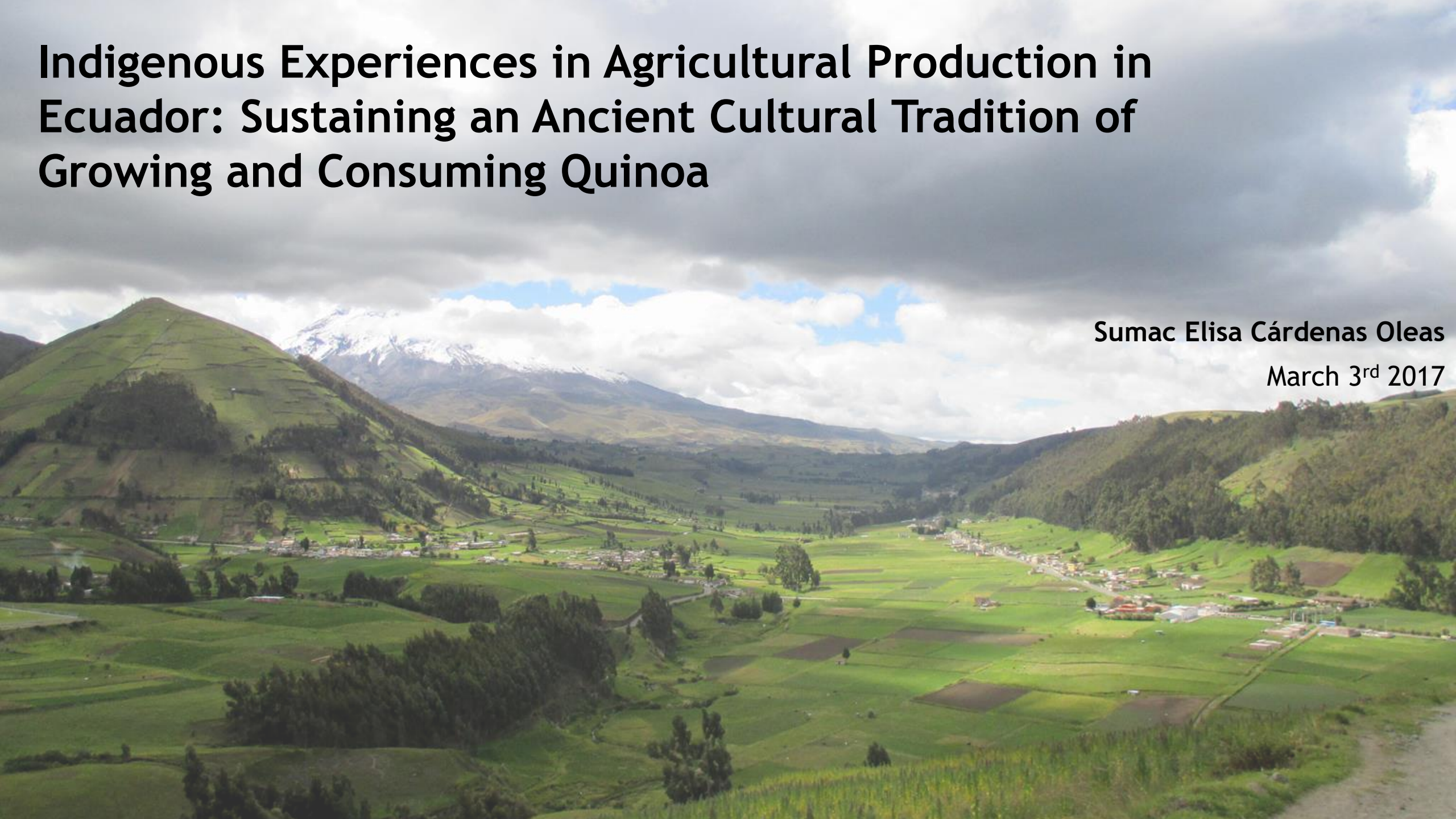


# Indigenous Experiences in Agricultural Production in Ecuador: Sustaining an Ancient Cultural Tradition of Growing and Consuming Quinoa

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March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2017



# Presentation Structure

- ▶ **Background: Ecuador**
  - ▶ Poverty & Indigenous People
  - ▶ Economy
  - ▶ Agriculture & Quinoa
- ▶ **Case Study: Fundamyf**
- ▶ **Research Problem**
- ▶ **Methodology**
- ▶ **Key Findings**
- ▶ **Conclusions**

