PROJECT FINAL REPORT

Warmi Yakukamak – Amazon Water Guardians

BRIDGE Programme – Women Leadership Grant · IUCN

Reporting period: November 2025 – August 2026

1. Project Information

Field	Detail
Project title	Warmi Yakukamak – Amazon Water Guardians: building resilience and strengthening women's leadership in the Water Boards of three indigenous communities in Chontapunta, Napo River watershed
Report type	Final report
Reporting period	November 2025 – August 2026
Project coordinator	Felipe Vásquez
Implementing organisation	Fundación Ingenieros en Acción – Ecuador (FIEA)
Beneficiary communities	Los Ríos, Santa Estefanía de Maltapura and Runashitu — Chontapunta Parish, Tena Canton, Napo Province
Funder	IUCN BRIDGE Programme – Women Leadership Grant (SDC)
Date of submission	18 September 2026

2. Key Achievements

The project completed the following activities.

- The planned workshops were delivered in the three beneficiary communities.
- Both baseline instruments were applied.
- At the close of the cycle, a women-led water organisation was created.

2.1 Design and launch

- Design phase (November 2025 – January 2026): project design completed, including workshop content, didactic materials and the baseline instruments (SLA and GBA).
- Launch and socialization (December 2025): community assemblies in the three communities. The project's objectives, methodology and modalities were explained to community leaders and members. Approximately 80 participants attended in total.

2.2 Baseline assessments

- **Sustainable Livelihoods Assessment (SLA) baseline:** applied and completed in the three communities. Principal Finding:
  - Financial Capital is the most critical deficit (43% average; Los Ríos at 30%);
  - Social Capital is the strongest asset (78% average);
  - Physical Capital is moderate (65% average);
  - Human Capital shows a clear gradient between the mestizo community (65%) and the indigenous Kichwa communities (Santa Estefanía 45%, Runashitu 55%).

- **Gender Base Analysis (GBA) baseline:** 160 surveys were completed across the three communities, with a distribution of 67% women (107 people) and 33% men (53 people) — a marked shift from the 56% men / 44% women split of the preliminary round reported at mid-term.

What the baseline found, starting with who responded:

- **Who responded.** 160 people across the three communities. Two thirds of respondents were women (67%, 107 people) and one third men (33%, 53 people). By ethnicity, 64% identify as Kichwa indigenous and 36% as mestizo, which matches the make-up of the communities: Runashitu and Santa Estefanía are predominantly Kichwa and Los Ríos is mestizo.
- **Income.** 91% of men say they are the only person who brings money into the home. Only 32% of women agree; the remaining 68% say the responsibility is shared between both. At 59 points, this is the widest disagreement in the whole survey, and it occurs inside the same households.
- **Decision-making.** 89% of men say community decisions are taken with complete equality. Only 57% of women say the same: a 32-point gap. Because women are two thirds of those surveyed, if the community is looked at as a whole rather than separated by sex, the sense that decisions are equal drops to around 67%.
- **Access to resources.** 67% of women say it is easier for men to obtain land, equipment and financing. Only 45% of men recognise that advantage. Nobody — neither a man nor a woman — said the opposite, that resources are easier for women to reach.
- **Opportunity to speak.** 22% of women say they feel unsafe expressing ideas in community meetings, against 9% of men: more than double the rate.
- **Leadership.** 55% of women support community organisations being led by women only, against 15% of men, and no woman in the survey opposed the idea. This finding is what led directly to the constitution of the women's organisation described below.

2.3 Workshop cycle — completed in the three communities

- Water Quality Workshop: organoleptic analysis, chemical testing with DPD strips and hands-on water quality monitoring. Each Water Board received 50 test strips to continue monitoring.
- TANDAS and Handwashing Workshop: hand hygiene technique (including the practical blue-paint exercise), household water treatment and safe storage methodology.
- Leadership and Communication Workshop: assertive communication, conflict management and negotiation skills for the women of the communities.
- Depatriarchalisation and Gender Equity Workshop: delivered immediately after the leadership module, it addressed the structural roots of the perception gap documented in the GBA baseline.
- Operation & Maintenance and Basic Plumbing Workshop: system operation, meter reading and regulation, valves and fittings, and basic repairs. The interviews record this session as the first opportunity many women had to handle tools and system components directly.
- Personal, Household and Community Hygiene Workshop: health depends not only on water quality but on good practices. Training on the importance of hygiene.
- Solid Waste Management Workshop: the importance of sanitation and waste management for environmental and community health.
- Watershed Management Workshop: participatory socio-environmental diagnosis of the Napo River basin, with an impact matrix by community and collective identification of the pressures on the basin.

