

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE SCHOOL MOCH HUASGINCH KAMĚNTSÁ

PRESERVING A SACRED LANGUAGE. REVIVING A LIVING CULTURE.

Executive Summary

The Kaměntsá people of Colombia's Sibundoy Valley—ancestral guardians of Yagé (Ayahuasca) and carriers of profound ecological and spiritual wisdom—are facing an urgent cultural crisis: only 6% of the population can still speak their ancestral language. Without action, this sacred language could disappear within a generation, taking with it an entire cosmology, worldview, and ecological intelligence.

In 2025, with seed support from the **Indigenous Reciprocity Initiative (IRI)** and **Chacruna Institute**, the **Moch Huasginch Kaměntsá School** was launched under the guidance of **Taita Juan Bautista Ágreda** and **OIOC**. This is the first community-based education program designed and led by Indigenous teachers to revitalize the Kaměntsá language and transmit ancestral knowledge through structured, experiential, and intergenerational learning.

The program has grown into a living space where **151** students—children, youth, and adults—learn together every weekend in **Tamabioy**, guided by **four Indigenous teachers** who combine language, songs, ritual, and Kaměntsá worldview.

This initiative is more than language education—it is a **movement of cultural resurgence, ecological awareness, and intergenerational healing**.

Who Are the Kaměntsá

The Kaměntsá are an Indigenous people from the Sibundoy Valley in Upper Putumayo, Colombia. Known as ancestral guardians of Yagé (ayahuasca), they have preserved spiritual, ecological, and medicinal traditions for centuries despite colonial and modern threats. Their cosmology centers around reciprocity with nature, intergenerational knowledge, and collective well-being.

Why This Matters

When a language disappears, the wisdom it carries—its songs, medicinal knowledge, ecological systems, and spiritual practices—vanishes too.

The Kaměntsá language encodes a sophisticated worldview rooted in reciprocity and respect for nature. Its survival means safeguarding knowledge essential for **Amazonian ecological resilience and spiritual continuity**.

Supporting this program means ensuring that **ancestral knowledge systems thrive in the modern world**, guided by Indigenous leadership, community participation, and measurable impact.

Core Outcomes

- **151 active students** completing structured Kaměntsá language courses.
- **4 Indigenous teachers** trained and employed, teaching 8-hour sessions weekly.
- **111 adults** receiving completion bonuses for fulfilling the 16-week curriculum.
- **New materials developed:** illustrated grammar cards, songbooks, and audiovisual documentation.
- **Formation of a sustainable educational model** to expand across schools in the Sibundoy Valley in 2026.
- **Cultural impact:** measurable progress in writing, grammar, and oral expression, plus renewed intergenerational dialogue.



Indigenous
Reciprocity
Initiative
OF THE AMERICAS



CIRCLE OF
SACRED NATURE

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Team & Leadership

Our leadership team embodies intergenerational collaboration—a living bridge between ancestral wisdom and contemporary coordination. Each member brings decades of experience in education, cultural preservation, and Indigenous governance, ensuring that the Kaměntsá language is not only remembered but reborn as a vital force in community life. Together, they represent the heart of this movement for cultural and ecological renewal.

Taita Juan Bautista Ágreda **Director, OIOC**

Spiritual leader, Yagé elder, and three-time elected Governor of the Kaměntsá Nation, Taita Juan carries over 40 years of wisdom as a healer, teacher, and guardian of ancestral knowledge. As Director of OIOC, he leads the organization with integrity, ensuring that every step of the program remains rooted in Indigenous values, cultural preservation, and long-term sustainability.

Andrés Juagibioy **Teacher & Researcher**

A master of Kaměntsá cosmology, epistemology, and ancestral law, Andrés has dedicated more than three decades to strengthening his people's language and memory. His work bridges the oral traditions of elders with modern documentation, guiding students to understand the sacred logic and structure of Kaměntsá speech.

Juana María Muchachasoy **Teacher & Cultural Educator**

With 38 years of teaching experience, Juana María is a pillar of the community and a voice for the continuity of the ancestral word. She integrates music, storytelling, and intergenerational dialogue into her classes, ensuring that children and youth grow up grounded in identity, respect, and joy for their heritage.

Luis Antonio Buesaquillo Ágreda **Teacher & Materials Developer**

Educator, cultural organizer, and writer, Luis Antonio is developing a Kaměntsá grammar booklet to strengthen literacy and accessibility. His teaching combines linguistic precision with community spirit, making ancestral language learning dynamic and relevant for modern Kaměntsá life.

Gladis Alicia Chindoy Chicunque **Youth Education**

A lifelong teacher since the age of 16, Gladis has over 25 years of experience preserving and transmitting the Kaměntsá language. She specializes in teaching children, inspiring in them a love for their culture and the confidence to speak their ancestral language as a living inheritance.

Yobani Chicunque **Local Coordinator**

At 26 years old, Yobani represents the new generation of Kaměntsá leadership. He coordinates the school's weekly operations in Tamabioy, ensuring logistics, attendance, and communication among teachers and students. His dedication embodies the spirit of youth-led cultural revitalization.

Erika Salazar **Program Manager, OIOC**

With over 20 years of experience bridging Indigenous and international collaboration, Erika oversees partnerships, development, and strategy for OIOC. She unites cultural integrity with organizational vision, ensuring accountability and building global support for Indigenous-led education, conservation, and research.

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Student Motivation Strategy

To ensure accountability and measurable results, the program includes a **\$200 completion bonus** for each Kamëntsá student who finishes the full 4-month course.

This approach:

- Encourages consistent attendance and dedication.
- Recognizes real effort and achievement.
- Provides donors with clear, outcome-based impact.

Bonuses are distributed publicly during the community graduation, celebrating discipline and reciprocity while ensuring full transparency of funds.

OIOC (Organization for Indigenous Outreach & Conservation)

OIOC is a Colombia-based nonprofit leading Indigenous-driven initiatives that bridge ancestral knowledge, ecological restoration, and cultural renewal. Working directly with the Kamëntsá Nation in the Sibundoy Valley and broader Amazon region, OIOC restores native forests, revitalizes endangered languages, and sustains traditional plant medicine education. Through programs in language revitalization, forest regeneration, agroforestry, Indigenous-led research, and cultural preservation, OIOC builds living models of reciprocity, resilience, and biocultural conservation.

Our work unites communities, scientists, and philanthropists in a shared mission: to protect sacred lands, strengthen cultural identity, and inspire a new paradigm of harmony between people and the Earth.



Budget Breakdown

1-Year Total: \$27,077 USD

\$13,000 Secured – \$14,077 Needed

Key Funding Areas

- **Student Motivation Bonuses – \$22,200** \$800,000 COP per student × 111 students completing the 4-month course; ensures accountability, engagement, and measurable outcomes.
- **Teacher Salaries – \$4,200** Four Indigenous teachers provide weekly instruction for 151 students.
- **Program Coordination & Logistics – included** Local coordination, class management, and materials through OIOC's Tamabioy team.

Funding Secured

- Chacruna / IRI – \$8,000
- Santiago (Philanthropist) – \$5,000
- **Total Secured: \$13,000 | Balance to Raise: \$14,077**