Organizacion Indigena de Orientacion & Conservacion



# Amazon Conservation & Biocultural Revitalization

### An Indigenous-led conservation strategy connecting plant medicines, territory, language, water, forests, biodiversity, and cultural continuity

OIOC · Organization for Indigenous Outreach & Conservation
2026 Project Framework & Donor Brief

## Executive Summary

OIOC is an Indigenous-led Kamëntsá organization working in the Sibundoy Valley of Colombia's Upper Amazon. Our conservation strategy begins from a simple principle: biodiversity and culture cannot be protected separately. Forests, water, Yagé and other medicinal plants, ancestral Chagras, language, food systems, elders, and community knowledge form one living system.

Over three years, OIOC has developed a pilot restoration site that is evolving into a Kamëntsá Biocultural Revitalization Laboratory: a living landscape where native forest restoration, medicinal-plant conservation, regenerative agriculture, Indigenous science, language revitalization, community research, and intergenerational education can be practiced together.

The next phase is designed to move from a successful pilot toward community-scale impact. Through GlobalGiving, OIOC is seeking USD $19,300 dedicated to land-based conservation: expanding the native-tree and medicinal-plant greenhouse, continuing restoration of the pilot Chagra, producing compost and living-soil systems, documenting species, and providing native seedlings to Kamëntsá families.

## 2026 Impact at a Glance

| | |
|---|---|
| **100** | additional native trees planted this trimester in the pilot restoration area |
| **40** | additional smaller biodiversity species integrated into the restoration system |
| **20** | fruit trees planted in diversified lines |
| **30** | loads of upper-forest soil/humus added to help rebuild a protective living soil layer |
| **150+** | native medicinal plants cultivated in the botanical garden |

Organizacion Indigena de Orientacion & Conservacion



| | |
|---|---|
| **122** | active students participating in Kamëntsá language revitalization |
| **7** | veredas included in the community-led language autodiagnóstico |
| **14** | community applicators planned for the six-month language autodiagnóstico |
| **COP 25M** | budget for the Kamëntsá language autodiagnóstico |
| **300 ha** | larger native-forest restoration vision presented by the Kamëntsá Cabildo to Colombia's Ministry of Environment |

# The Strategy: BIO + CULTURAL

OIOC uses biocultural revitalization as the organizing framework for conservation. The biological and cultural dimensions are not parallel projects; they are mutually dependent parts of the same territorial system.

## BIO — Forests, Water, Chagras & Plant Medicines

The biological dimension restores the diversity and relationships that make the Upper Amazon resilient. Instead of monoculture planting, the pilot site is being developed through principles inspired by the ancestral Kamëntsá Chagra and by observing how native forest regenerates: multiple species growing together, different canopy levels, organic matter returning to the soil, water moving through the land, and food and medicine coexisting with forest species.

- Plant native and culturally important trees, including species used for food, medicine, shade, crafts, soil regeneration, and habitat.
- Conserve and propagate Yagé and other native medicinal plants as part of a wider living ecosystem rather than as isolated species.
- Expand the greenhouse and native-tree nursery so seedlings can be distributed to Kamëntsá families restoring their own Chagras and lands.
- Develop natural compost and fertilizers from locally available organic materials, including a cow-manure-based preparation tested at the pilot site.
- Maintain drainage lines, shade structures, living soil, and diversified planting systems that improve resilience without dependence on pesticides.
- Document species, growth, survival, traditional names, uses, and ecological relationships to build a long-term Indigenous-led restoration record.

# The Pilot: A Living Biocultural Revitalization Laboratory

The restoration lot is becoming a practical site for Indigenous science: a place to plant, observe, compare, document, teach, and adapt. This trimester, OIOC planted 100 additional native trees and integrated 40 smaller biodiversity species. Plants were selected not only for species count, but for ecological function—future compost material, shade, food, medicine, soil recovery, and habitat.

A section of yuca was planted collaboratively with local community members, together with lines of 20 fruit trees. OIOC also built a small shaded structure, added 30 loads of upper-forest soil/humus to create a protective layer, developed a natural fertilizer using cow manure, and created drainage lines to manage water through the site.

These interventions are part of a three-year learning process. The objective is not to reproduce a conventional plantation, but to understand how diversity itself can become infrastructure: how one species protects another, how shade and organic matter support soil, how water can be slowed and directed, and how the Chagra can function as a regenerative system without pesticide-dependent monoculture.

## Next Phase: Expanding the Community Native-Tree Greenhouse

The greenhouse is the bridge between the pilot site and territorial scale. OIOC's next priority is to increase propagation capacity for native trees, medicinal plants, and culturally important species, then place those seedlings into the hands of Kamëntsá families who want to restore their own lands.

- Construct a larger greenhouse/dome for seedling propagation, seed conservation, plant drying, study, and community workshops.
- Increase production of native and medicinal seedlings for community distribution.
- Continue compost production and develop methods that can be taught and shared locally.
- Establish demonstration Chagra Núcleos that families can adapt to their own land and needs.
- Create a documented species inventory and growth record for the restoration site.
- Develop the site as a learning space for elders, youth, families, Indigenous communities, students, and responsible research partners.