# Poverty

## ► 2013

- Poverty Line: \$78.10/month or \$2.79/day
- Total Poverty: 26%
- Total Rural Poverty: 42%

## ► Indigenous Populations

- Colonialization: racism and discrimination
- Isolated Rural Areas
  - Haciendas
  - Green revolution 1960s
  - Limited access to inputs, education, & tech.
- Andes Mountains (Quichua)



# Agriculture

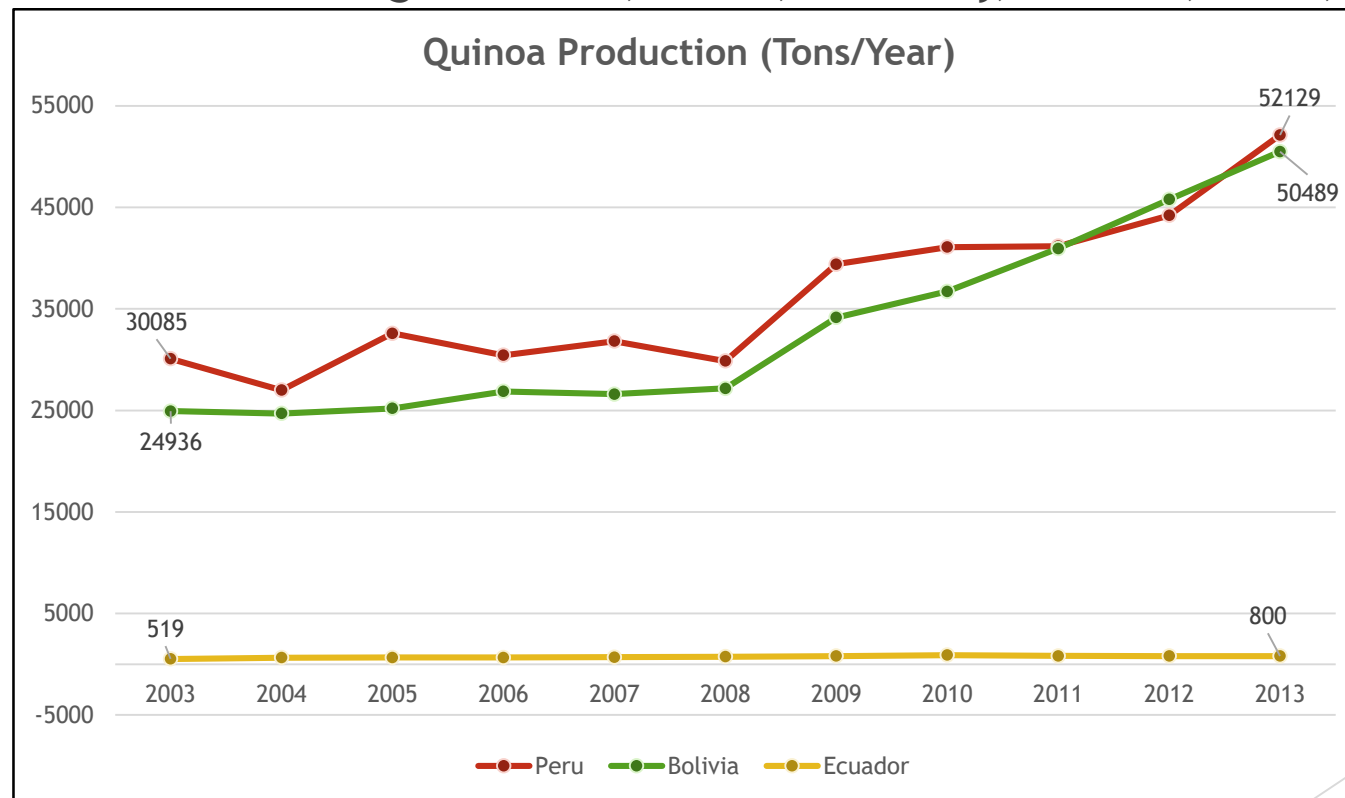
- ▶ Practice of farming (soil cultivation, crop growing, and animal rearing)
  - ▶ 10% of Gross Domestic Product
  - ▶ 28% of Total Employment
  - ▶ 53% of Rural Employment (small farm families)





