

Over 100 Indigenous and Afro Colombians will gather in Mocoa to Share Their Knowledge Gained Through the Hilos de la Tierra Project

- *Hilos de la Tierra is an initiative of Gran Tierra Energy implemented by the World Corporation for Women Colombia which aims to recover ancestral practices through the creation and design of handicrafts using natural fibers and dyes, seeds from the forest, recycled materials as well as innovate with new materials and techniques in design with the communities from Putumayo and Middle Magdalena Valley*
- *The Hilos de la Tierra project works with 8 indigenous communities in the department of Putumayo, specifically in the municipalities of Orito, Villagarzón and Puerto Asís. 104 community members have received business training during 2022.*
- *In Middle Magdalena Valley there are 53 female participants from San Martín, Aguachica and San Alberto and Rionegro have participated in the project.*
- *On October 18 at in Mocoa, an event called “Meeting of Knowledge” was held so that indigenous and afro from community members from Putumayo and women from Cesar and Santander of the project can share their cultures and knowledge.*

Bogotá, October 18th 2022. Starting in September 2021 Gran Tierra Energy (Gran Tierra) in partnership with the World Corporation for Women in Colombia (CMMC) has been implementing the Hilos de la Tierra project in Putumayo and Middle Magdalen Valley, which aims to recover ancestral practices through the creation and design of handicrafts using natural fibers and dyes, seeds from the forest, recycled materials as well as innovate with new materials and techniques in design with the communities from Putumayo. With the communities from Middle Magdalena Valley the project aims to strength their tailoring and design skills. The project has benefited 104 indigenous and afro community members from eight different communities from Orito, Villagarzón and Puerto Asis: Burdines Saladilloiaco, Wasipungo, San Miguel de la Castellana, Awá Blanca, Kiwe Nxusxa, Cañabravita, Kiparadó. In Middle Magdalena Valley 53 women from San Martín, Aguachica and San Alberto from Cesar and Rionegro from Santander participated in the project. Out from the total number of participants, 86 % are women.

The handcrafted products made in the Hilos de la Tierra program reflect local culture, traditional practices, and history from local Indigenous, afro and rural communities. Traditional artisans enjoy sharing stories at local fairs about their lived experiences of their territories as a way to inform and educate others, while their handcrafted products preserve their culture.

On October 18 a *Meeting of Knowledge* was held at the CEA - Amazon Experimental Center in Mocoa – Putumayo. The objective of this event was to provide a space for the communities who have participated in the project to share with other indigenous, afro and rural groups and communities who attend the meeting and learn about the skills and abilities they have acquired and developed throughout their participation in the project.

Over 100 artisans, from 8 indigenous and Afro communities from Putumayo participated in this event. Also in attendance were representatives clothing manufacturers from the Middle Magdalena Valley Hilos de la Tierra program, who were part of the first stage of the program and have created a Collection called Matilde Lina. In this meeting of knowledge, additional activities were carried out aimed at recognizing the identity, language, history and culture of all the communities that were present.

Through the program these communities have participated in various business strengthening processes and activities with an emphasis on the artisan development of the different techniques they use to create and preserve their cultures, ancestral knowledge, symbols, rituals and traditions. During of the life of the project, activities and workshops have been carried out on the design of ideas and products, product development, finances and access to economic resources, among others, with which they not only strengthen their business but also create skills for the strengthening and growth of their communities.

“In the World Corporation of Women Colombia we have been working with ethnic communities throughout Colombia for some time and we have learned the value of all ancestral knowledge and cultures; Our goal is to contribute to productive, cultural and community development so that they develop skills and competencies that allow them to generate income and run their businesses without losing their cultural identity.” Mentions Ana Lucía Jiménez, director of the Social Performance area of the CMMC.

Manuel Buitrago, President and Country Manager of Gran Tierra Energy in Colombia stated “Hilos de la Tierra is a good example of the Company’s commitment to empower local communities in Putumayo and Middle Magdalena Valley. The company is committed to continue supporting projects that help to build transparent relationships with the communities next to our operations and that seek to promote ways to preserve their ancestral cultures”.

The World Corporation for Women Colombia (CMMC) seeks to train and strengthen entrepreneurial partners, microentrepreneurs, ethnic communities located in different parts of the country and people in difficult contexts to achieve a better quality of life, from the generation of decent and sustainable income. The CMMC has more than 30 years of experience supporting Colombians who dream, work and make their projects come true.