% probability that the temperature rise will temporarily exceed 1.5°C as early as 2024 [1]. In the long term, the impacts of the increase in global temperature can bring catastrophic results for humanity, such as the scarcity of



ANDRÉ HENRIQUE NASCIMENTO - PROJECT: FAMILY INCOME WITH THE FLAVORS OF THE SEA. PHOTO: ATTILIO ZOLIN/ CASA SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL FUND

drinking water, floods and sea level rises, droughts, food insecurity and, consequently, migratory crises.

One of the ways to mitigate the increase in the planet's temperature is to keep the forests standing, and this is a great challenge. The world's largest rainforest, the Amazon, faces major threats and registers record deforestation. Other South American biomes, such as the Cerrado, Pantanal and the Atlantic Forest are also under pressure. But there is hope since there are ways for humanity to live in balance with forests and at the same time help in their recovery. The projects supported by Casa Socio-Environmental Fund in its 17 years of operation show that this other path is possible. These are initiatives of indigenous, quilombola e riverine peoples, extractivists and other types of traditional populations that teach us that it is possible to live in harmony with the forests, and more,

protecting them from external threats. It is increasingly evident that there are no better guardians for the forests than those who are children of the forests and rivers – where these communities are present, active and strengthened, it is possible to observe the preservation of life.

Mobilizing and allocating resources for these communities to remain and thrive in their territories is a specialty of Casa Fund, which has been working with a methodology that is constantly improving for the last two decades. Now, more than ever, it is critical that we support communities that effectively protect forests and carry out this role that will be so vital for humanity until the end of the 21st century. If we need forests to maintain the Earth's climate, humanity needs the traditional peoples ever more strengthened so that future generations can also appreciate and relish our planet.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITIONAL POPULATIONS IN PROTECTING FORESTS



The presence of traditional populations in their territories is directly linked to the preservation of forests, and recent studies demonstrate this relationship. In 2021, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - FAO, released the Report “Indigenous Peoples and Traditional Communities and Forest Governance” [2] with evidence that traditional peoples are the true guardians of Latin American and Caribbean forests. For the compilation of this report, more than 300 scientific articles were analyzed, which together showed that no one takes better care of forests than these peoples. While the area of intact forest decreased by only 4.9% between 2000 and 2016 in

indigenous areas of the region, in non-indigenous areas it decreased by 11.2%. According to the report, the rate of deforestation within indigenous forests, where land ownership has been secured, is 2.8 times lower than outside these areas in Bolivia, 2.5 times lower in Brazil and 2 times lower in Colombia. [2].

These data show the importance of respecting the voice and vision of these traditional populations, which must be taken into account in all global initiatives and structures related to climate change such as biodiversity, among many other topics. Indigenous peoples and traditional communities participate in the governance of 320 to 380 million

hectares of forests in Latin America and the Caribbean, which store around 34 billion metric tons of carbon, more than all forests in Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Congo combined. Territories inhabited by traditional peoples contain about one third of all carbon stored in Latin America and the Caribbean forests and 14% of carbon stored in the world's tropical forests.

In Brazil, according to MapBiomás [3], Indigenous Territories are among the main barriers against the advance of deforestation. In the last 30 years, indigenous lands have lost only 1% of their native vegetation area, while in privately owned areas the loss was 20.6%. Between 1990 and 2020, this destruction amounted to 69 million hectares, of which only 1.1 million took place on indigenous lands. Another 47.2 million hectares were deforested in private areas. However, in recent years since the beginning of the current government in January 2019, the number of episodes of invasions, deforestation and land grabbing of areas in indigenous territories, demarcated or not, has increased.



LUÍZA CAVALCANTE - SÍTIO ÁGATHA. PHOTO: ATTILIO ZOLIN/
CASA SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL FUND



The rate of primary forest loss in Brazil has remained persistently high in recent years. Fire-related loss fluctuated depending on the level of wildfires. The historical peaks of fires in the Amazon and Pantanal were recorded between 2019 and 2020. These data are from PRODES, Brazil's official monitoring system, which showed that 2021 had the highest rate of deforestation in the Legal Amazon since 2006, when measures were implemented to drastically reduce deforestation. In some states, this increase was more than 25% between 2020 and 2021.

According to the study "Forests need people" [4] by the Instituto Socioambiental - ISA (Socio-Environmental Institute), about 30% of all forests in Brazil are in protected areas (indigenous lands, quilombola territories and conservation reserves) with traditional population presence. The study also highlights the importance of these populations in preserving forests. Indigenous lands alone are responsible for protecting 20.3% of Brazil's forests. Conservation reserves, where traditional occupation is permitted (Resex and RDS), also showed better results in terms of environmental preservation and regeneration.



RESTRUCTURING OF THE WAUJA PEPPER PRODUCTION CHAIN.
PHOTO: TULUKAI INDIGENOUS ASSOCIATION, WAUJA PEOPLE.

Science and data have proven the important role of forest peoples in reducing deforestation rates and avoiding greenhouse gas emissions whilst also reducing biodiversity loss. However, more investments are needed to face the threats that grow every day.

LOCAL MEASURES TO MITIGATE GLOBAL IMPACTS

Strengthening traditional populations in their territories is also strengthening forest protection, and the Casa Socio-Environmental Fund is a partner of grass-roots organizations that are involved directly with this challenge. Also according to the Report "Indigenous Peoples and Traditional Communities", there are measures that are capable of facing the threats to forests and the peoples that inhabit them and among them are the following actions:



Strengthen territorial rights;



Compensate for environmental services;



Promote community forest management;



Reaffirm traditional cultures and knowledge;



Support territorial governance and organizational structures for indigenous peoples and populations living in forests: quilombolas, riverside dwellers, fishermen, extractivists.