2.4 Constitution of the Mujeres Guardianas del Agua organisation

On 23 August 2026, in Chontapunta Parish, the women from the three communities who showed the greatest interest after the workshop modules were invited to formally constitute the organisation Mujeres Guardianas del Agua de Chonta Punta, with 20 founding members and a democratically elected board.
At the end of the modules, and as the project's governance outcome, the leadership content of the workshop cycle was converted into a permanent, community-owned organisation with its own objectives and representation.

The organisation's stated purpose is the protection, conservation and recovery of the water sources and ecosystems of Chontapunta Parish, strengthening women's leadership and participation in community water management. Its founding objectives include the protection of rivers, streams and springs; reforestation of the areas surrounding water sources; environmental education; the recovery of ancestral knowledge and practices relating to water; and coordination with communities, public institutions and civil-society organisations.

Elected board:

Position	Name	Votes
President	Mirian Alexandra Yugcha Guamán	11
Vice-President	Silvia Rita Grefa Shiguango	4
Secretary	Rosa Margarita Martínez Goyes	3
Treasurer	Lourdes Lorena Santillán Tobar	2
First Board Member	Noemí Margarita Calapucha Mamallacta	—
Second Board Member	Kerly Gissela Andi Licuy	—
Third Board Member	Bertha Maira Yumbo Tapuy	—

The election was held by open vote in community assembly; the tally is documented in the photographic record annexed to this report.

2.5 Qualitative documentation

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with women from the three beneficiary communities, documenting the historical relationship with water, the gendered distribution of water-related labour and perceptions of the leadership process. These testimonies constitute the project's principal qualitative evidence base and are annexed to the technical report.

3. Status of Activities

Output	Status	Activity	Planned timeline	Remarks
Technical capacity strengthened for at least 5 women per community for the sustainable management of water infrastructure	**Completed**	Project design, inauguration and socialisation; material development and planning	Nov – Dec 2025	Delivered in the three communities
		Water Quality Workshop	Dec 2025 – Jan 2026	50 DPD test strips handed over to each Water Board
		Operation & Maintenance and Basic Plumbing Workshop	Jun – Jul 2026	Rescheduled from the original December 2025 – January 2026 window

Output	Status	Activity	Planned timeline	Remarks
				(see Section 5). A first plumbing workshop was delivered in June 2026 and reinforced with a second session in July 2026. First direct handling of system components by the participants
Leadership and community governance capacities strengthened	**Completed**	Stakeholder mapping and SLA baseline	Jan 2026	The three communities
		Gender Base Analysis (GBA) baseline	Jan – May 2026	160 surveys
		Leadership and Communication Workshop; conflict management and negotiation	April 2026	Women-only circles held before the mixed plenary sessions
		Depatriarchalisation and Gender Equity Workshop	April 2026	Delivered immediately after the leadership module
Women's leadership and participation in the Water Boards increased by at least 50%	**Completed**	Training and formal structuring of the women's association	May – Aug 2026	Mujeres Guardianas del Agua constituted on 23 August 2026; 20 founding members; board elected by open vote
Hygiene practices and awareness improved	**Completed**	Handwashing; household water treatment and safe storage (TANDAS)	Mar 2026	Practical blue-paint exercise in the three communities
		Personal, Household and Community Hygiene Workshop	May 2026	Popular education methodology, bilingual facilitation
		Solid Waste Management Workshop	Mar 2026	Emphasis on practices that affect water sources
Community organisational structures strengthened with a gender focus	**Completed**	Watershed Management Workshop and participatory diagnosis	Aug 2026	27 August 2026; impact matrix by community
Monitoring and evaluation	**Baseline completed; endline deferred**	Baseline completed (SLA and GBA)	Jun – Jul 2026	Post-intervention assessment deferred
		KAP endline survey	Jun – Jul 2026	Not developed; recommended for a subsequent phase

4. Key Indicators at Project Closure

The table below reports the project's cumulative results against the indicators requested by IUCN BRIDGE for final reports.