# Quinoa

- ▶ Andean seed-like crop that grows in harsh and dry environments
  - ▶ 2013 International Year of Quinoa- United Nations
- ▶ **Supply**
  - ▶ Cultivated/Investigated: USA, China, Germany, Canada, India, Finland, & UK



Data Source: FAOSTAT

# Quinoa

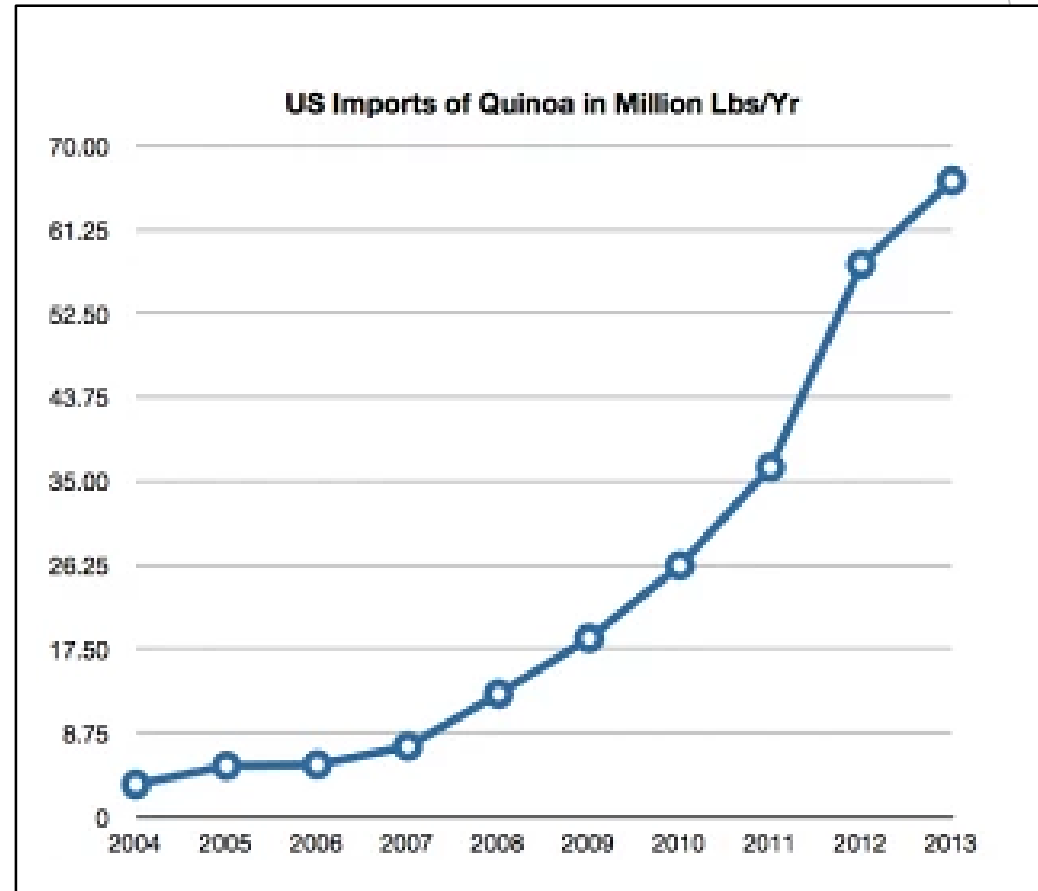
## ► Demand

### ► Increased in last 10 years

- United States
- European Nations

### ► Nutrition

- Gluten free
- Balance of proteins, carbohydrates, & minerals
- Organic



Source: Washington Post

# Problem

- ▶ **Quinoa Top Exporters:** Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador
- ▶ **Studies:**
  - ▶ Peru and Bolivia: Concern on producers lack of consumption of the crop due to high world demand and prices
  - ▶ Ecuador: Scarce studies on quinoa production impacts on producers and families (ancient indigenous crop)



# Fundamyf

Location: Chimborazo



Source: (Ezilon 2014)

Groups: Five Cantons in Chimborazo



Source: Adapted (Secretaría Técnica del Ministerio de Coordinación de Desarrollo Social 2006).