For almost two decades Casa Socio-Environmental Fund has been creating ways to directly support traditional populations and native peoples. It always works through networks of trust created throughout its history, within a set of values, shared practices around local protagonism and the valorization of collective work.

Casa Fund has developed technology to strengthen these community groups, promoting autonomy and independence with the main premise being listening, so as to truly respond to the real needs and demands of communities. What we do is BE the bridge that makes it possible for large funds to access community-based groups with all the care and security that their fragility requires. At the same time, we act as a filter for the communities by taking care of how this resource reaches them. We facilitate processes and offer information and institutional strengthening tools so that they are able to grasp the processes that will enable them to create sustainable economic self-sufficiency by eventually accessing other sources of resources and therefore expand their actions.



PHOTO: THIAGO RODRIGUES/QUILOMBO RUFINOS.

Despite this aggregating and formative role, we were often described as an intermediary fund, a category which emerged in the Global North to structurally define funds that raise money to donate. This generalization has been a problem for funds like ours, whose founders are, in fact, people and organizations with a history of activism in the field of environmental protection aligned with social justice. We don't just pass on the resources. We have a much more strategic role, since we are fully aware that there would be no other way to ensure that crucial resources for the protection of large biomes reach the most excluded and vulnerable populations. This requires deep knowledge of the field in which we operate, and relationships of trust and reciprocity that go far beyond a mere "pass through".

We know that it is a long and complex path for communities to be prepared to receive resources directly from more demanding sources. Casa Fund provides the tools and conditions for grassroots organizations to create autonomy in their internal project management processes and also in the development of joint monitoring and evaluation processes.

Valuing culture and traditional knowledge, prioritizing the role of youth and women are part of the fundamental recognition necessary for this path to be successfully followed.



ABOUT THE CASA SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL FUND

With financial, capacity building and technological support, Casa Fund promotes environmental sustainability, democracy, respect for socio-environmental rights and social justice. Casa Fund has a support network that mobilizes resources, provides the necessary support to design a project and budget, and strengthens the capacities of supported groups so that they are able to manage their projects directly.

Among the technologies developed by Casa Fund, there is an advanced and secure database that stores important information about all proposals received and projects supported, allowing for monitoring from the contracting phase until the rendering of accounts. This database allows the cross-referencing of information so as to generate reports and analysis that are used to determine the organization's strategies.

As a value of Casa Fund, we emphasize the learning construction approach with local groups and knowledge production for the field of philanthropy — knowledge based on listening, observation, monitoring and evaluation of projects over the course of almost two decades.

Over the years, Casa Fund **has been privileged** to work with a huge diversity of indigenous peoples, quilombolas, artisanal fishermen, extractivists, family farmers and activist citizens in the search for real and sustainable transformation.

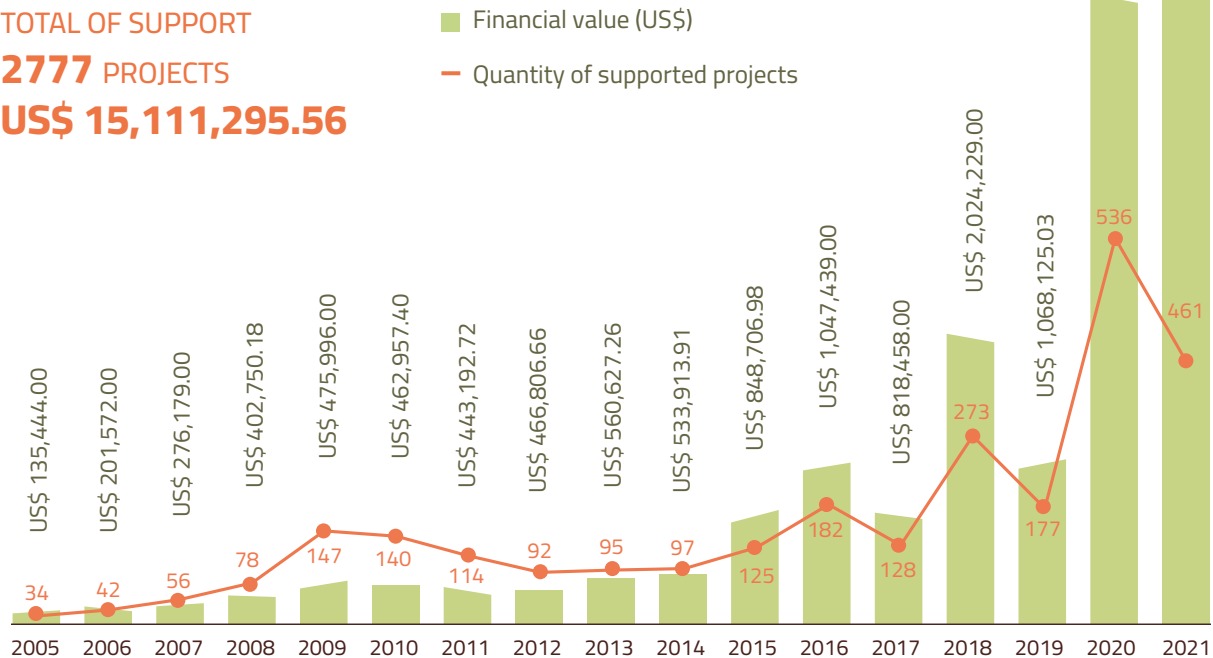
History of donated resources and projects supported by Casa Fund from 2005 to 2021.