Indicator	Result
Social media posts published	7 publications (February – August 2026), each shared on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, and reposted by Engineers Without Borders USA. Links in the communications annex.
Videos produced	1 professionally produced video (shared internally)
Workshops conducted	8 workshop themes delivered in each of the 3 communities — 24 sessions in total
Locations reached	3 communities (Los Ríos, Santa Estefanía de Maltapura, Runashitu), Chontapunta Parish, Napo Province
Guidelines / training handbooks produced	8 workshop design sheets (fichas de talleres), one per theme
Baseline studies / diagnostics conducted	2 baseline studies (Sustainable Livelihoods Assessment and Gender Base Analysis), plus 1 participatory watershed diagnosis
Groups formed	1 group / association — Mujeres Guardianas del Agua, with 20 founding members and an elected board
Community-based organisations collaborated with	3 Water Boards (Juntas de Agua), one per beneficiary community
Institutional bodies collaborated with	4 — Engineers Without Borders USA, Fundación Hombro a Hombro, Fundación Ingenieros en Acción Ecuador and the GAD Parroquial de Chontapunta
Women direct beneficiaries	~ 115
Men direct beneficiaries	~ 110
Disabled people direct beneficiaries	Not applicable — disability was not disaggregated in the project's data collection
Youth direct beneficiaries	Not applicable — youth were not defined as a distinct beneficiary group
Indirect beneficiaries	Approximately 850 — the total population of the three beneficiary communities (Los Ríos ≈400, Runashitu ≈300, Santa Estefanía de Maltapura ≈150)

5. Delays and Challenges

The project encountered several significant challenges that required adaptive management and a full restructuring of the implementation calendar.

5.1 Delay in the first disbursement from the funding mechanism

One cause of the calendar disruption was the delay in the initial payment. This affected operational capacity during the December 2025 – February 2026 window, when a group of the technical workshops was scheduled. Rather than proceed with reduced resources, FIEA decided to postpone the workshops. The displaced activities were subsequently delivered between April and August 2026.

5.2 Exposure to an unforeseen security incident

The most decisive factor affecting completion of the July activities was the exposure of field staff (technicians) to a security incident on the access road to Chontapunta Parish. This required dates to be changed so that countermeasures could be taken and conditions in the territory assessed before the remaining workshops were resumed.

5.3 Competing community calendar: intensive agricultural training (May – mid-July 2026)

The workshop calendar was disrupted by two external factors. From May to mid-July 2026 the three communities entered a period of intensive agricultural training led by the Ministry of Agriculture, focused on cacao production. Households prioritised that parallel economic programme, and the sessions FIEA attempted to hold during that window drew very low attendance. In addition, during June 2026 FIEA had to adjust its field calendar to accommodate visits related to other donor-funded projects.

FIEA postponed the workshops until the agricultural training concluded. This is a lesson worth recording for future design: in communities engaged with several programmes at once, calendar coordination between implementing organisations should be agreed in advance.

5.4 Geographic accessibility

The communities lie along the Napo River in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Access involves significant travel time, logistical coordination and the associated risks. Santa Estefanía de Maltapura, located directly on the riverbank, was particularly affected by flooding conditions during one scheduled field visit.

5.5 Dispersed population and language

Household dispersion and the need to administer the surveys in Kichwa extended the GBA data collection period, so it became necessary to work through the most engaged community members in order to complete every survey.