# Fundamyf

- ▶ **Founded:** 1994
- ▶ **Goal:** “Reduction of poverty levels in the country by implementing a sustainable development proposal incorporating criteria of inclusion, equity, and diversity”
- ▶ **Focus:** Agricultural quinoa production, commercialization, and exportation
- ▶ **Groups:** Indigenous women and families (25 communities)
- ▶ **Research:** Understand the efforts in quality of life improvements by Fundamyf, an NGO working with indigenous producers of quinoa in Ecuador

# Problem

## Research Questions:

1. What is the nature of Fundamyf (goals, history, etc.)?
2. What activities does Fundamyf perform to attain its goals (projects, programs, etc.)?
3. How effective is Fundamyf in achieving its goals (benefits to producers)?

# Methodology

## ► Data Collection (June-July 2014)

### 1. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews

Interviewees	Location	Number
Fundamyf	Quito	2
	Riobamba	2
Producers	Canton Colta	1
	Canton Riobamba	3

A primary way to examine an organization is through semi-structured interviews of individual's experiences who are part of the organization (Seidman 2006)

### 2. Review of public documents and reports

- newspapers, governmental reports, and the Fundamyf's website



# Methodology

## ► Data Analysis

1. What is the nature of Fundamyf (goals, history, etc.)?
2. What activities does Fundamyf perform to attain its goals (projects, programs, etc.)?

*Answered through examination of reports, public documents, and Fundamyf's interviews*

3. How effective is Fundamyf in achieving its goals (benefits to producers)?

*Answered through analysis of interviews with producers through the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA). - Capitals*

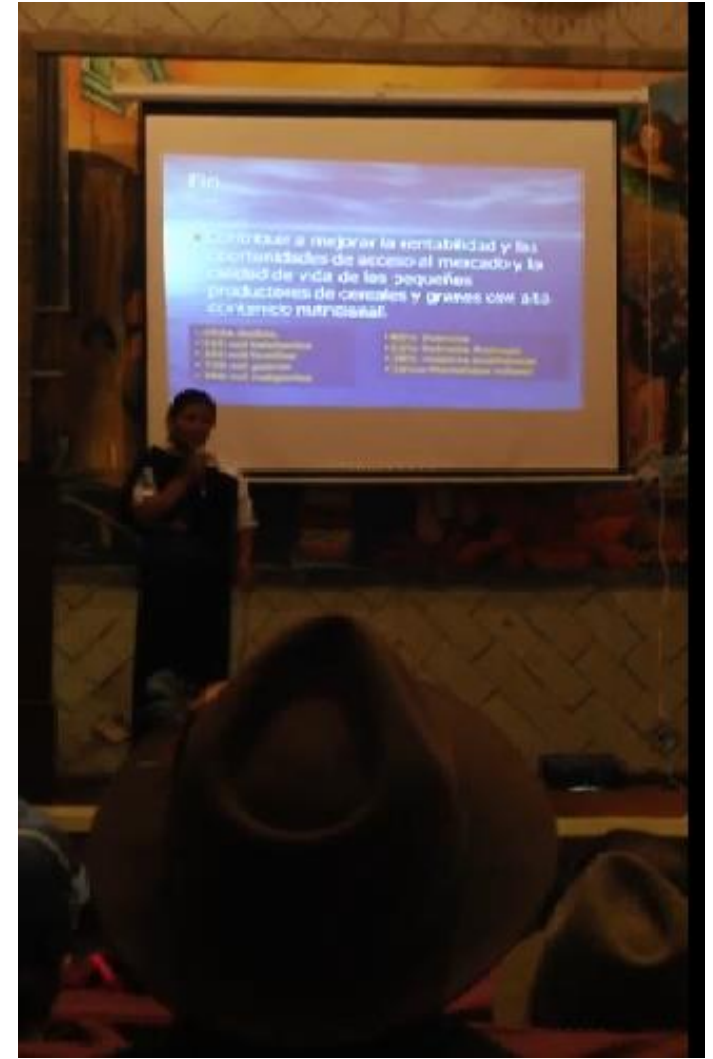
# Findings

## 1. What is the nature of Fundamyf (goals, history, etc.)?

*Goal:* Improve rural living conditions of the family farmers

*Evolution:* According to a Fundamyf's representative it occurred in three phases

Phase	Work	Time
One	Helped women become organized and promoted development through workshops that inform women about available resources and opportunities	1994- 1998
Two	Assist communication among women and local governments to draft a planning report to improve living conditions	1999-2006
Three	Provide information, resources, and services to women's organizations and create a new income generation model to fund projects and operations.	2003- present