US\$3,535,017.85

TOTAL OF SUPPORT

2777 PROJECTS

US\$ 15,111,295.56



The guiding principles for the selections made are:

SUPPORT for concrete actions and capacity building initiatives of the socio-environmental movement;

ACTIONS that promote sustainable local development;

STRENGTHENING the capacities of organizations to assume control of priorities and strategic agendas that affect their lives;

EXPANSION and qualification of society's participation in monitoring and engagement with public policies;

PRIORITY to the implementation of strategic actions that connect local, national and international work levels– synergistic actions;

PRIORITY support for innovative projects that create environmental solutions;

ASSISTENCE for small and medium-sized organizations to discover funding sources and prepare them to raise funds;

RESPONDING to emergency issues and necessities in this field.

The priorities for support are:

SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED grassroots organizations, traditional populations, human rights and citizenship organizations that work on socio-environmental issues and the sustainability of human development;

GROUPS that influence and monitor 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 with the participation of young people for the formation of new leaderships;

SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL groups that strongly consider gender balance.

*A quilombo is a Brazilian hinterland settlement founded by people of African origin.



WOMEN FROM QUILOMBO* PICADA. PHOTO: ATTILIO ZOLIN/
CASA SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL FUND

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED ALONG THIS JOURNEY



When we talk about supporting sustainable solutions for communities, challenges certainly appear. And one of them is scale: how to replicate models in such peculiar realities and populations with such diversity of race and culture. Another challenge refers to recognizing the connection between the various dimensions existing in the territories where communities are involved and which are intrinsically connected to health, education, income and how much any event can interfere in this scenario.

To overcome these challenges, it is necessary to look at the territories as a whole. A biome that contains several types of human occu-

pation, as well as needing to be protected, regenerated and offer decent living conditions to its populations, cannot have its integrity put at risk. For this to be possible, it is necessary to understand these realities from the perspective of systems thinking. Like any living organism, from the human body to the planet itself, biomes have an intelligent self-regulation system that maintains and protects life. In this process, each part has a role in maintaining the balance of the system, including all beings that live in it.

When any one of the parts goes out of balance, it can negatively impact the whole. The greater the ability and speed with which

other parts of the system can identify the disturbance (ie, the ability to communicate and provide feedback), the faster they can correct it and bring it back into balance. Based on this approach, Casa Fund makes its contributions, maintains itself part of the relationships, of the internal communications, of the networks, of the entire universe where it proposes to act.

By identifying the leverage points in the system where interference can be positive, a vicious circle can be transformed into a virtuous circle – this is what we seek to do with our contributions. And, in our case, there are many simultaneous contributions in various parts of the system, conducting different factors so as to, together, produce many virtuous circles that connect and feed each other. Together with multiple positive factors within the system itself (such as local knowledge, the determination and will of the communities,

and many others), they give strength to this web of self-healing and regeneration of the whole. Within this vision, each community and group evaluates its own territory and proposes solutions involving a range of aspects, dealing with the entire context and the relationships that connect with the fight against climate change.

A small support is an entry or insertion point into the system to drive positive processes. This mechanism, when carefully and thoughtfully stimulated, is capable of generating results beyond the stimulus, exponentially, as well as fostering countless other connections. The Casa Fund, through its programs, has been systematically supporting the processes of communities for good living, projects that strengthen the socio-environmental rights of communities and that are connected with the fight against climate change, a topic to which we draw attention in this summary of our activities.



Themes that connect in the support

PERIOD BETWEEN 2019 AND 2021

The projects supported by Casa Fund, in general, have themes that connect with each other and have **direct connections with climate mitigation and adaptation** (2019-2021), as shown below:



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AXIS

**Defense of Human and
Environmental Rights /
Surveillance and monitoring
of the territory**

132 projects
US\$ 1,090,824.60

Forest protection

236 projects
US\$ 2,302,436.37



URBAN COMMUNITIES AXIS

**Active mobility, country-city
connection, collaborative
territories**

132 projects
US\$ 1,246,113.13



DEFENDERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE JUSTICE AXIS

83 projects
US\$ 890,884.48



SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS AXIS

**Access to water/energy/
sanitation/solid waste**

269 projects
US\$ 1,620,045.27



FOOD SOVEREIGNTY SECURITY AXIS

**Agroecology/
Family agriculture**

272 projects
US\$ 1,771,660.72



ENERGY AXIS

Impacts by megaprojects –
energy and energy transition

52 projects

US\$ 264,799.78



SOCIAL CONTROL AND PUBLIC POLICY AXIS

Capacity Building, Incidences,
Mobilizations, Rights of
Traditional Populations

117 projects

US\$ 970,669.17



INCOME GENERATION AXIS

Integrated management of
supply chains/certification/
marketing/stocks

247 projects

US\$ 1,654,516.00



MARIA VANUSA VIEIRA - PROJECT: FAMILY INCOME WITH THE FLAVORS OF THE SEA. PHOTO: ATTILIO ZOLIN/CASA SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL FUND



LUÍZA CAVALCANTE - SÍTIO ÁGATHA. PHOTO: ATTILIO ZOLIN/
CASA SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL FUND

Based on the experience acquired
by Casa Fund, we highlight some
important points and lessons learned
over the last 17 years:

PROTAGONIST COMMUNITIES - action based on the recognition of communities as political entities, protagonists of local transformation processes.

INNOVATION AND LISTENING – There is a process of deep listening to the communities that serves as a guide for the actions to be implemented, guaranteeing their protagonism in the transformation process. Support for pioneers, and the particular ability to understand the demands and needs of communities, are great assets of Casa Fund.