## From Pilot to Territorial Restoration

The community significance of the pilot is already expanding. Under the leadership of the Kamëntsá Cabildo and Governor Taita Juan Bautista Agreda, who also directs OIOC, a proposal has been presented to Colombia's Ministry of Environment for restoration of 300 hectares of native land and forest, including areas connected to important water sources of the Upper Amazon.

OIOC's pilot can serve as a teaching and demonstration site for this larger vision. The goal is to develop Chagra Núcleos—diverse restoration units rooted in ancestral practice—that can help communities restore forest structure, food and medicinal plants, soil health, and biodiversity together. This creates a pathway from one learning site to a network of community-led restoration.

## Why Yagé Conservation Is Biocultural Conservation

Yagé (ayahuasca) is central to Kamëntsá medicine, spirituality, and ancestral knowledge, but conserving Yagé cannot mean conserving a single vine in isolation. Its continuity depends on forests, companion plants, water, healthy soils, knowledgeable elders and healers, language, territory, and the ability to transmit knowledge responsibly between generations.

For this reason, OIOC places Yagé conservation within a broader native-plant and forest-restoration strategy. The botanical garden, which cultivates more than 150 native medicinal plants, and the restoration site together provide spaces where plant knowledge can remain connected to living ecosystems and community education.

## Long-Term Outcomes

**Community restoration capacity:** A stronger nursery can provide native seedlings and practical restoration knowledge to more Kamëntsá families.

**Biodiversity continuity:** Native trees, medicinal plants, food species, and companion plants are restored as interconnected systems rather than isolated specimens.

**Cultural continuity:** Language education and community research strengthen the transmission of ecological and medicinal knowledge.

**Water and territory protection:** Restoration supports healthier soils, forest cover, drainage, and community stewardship of Upper Amazon water sources.

**Indigenous science:** The pilot becomes a documented living laboratory where Kamëntsá knowledge guides observation, experimentation, education, and restoration.

**Scalable Indigenous leadership:** Lessons from the pilot can inform larger community and territorial restoration initiatives, including the 300-hectare vision advanced by the Cabildo.

## GlobalGiving Funding & Expansion Plan

GlobalGiving supporters have already helped move this work from vision into practice. OIOC has received approximately COP 2,900,000 through GlobalGiving for the greenhouse and conservation work. These funds have contributed to the nursery and restoration process described in this brief. We are now seeking USD $19,300 for the next land-based phase, concentrated on native-tree and medicinal-plant restoration, greenhouse expansion, and distribution of seedlings to Kamëntsá families.

The language and cultural work described in this document remains essential to OIOC's wider biocultural strategy, but the USD $19,300 request below is dedicated to land restoration and plant conservation. No language-school costs are included in this funding request.

### Proposed Use of USD $19,300

| Priority | Amount (USD) | Share | What it enables |
|---|---|---|---|
| Native-tree & medicinal-plant restoration | $8,500 | 44% | Native and medicinal seedlings, planting inputs, continued restoration of the pilot Chagra, soil recovery, drainage, compost and field care. |
| Greenhouse & nursery expansion | $6,000 | 31% | A larger protected propagation |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | space/dome, nursery beds, seedling production, seed conservation and basic infrastructure for growing native species. |
| Community seedling distribution | $3,000 | 16% | Propagation, preparation and delivery of native trees and medicinal plants to Kamëntsá families restoring their Chagras and lands. |
| Species documentation & monitoring | $1,800 | 9% | Inventory, labeling, survival and growth records, traditional names and uses, and documentation of the pilot as an Indigenous-led restoration model. |
| **TOTAL** | **$19,300** | **100%** | **Land-based conservation and community propagation phase** |

This allocation intentionally places approximately three quarters of the request directly into restoration and greenhouse/nursery capacity. The objective is to create a regenerative cycle: propagate locally appropriate species, restore the pilot landscape, learn from their growth, and place healthy native trees and medicinal plants into community hands so restoration can expand beyond OIOC's own land.

## What This Funding Can Build

- A stronger native-tree and medicinal-plant greenhouse capable of producing seedlings for both OIOC restoration and community distribution.
- Continued expansion of the pilot Chagra with native trees, Yagé and other medicinal plants, fruit species, shade plants and biodiversity-supporting species.
- Improved compost, living-soil and water-management systems that demonstrate low-input restoration without pesticide-dependent monoculture.
- A community distribution pathway through which Kamëntsá families can receive native seedlings for restoration of their own Chagras and lands.
- A documented living restoration site that can support learning for future Chagra Núcleos and the wider territorial conservation vision.

Organizacion Indigena de Orientacion & Conservacion



# A Living Vision

**The goal is not simply to plant more trees.** It is to ensure that future generations inherit both a living forest and the knowledge needed to understand, care for, and live in relationship with it.

## BIO + CULTURAL = BIOCULTURAL REVITALIZATION

Through this integrated approach, OIOC is developing an Indigenous-led conservation strategy that connects plant medicines with territory, language, water, forests, biodiversity, and cultural continuity—building a model that begins in Kamëntsá Territory and can contribute to wider conversations about the future of Amazon conservation.