# Findings

2. What activities does Fundamyf perform to attain its goals (projects, programs, etc.)?

Project “Indigenous Women Building their Future”	
Area	Focus
<i>Quality of Life</i>	Provides strategies and plans in health, education, and human rights that promote the improvement of quality of life with a gender-equality focus
<i>Political-Social</i>	Focuses on the development of leadership skills and organizational strategies in women and their families, empowering them to create and participate in networks within their communities
<i>Territorial-Environmental</i>	Trains and improves soil-management methods through organic and sustainable production
<i>Economic-Productive</i>	Improves strategies for production, commercialization, exchange, and distribution of agricultural products

# Findings

## 3. How effective is Fundamyf in achieving its goals (benefits to producers)?

Fundamyf focuses on four aspects of indigenous producers' lives and four corresponding forms of capital from the SLA were employed in the analysis

- 1) *Quality of Life Area - Human Capital*
- 2) *Political-Social Area - Social Capital*
- 3) *Territorial-Environmental Area - Natural Capital*
- 4) *Economic-Productive Area - Financial Capital*

# Findings

## 3. How effective is Fundamyf in achieving its goals (benefits to producers)?

### 1) *Quality of Life Area-Human Capital:*

“They trained us through video, so then we also invited the men...

[We saw] the change [in violence and women’s rights]. But first the change was in us women, because if we only want them to change, they never change. Then we started preparing [ourselves]. I started studying, I only had elementary school, and continued to study high school, and finished high school...

I liked to study and prepare myself. I said in my house, ‘study, get prepared’ [to my children and husband]...

For my community, [I said to] parents, mothers, ‘study get prepared.’ Some of them achieved. The young did not used to study and worked [instead], but [later] managed to study, they managed to get educated”



# Findings

## 2) Political-Social Area - Social Capital

**“Women before could not go out to work, just wait for their husbands. So with the trainings we have moved on, we came out.**

Before husbands were the only ones in meetings, trainings. Only husbands...[and] now married women have said that even now sometimes [they] make an excuse to the husband since he does not want to send her [to meetings].

[They say] ‘my husband says to not go,’ ‘my husband says I should not go,’ ‘my husband says to not follow,’ but fighting and struggling, little bit at a time, the...[husbands] continue to understand”



# Findings

## 3) Territorial-Environmental Area - Natural Capital

**“Before we did not know [how to produce sustainably, instead] we damaged the soil since we planted with chemical fertilizers, but now it's all organic...[and production] is going much better”**



# Findings

## 4) *Economic-Productive Area - Financial Capital*

**“My problem was that we could not get money easily.**

At times my husband said, ‘I cannot make all the money for the kids’ education,’ we had 4 children.

**I suffered, but when I started to plant quinoa then I also had [money] for me. It was quite helpful... [Although before producing quinoa] I did have animals [to sell and get income] but not enough. We sold \$20, \$30, and a hen for \$5, but it was not enough to pay for the education for the children”**



# Key Findings

## ► Long-term impact

- Empowered women through leadership and organizational skills to improve opportunities in their communities and produce long-lasting impact on them and on their communities.
- Trainings focused on the diet improvement and no chemical exposure, as well as the economic situation of producers, families, and communities while respecting the environment.



# Key Findings

## ▶ **Becoming an intermediary**

### ▶ Income generation model:

- ▶ Consulting services
- ▶ Assistance of quinoa production, commercialization, and exportation to producers
  - ▶ Increased income and ability to produce organically
  - ▶ Intermediary or “middleman” between producers and buyers
  - ▶ Foment dependence (COPROBICH)
  - ▶ Farrington, et al., (1993) stated that NGOs’ work has been mostly focused on empowering people, and this work is often considered to be a temporary service
  - ▶ Fair price for the producers





# Conclusions

- ▶ Indigenous women producers participate in leadership positions and contribute to decision-making processes in their communities (long-term)
- ▶ Organic production knowledge and skills to expand opportunities to increase income and decrease chemical use and costs, while respecting the environment (long-term)
- ▶ Income-generation model (consulting services and assistance to producers) has raised concerns about how the income is used and if it promotes dependency of producers

**This study contributes to our understanding of how NGOs' work can contribute to quality of life improvement and women's empowerment through agricultural production in Ecuador**

Questions?