WORKING IN NETWORKS AND STRENGTHENING LOCAL NETWORKS – the challenges are enormous, therefore, in order to face them, operating in Networks is essential, either by strengthening existing ones, or responding to the demands of creating new networks.

ASSERTIVE METHODOLOGY AND SCALE –

The entire process of selection, approval and monitoring of projects and support relies on a large collaborative network in the territories. This exponentially enhances our capillarity and reach to the most distant groups - within processes and bonds with relationships of trust.

FOCUS ON DONATIONS/ ACCESS DEMOCRATIZATION TO FINANCIAL RESOURCES –

Casa Fund dedicates more than 70% of its budget to direct donations to community groups. This proves that our operation is based on a methodology that results in exceptional cost/benefit compared to other philanthropic structures, putting its activity/mission as a donor first; here the focus is on the largest possible amount of funds distributed across the territories.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND PEER LEARNING –

Capacity building actions developed together with groups are considered strategic and complementary to support, creating conditions for the group's autonomy, providing a set of tools and knowledge for them to grow as institutions and collectives. We recognize the importance of collective learning through

exchanges, local/regional/thematic networks, and community communication.

LOCAL SOLUTIONS AND GOOD LIVING –

The importance of supporting reconstruction actions that favor a dignified and full life, as well as being more sustainable, has always been a priority, using the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs as globally recognized reference bases. Actions that benefit and protect the most vulnerable, while advancing efforts to combat climate change and maintain the integrity of ecosystems.

ECONOMIC AUTONOMY IN COMMUNITIES AND TERRITORIES –

the focus on co-existence with the forest, added to the fact that ensuring rights often relegated to traditional communities residing in forest territories, promotes a fair distribution of income for the defenders of these forests. In this sense, it is necessary to recognize the natural role of traditional peoples and communities in the construction and implementation of an economic transition agenda, based on the green economy or bioeconomy. It is within communities and territories that solutions exist.

URGENCY & EMERGENCY - Resources need to reach grassroots communities and defenders quickly, therefore it is important to have empathy and understand that the local contexts of territories are dynamic, and that it is necessary for defenders to have access to resources quickly and safely. It is important to establish relationships and links with defenders' support networks, as well as strengthen their access to legal advice.

COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL - Supporting local collective actions produces deeper responses to problems, with more efficiency and with better results. In addition to not only personifying individualities, the collective fundings contribute to strengthening the community in favor of common issues. In the case of defenders, collective support needs to be planned as a way to reduce violence against leaders and leading toward collective protection.

SYSTEMIC VISION - It is important to act within a holistic, integrated and systemic vision of the territories and their communities.

EMPATHY – Working with communities and in the field of climate change is to address the issue of extreme events that cause deep damage to communities. The answers to this need should be based on empathy, solidarity, compassion, respect for human dignity and ecological integrity;

SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, GENDER AND DIVERSITY – It is impossible to build a resilient and sustainable society with not recognizing and addressing gender, race and class inequalities. It is important to support proposals that provide for the effective participation of women in spaces and levels of management, execution and decision-making in the projects and within the organizations that received funding, as well as in actions that seek to combat the various violations suffered by women of all categories. So actions that involve care, self-care and mutual care for women involved in the supported projects and organizations are a main criterion.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT – this intrinsic relationship not only reduces disproportionate impacts, but also promotes a more resilient society, since a society can only be as healthy as its most vulnerable members. Protecting Human Rights and Environmental Defenders is part of this action.

TO WHOM WE DONATE

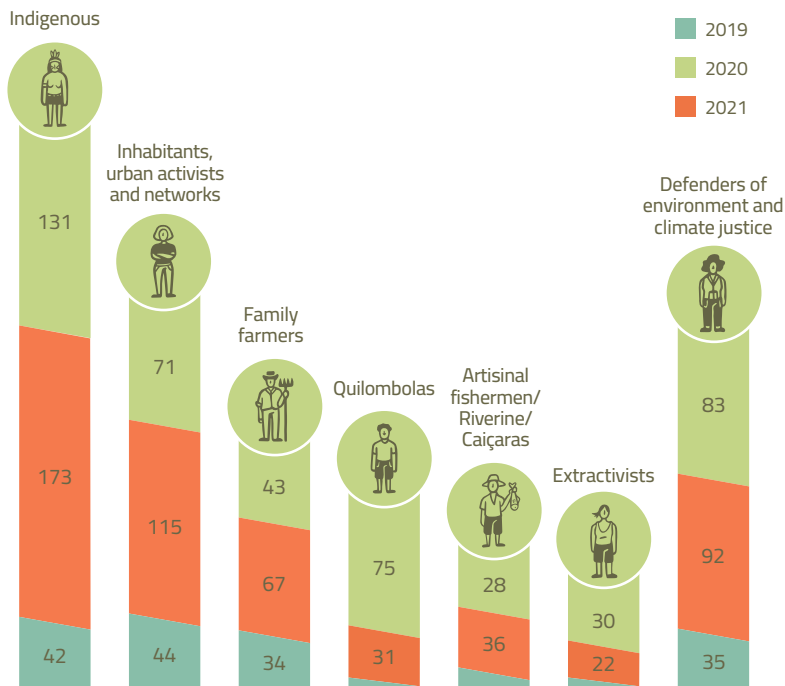
Populations most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change

In the last 3 years alone (from 2019 to 2021), more than R\$36 million reais (+ US\$7 million) was donated to more than 1,100 projects that connect with the theme of tackling climate change. But we can also consider that this is a transversal theme that is potentially linked to all the projects already supported in the history of Casa Fund, as it refers to the effects of human presence on planet Earth.