6. Changes to the Workplan

Revised activity	Reason for change	New timeline	Responsible
Hygiene workshop methodology adapted to popular-education approach	Early community feedback indicated that standard technical training formats were not well-suited to the Kichwa cultural context and mixed literacy levels.	Applied as of February 2026; no change to overall timeline.	Field Facilitators
Operation & Maintenance, Basic Plumbing, Watershed Management and Women's Association formation — second revision	FIEA's field calendar shifted again in June 2026 due to visits related to other donor-funded projects; in addition, the three communities were engaged in intensive Ministry of Agriculture cacao-production training from May to mid-July	Rescheduled from April – May 2026. First plumbing workshop delivered 15–18 June 2026; cycle finalised in August 2026.	Felipe Vásquez / Field facilitators

Revised activity	Reason for change	New timeline	Responsible
	2026, during which households were largely unavailable for project activities.		

7. Project Closure and Recommendations for a Subsequent Phase

With the activity cycle concluded, FIEA identifies the following priorities for consolidating and extending the results achieved:

1. Endline measurement. Re-apply the SLA and GBA instruments after a sufficient interval, using the preserved datasets and sampling frames, to measure the change attributable to the intervention.
2. KAP instrument. Develop and apply a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices survey to measure behavioural change in water, sanitation and hygiene following the hygiene and household water treatment cycle.
3. Accompaniment of the Mujeres Guardianas del Agua organisation. The organisation is newly constituted and all the registered members are eager to continue, but they will need support to consolidate it. This is the follow-up action with the highest return available: it is what would allow the objective to take hold in the territory.
4. The GBA evaluations identified emotional factors and intrinsic values, formed primarily within the family environment, that affect levels of trust and participation. The need to strengthen women's self-esteem and confidence in their capacity to act was evidenced. As a future activity, the implementation of socio-emotional strengthening processes targeting women is proposed, articulated with existing capacity-strengthening strategies.

8. Communications and Visibility

FIEA's communications strategy for the Warmi Yakukamak project used multiple digital platforms to maximise the project's visibility at national and international levels.

Social media. FIEA published 7 posts documenting project activities between February and August 2026 on its official platforms (Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn). The formats produced include reels, short-form video, photography and posts documenting the workshops and the community work, publicly acknowledging the financial contribution of IUCN – BRIDGE as a strategic partner. Engineers Without Borders USA (EWB-USA) reposted and published content on the joint work between FIEA-Ecuador and IUCN BRIDGE.

International conferences. FIEA presented its integrated water management strategies and its strategic partnerships, including its collaboration with IUCN, at three international conferences: the EWB-USA Annual Conference in Portland, Oregon (February 2026), the IX Scientific Conference of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) in Costa Rica (March 2026), and SIWI – World Water Week (August 2026).

9. Events and Participation

Event / description	Date	Location	Men	Women	Total
Project launch in the communities	18–20 Dec 2025	Los Ríos, Santa Estefanía, Runashitu	~45	~35	~80
Socialisation and SLA baseline data collection	17–20 Jan 2026	Los Ríos, Santa Estefanía, Runashitu	~55	~65	~120

Event / description	Date	Location	Men	Women	Total
Water Quality Workshop	1–3 Mar 2026	Los Ríos, Santa Estefanía, Runashitu	~54	~48	~102
TANDAS and Handwashing Workshop, and Solid Waste Management Workshop	18–20 Mar 2026	Los Ríos, Santa Estefanía, Runashitu	~45	~49	~94
Depatriarchalisation and Gender Equity Workshop, and Leadership, Communication & Negotiation Workshops (3 communities)	5 April 2026	Los Ríos, Santa Estefanía, Runashitu	45	58	103
Personal, Household and Community Hygiene Workshop	22–25 May 2026	Los Ríos, Santa Estefanía, Runashitu	46	47	93
O&M / Basic Plumbing Workshop and reinforcement session	15–18 June 2026 reinforced 28–31 July 2026	Los Ríos, Runashitu, Santa Estefanía, Napo Province	48	60	108
Constitutive assembly — Mujeres Guardianas del Agua	23 Aug 2026	Chontapunta Parish	—	20 founding members	20
Watershed Management Workshop and community diagnosis	27 Aug 2026	Los Ríos, Runashitu, Santa Estefanía, Napo Province	49	54	103