Our priority focus public for donations from 2019 to 2021 refers to the most vulnerable populations - Traditional and Specific Population Groups - GPTE* - defined by the **National Adaptation Plan** as those that will be most affected by climate change.

The direct support provided by the Casa Fund served this priority audience, as shown in the following table.

SUPPORTED GROUPS



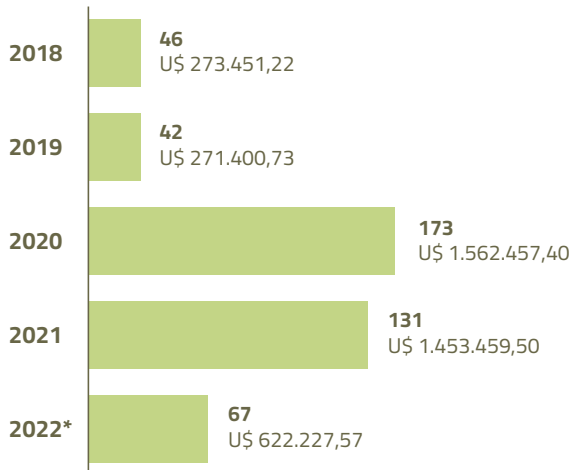
* GPTE defined in the Cadastro Único (Universal Registration) – instrument that identifies and characterizes low-income families, which allows the government to better understand the socioeconomic reality of this population

Direct support to Indigenous groups

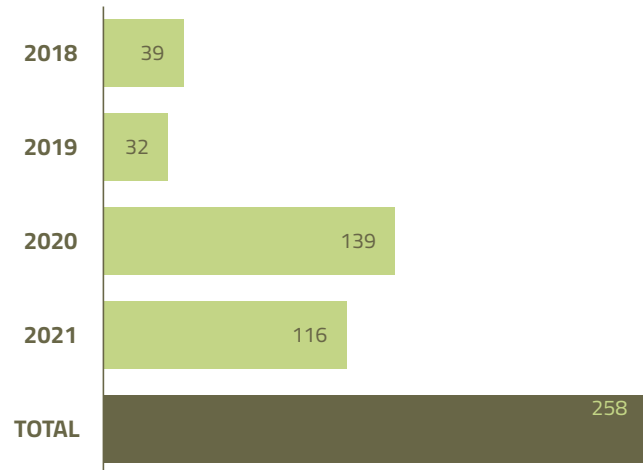
To understand the support provided by Casa Fund for indigenous projects, a broader study was carried out in 2022. Considering that a total of 504 indigenous projects were funded from 2015 to 2021 and between 2018 and 2022 alone we funded 413 Indigenous Projects one can see that we have built strong networks and relationships that have enabled Casa Fund to significantly increase its support in recent years:



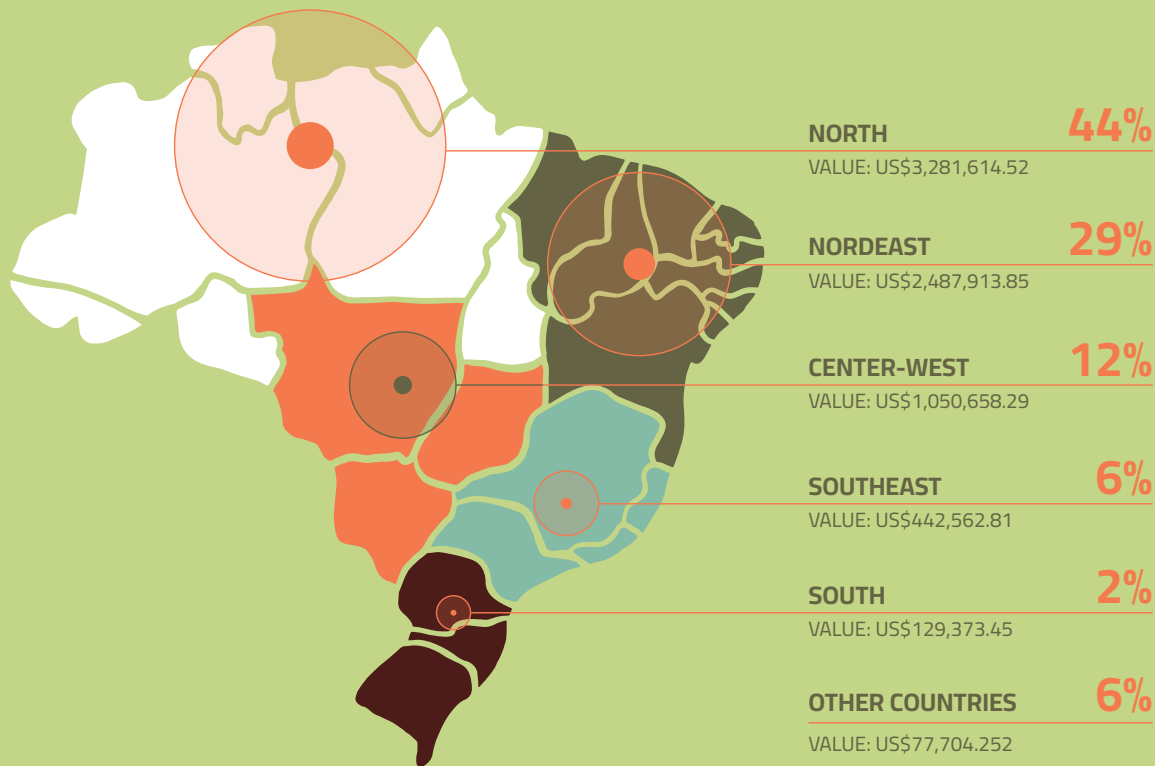
INDIGENOUS GROUPS SUPPORTED FROM 2018 TO 2021



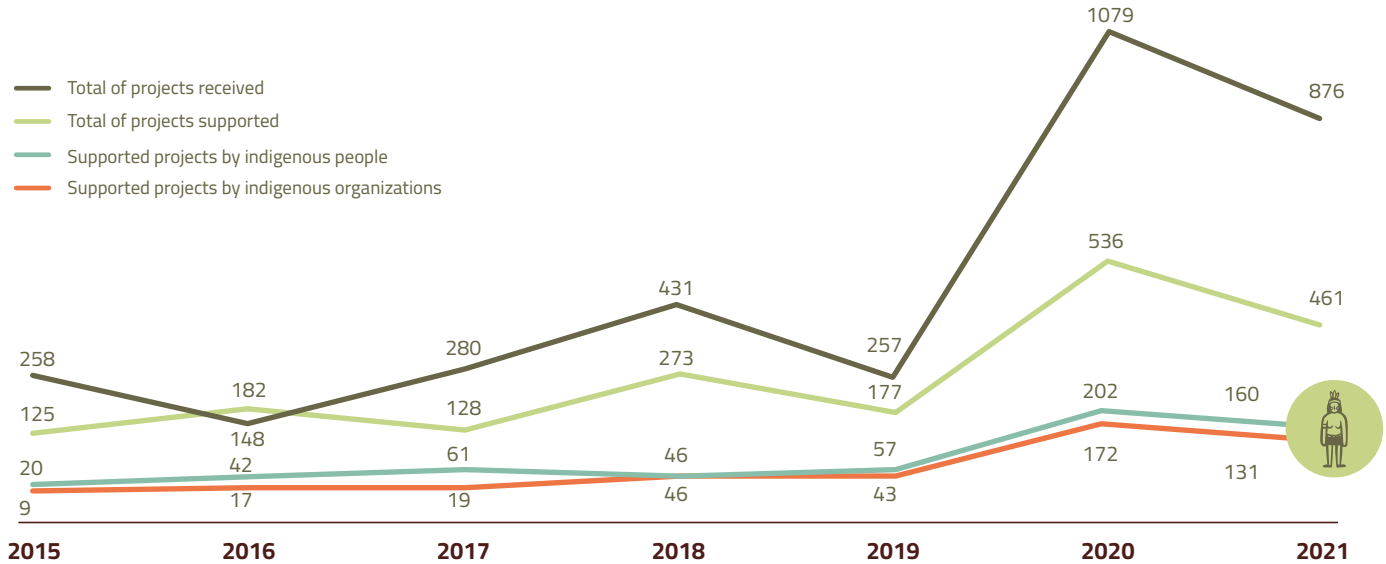
TOTAL INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED BY THE CASA FUND FROM 2018 TO 2021



Support per region of Brazil from 2018 to 2021

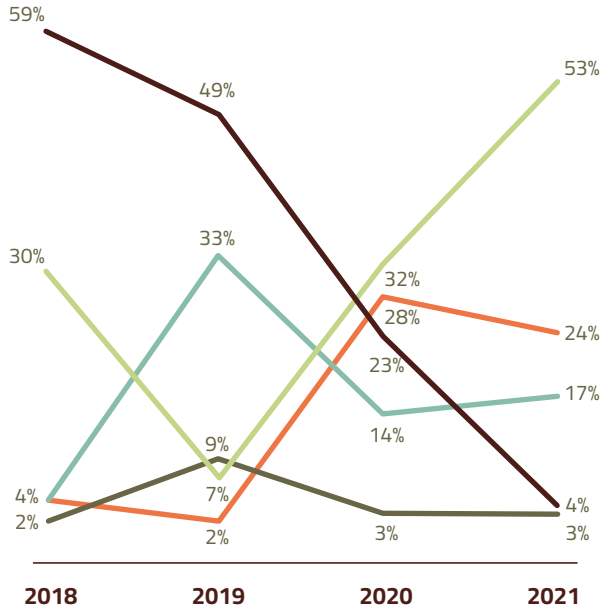


PROJECTS RECEIVED, SUPPORTED AND INDIGENOUS PROJECTS



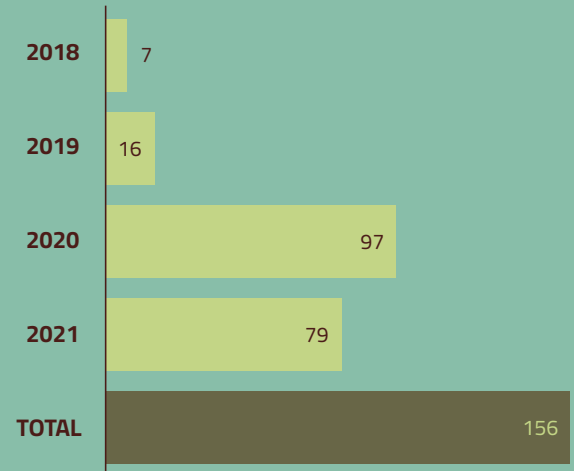
Between the years 2018 and 2021, it is also possible to note the support growth for **different ethnicities**, a fact that establishes Casa Fund as an organization that accesses different peoples and thus meets different local needs.