10. Expenditures Overview

Budget item	Budget	Period 1	Period 2	Total P1+P2	Balance
1. Personnel	5,000.00	2,370.00	2,907.20	5,277.20	(277.20)
2. Travel and logistics	1,700.00	968.08	646.43	1,614.52	85.48
3. Training / workshops	400.00	0.00	385.37	385.37	14.63
4. Materials and supplies	1,000.00	140.53	859.42	999.94	0.06
5. Communications and outreach	200.00	0.00	227.13	227.13	(27.13)
6. Monitoring and reporting	1,500.00	40.90	1,404.60	1,445.51	54.49
7. Other (local partner coordination)	200.00	35.50	14.24	49.73	150.27

Budget item	Budget	Period 1	Period 2	Total P1+P2	Balance
TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS	10,000.00	3,555.01	6,444.39	9,999.39	0.61

11. Lessons Learned and Additional Comments

- **Adaptive calendar management is essential in remote Amazonian contexts.** Payment delays and geographic barriers are predictable risks in this type of intervention. Future projects should build in a buffer period and contingency financing mechanisms to avoid interrupting field activities.
- **The gender perception gap is structural and is not closed by participation alone.** The 32-point difference between men's and women's perceptions of equality in decision-making calls for structured exercises that help men recognise barriers they do not themselves experience. Passive inclusion in mixed sessions does not make it visible.
- **Technical training has an equalising effect that governance training alone does not produce.** The interview testimonies consistently identify the plumbing and operation-and-maintenance sessions as the moment when women's participation moved from formal to substantive: several participants describe having handled meters, valves and fittings for the first time, having previously assumed that such work belonged to men or to contracted technicians.
- **Infrastructure without governance is fragile.** Physical systems can be interrupted by circumstances outside the community's control. What remains available to the community in those situations is organizational.
- **The Financial Capital deficit should guide future programming.** Access to financial resources for subsistence would make conservation action possible; without it, the pressure to exploit nature for income and the resulting damage to the basin remain high. Including modules on economic activity and financial administration would allow these achievements to continue.
- **The Alliance Model Adds Critical Value.** FIEA's entry into Chontapunta through the alliance with Fundación Hombro a Hombro proved decisive. Hombro a Hombro's decade of medical brigade work created the community trust and relational capital needed for genuine participation — a replicable partnership model for the IUCN BRIDGE Programme and similar initiatives.

Annex A — Founding Members, Mujeres Guardianas del Agua de Chonta Punta

Constitutive assembly was held in Chontapunta Parish, Tena Canton, Napo Province, on 23 August 2026.

No.	Name	Community	Telephone
1	Lourdes Lorena Santillán Tobar	Los Ríos	0982939898
2	Mirian Alexandra Yugcha Guamán	Los Ríos	0989015905
3	Maricela Marilú Shanga Grefa	Los Ríos	0959529135
4	Amoaro Esperanza Granja Martínez	Los Ríos	0968740598
5	Rosa Margarita Martínez Goyes	Los Ríos	0990984149
6	Lucy Jackeline Medina Cruz	Los Ríos	0985696146
7	María Yolanda Yumbo Shiguango	Los Ríos	0992448993
8	Isabel Rosalina Cerda Grefa	Los Ríos	0991462072
9	Mónica Pilar Yugcha Guamán	Los Ríos	0994162552

No.	Name	Community	Telephone
10	Noemí Margarita Calapucha Mamallacta	Santa Estefanía	0998753357
11	Rosa Josefa Calapucha Alvarado	Santa Estefanía	09825063722
12	Juliana Fabiola Grefa Aguinda	Santa Estefanía	
13	Beatriz Lucita Calapucha Mamallacta	Santa Estefanía	
14	Bertha Maira Yumbo Tapuy	Runashitu	0982892579
15	Kerly Gissela Andi Licuy	Runashitu	
16	Silvia Rita Grefa Shiguango	Runashitu	0999112125
17	Tamia Valeria Cerda Grefa	Runashitu	
18	Jenny Margoth Yumbo Alvarado	Runashitu	
19	Johana Jomayra Yumbo Alvarado	Runashitu	
20	Lizbeth Jimena Yumbo Aguinda	Runashitu	

Distribution by community: Los Ríos 9, Santa Estefanía 4, Runashitu 7.