AMOUNT ALLOCATED IN SUPPORT FROM THE CASA FUND



- Up to US\$2,000.00
- From US\$2,000.00 to US\$4,000.00
- From US\$4,000.00 to US\$6,000.00
- From US\$6,000.00 to US\$10,000.00
- Above US\$10,000.00

FUNDING PER ETHNICITY PER YEAR COMPARED TO TOTAL SUPPORT



Support for Quilombola groups

The Casa Fund also understands that being involved with the anti-racist agenda is essential, as it is impossible to dissociate environmental issues from the struggle for recognition and respect for ancestral peoples and territories. Thus, defending environmental and climate justice is obligatorily combating racial injustice.

In Brazil, Quilombos are present in 30% of the municipalities and in 24 states. The quilombola population's way of life, in harmony with nature, support the preservation of the native vegetation of the Brazilian biomes (Amazon, Atlantic Forest, Cerrado, Caatinga, Pampa and Pantanal). The presence of quilombos in these regions are important resistance points against environmental degradation that favors the implementation and expansion of large commodity production projects in rural Brazil. These communities are therefore targets of violence, since they are considered a factor preventing the development of this economic model in Brazil, and as such, human rights violations have arisen against the quilombola people.

As already seen with FAO research [1], the biggest drivers of deforestation in Brazil are changes in land use caused by cattle ranching and agricultural land expansion.

The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) published in 2020 the existence of 5,972 quilombola localities in Brazil. Present in the 5 geographic regions of Brazil, the quilombolas face threats from agribusiness, real estate speculation, impacts caused by infrastructure and energy projects such as oil pipelines, wind and solar plants, port and mining projects. They are also frequently impacted by the government itself, that does not recognize the autonomy of the quilombola peoples, for the Brazilian State is negligent in not recognizing the rights of the quilombola population to have full access to the territory through the demarcation and titling of areas. Currently, 1,748 titling applications are on the waiting list at the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA).

In 34 years, INCRA demarcated only 25 quilombola areas. This sluggishness encourages violence in quilombola areas and violations of Quilombola Human Rights in Brazil.

Between 2018 and 2021, Casa Fund supported 122 Quilombola Projects – totaling R\$3,300,929.16 (US\$652,328.15) in various agendas that connect quilombola rights with socio-environmental rights.

The Casa Fund has carried out annual Calls for Proposals specifically to support quilombola peoples and also to fund the quilombola movement in emergency issues.

“Support for the protagonism of indigenous peoples, quilombola and traditional communities, happens when the funder undergoes a listening process, understanding local demands, seeking to meet them effectively and efficiently. In recent years, Casa Socio-Environmental Fund has been facing the challenge of serving this public ever more closely. Respect for orality, ancestry and territoriality has been a strong mantra within Casa Fund. Respect for their ways and customs in dealing with nature, the preservation of the environment and traditions, in the fight against environmental racism, in climate change and defense of their respective territories. Casa Fund directly and highly efficiently contributed during the most serious period of COVID-19, in raising funds and immediate transfers through Public Calls and emergency support. And it continues to make a difference with a team made up of humane people, sensitive to the agenda and strongly committed to the anti-racist agenda.”

SELMA DEALDINA

Vice-chair of the Casa Fund Governance Board and Administrative Secretary of the National Coordination of Black Rural Quilombola Communities - CONAQ

Support for local groups connected with the energy theme

Support related to this theme is on two fronts:

SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS caused by the energy infrastructure – this axis is associated with hydroelectric and thermoelectric plants, and with energy generated from fossil fuel;

FAIR, POPULAR AND INCLUSIVE Energy Transition – this axis highlights the importance that the energy transition to a cleaner generation includes other important social aspects, such as the way of life of fishing communities and quilombolas where wind and solar parks are being implemented, causing huge social harm.

In these two axes, between 2018 and 2019, Casa Fund supported 117 local community projects that totaled R\$3,695,818.04 and US\$562,000.00.

Support given to groups in emergencies caused by extreme events

In 2022, according to a study by the World Weather Attribution (WWA) [5], more than 25,000 people were left homeless in the north-east region of Brazil in 2022 and 133 people lost their lives as a result of the storms that ravaged that region, causing landslides and flooding in urban and rural areas.

The Casa Fund created a line of **emergency funding** for groups already supported and impacted by extreme events, starting as a learning experience. One can easily emphasize that the preponderant portion of the Brazilian population most affected by natural disasters is the peripheral (poor) and black population. This process brought a series of information about how to work and provide relevant support in these situations.



BRIGADIER OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AREA BAÍA NEGRA. PHOTO: VICTOR HUGO SANCHES/ECOA

Support for local groups in dealing with climate emergencies caused by forest fires

For many years Brazil has faced the challenge of deforestation with government after government failing to implement effective plans to prevent and combat this serious climate impact. As already widely studied, there is a set of stages of illegal occupation of biomes and conservation areas, that when they are successfully implemented the frontiers of agribusiness are able to advance rapidly; there is a direct relationship between fires x deforestation.

A survey carried out by the MapBiomass Project which analyzed satellite images between 1985 and 2020, shows the impact of fire on the national territory. In each of these 36 years, Brazil burned an area larger than England: 150,957 km² per year, or 1.8% of the country. The accumulated territory for this period reaches practically a fifth of the national territory: 1,672,142 km², or 19.6% of Brazil, with 65% of the total burned area being native vegetation.

The Casa Fund has been systematically supporting grassroots groups and communities so that they can prepare to face and fight fires.

In 2021, we held our first Call to Support Forest Fire Combat Projects with the thematic lines:

Structuring and Strengthening Brigades;

Integrated fire management;

Mobilization/engagement and reporting related to arson;

Support for community actions to combat deforestation and fires.

A total of 61 grassroots community projects were supported to face and fight fires, of which 43 were for the structuring of Volunteer Brigades and 08 are Indigenous Brigades.

Volunteer brigades play a fundamental role in fire control and therefore need to be structured: fire brigade training carried out, equipment, means of transport, drones, etc. The Casa Fund has supported communities to structure these brigades.

Support the resilience of urban groups

Between 2018 and 2021, we supported urban community projects in the interface with environmental racism. The aim is to support projects that improve life in cities and that strengthen urban groups to face the inequalities produced by cities, while raising awareness about their pressure on natural resources and the impacts of climate change. Casa Fund developed an extensive study on this topic, which can be [accessed here](#).

**171 projects were supported
in 10 metropolitan regions.**

Learn more at: www.casacidades.casa.org.br



PHOTO: COLLECTION OF THE MOVE CULTURE ASSOCIATION

Support for Defenders of the Environment and Climate Justice

We know that many people put their lives at risk to defend the forests and their way of life, which puts them in very vulnerable situations and over the last few years this has been getting worse.

In 2019, Casa Fund implemented its Program for Defenders & Climate Justice, this program has 2 strategic axes:

PROVIDE EMERGENCY SUPPORT FOR LEADERS AND GROUPS IN SITUATIONS OF EXTREME VULNERABILITY

Emergency Fund acting on urgency; Strengthen community communication collectives and groups - supporting them to build the capacity to communicate their causes, strengthening and amplifying their voices;

STRENGTHEN COLLECTIVES AND POPULAR LEGAL ADVICE

GROUPS - which are part of the local support networks for defenders and that influence public policies for the defense of human rights.

In this program, Casa Fund has already provided more than 230 grants totaling more than R\$3 million (US\$622,000.00) between 2019 and 2022.

In 2021 we launched the publication, Human Rights and Environmental Defense – Gender relations, compliance with the Escazú Agreement and opportunities for philanthropy, click [here](#) to access.

A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

As we have seen, Casa Fund has built an important capacity to ensure that resources reach local communities within a process that includes autonomy, independence and security.

It took years to build local networks, networks of partners, instruments and procedures that support this entire operation and the possibility of democratizing access to philanthropy's financial resources in a safe and effective way. As a result, in 2021 alone we donated more than R\$18 million (more than US\$3.5 million), reaching more than 400 local groups.

However, there is much to be done; Brazil is a country of enormous dimensions, formed by a vast diversity of peoples with different ways of life that must be respected. This being said, there are large gaps in direct support to local groups as well as in several important agendas that we must consider such as:

ATLANTIC FOREST IN GENERAL - One of the most degraded biomes in Brazil, a region with the largest part of Brazil's population and vulnerable to extreme events. A region that is home to many indigenous groups with threats to their territories from economic activities, infrastructure and mega enterprises);

EXTREME EVENTS & EMERGENCIES - Mainly caused by heavy rains or extreme droughts;

ARTISANAL FISHERIES - Populations that, despite exclusion and abandonment, are the main caretakers of coastal biomes;

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION PROJECTS IN ALL REGIONS, ESPECIALLY CERRADO AND CAATINGA - That bring good living to communities;

PROJECTS TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS CULTURE - A rare focus among available philanthropic resources, but of essential importance in maintaining the same ways of life that have protected forests for millennia;

FOREST RESTORATION FROM AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS;

POLITICAL TRAINING & COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION;

SUSTAINABLE CITIES;

AGENDA INTERSECTIONS;

PARTICIPATION OF LEADERS IN IMPORTANT DECISION-MAKING SPACES;

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING IN GENERAL;

CHEMICAL POLLUTION - Resulting mainly from industrial and agricultural activities, including "advocacy", participation and | access to information in the processes of implementation of non-binding multilateral agreements (such as SAICM) and binding treaties (such as Minamata, Stockholm - POPs, Basel and Rotterdam Conventions) for the management and elimination of toxic and hazardous substances.

And yet many important actors are excluded and without access to resources:

Main Groups without support (2019-2022)

- Artisanal Fishermen from the Brazilian Coast;
- Artisanal Fishermen from Extractive Reserves;
- Indigenous people outside the Amazon;
- Extractivists in general - National and State Resex;
- Quilombolas throughout Brazil;
- Groups from the urban periphery that work in the sustainable cities agenda.



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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT RESERVE PONTA DO TUBARÃO.
PHOTO: ATILIO ZOLIN/CASA SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL FUND

“Through small projects supported by the Casa Socio-Environmental Fund, it is possible to build consultation and consent protocols as a legal instrument for the defense of fundamental rights. **There are thousands of people in the Amazon who are directly and indirectly benefiting from this support from the Casa Fund**, which arrives through grass-roots organizations, respecting their ways of organizing and “doing what will be” in defense of the Amazon.”

IREMAR FERREIRA

*Member of the Madeira
Vivo Institute - IMV*

ADRIANA RAMOS

*Socio-environmental
Institute (ISA)*

“Conserving and restoring ecosystems is an ethical imperative and an objective necessity in the face of climate change. It is a consensus today endorsed by archaeological studies led by archaeologist Eduardo Neves that indigenous peoples are ultimately responsible for the “construction” and maintenance of the Amazon rainforest, recognized as an important climate regulator on the continent. Indigenous lands, quilombola and traditional community territories develop a vast repertoire of management strategies that make the Amazon one of the frontiers for confronting climate change. Ensuring conditions for these communities to be able to autonomously implement their territorial management and protection strategies is the best way to contribute to a consistent fight against climate change. **Strengthened communities and organizations will contribute to the reduction of degradation and the emergence of new economic models suitable for promoting the well-being of communities and maintaining the standing forest.**”



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