



natün

2026-2030 Strategic Plan

INDIGENOUS AUTONOMY FOR A JUST AND DIGNIFIED LIFE

VISION

Indigenous leadership and participation with autonomy across local, regional and national levels in Guatemala, enabling Maya communities to live a just and dignified life.

PURPOSE

Catalyze ethnodevelopment with community organization and leadership - rooted in Indigenous values and knowledge - through holistic strategies to strengthen Maya communities.

OBJECTIVES

- Cultivate local leadership in Sololá, by strengthening existing community capacities to address priority needs.
- Strengthen access to health, education and economic opportunities through community partnerships with the public sector.

**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

EDUCATION

**NUTRITION
& HEALTH**

**CULTURAL
RELEVANCE**

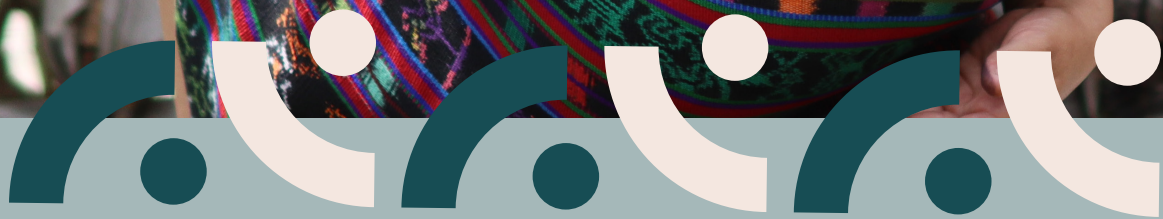
**INDIGENOUS
RIGHTS**

ENVIRONMENT

**LEADERSHIP
& ADVOCACY**

**GENDER
EQUITY**

**PARTNERSHIPS
FOR SYSTEMIC
CHANGE**



NATÜN'S VISION

We are delighted to present Natün's Strategic Plan for the period 2026-2030: the fruit of a collective process bringing together diverse stakeholders to define a shared vision, oriented toward Indigenous autonomy and a just, dignified life in Guatemala.

Our commitment to Indigenous autonomy stems from the very heart of the Maya communities of Sololá, in the Lake Atitlán region of Guatemala. With the conviction that a just and dignified life is built from the collective, we have a shared vision: to build communities where people can grow, coexist, and prosper with dignity, recognizing and exercising individual and collective rights in an environment of equity, justice, and equality.

Natün's plan is not just an institutional roadmap; it is a living expression to promote ethnodevelopment, which represents a development model driven by Indigenous people and based on respect for, and strengthening of, Indigenous cultural identity, forms of community organization, and a harmonious relationship with nature.

We project Natün as a visible and influential player within the wider ecosystem, reinforcing and strengthening spaces for participation at the community, local, and departmental levels, always based on Indigenous voices and priorities. By positioning ourselves as leaders on key issues and program areas, we will convene and support consortia that bring together different actors to advance shared objectives with cultural and territorial relevance.



Moreover, Natün will be a strategic intermediary for social and community organizations that lack access to international resources, promoting their perspectives and needs, and helping them obtain the necessary resources to contribute to our shared vision. Through this role, and by replicating our programs and model in more communities and regions, we will expand our impact.



As an organization we share a clear vision: to support Indigenous communities not only to participate in, but also lead, the processes that affect their lives, playing a leading role in the local, regional, and national spaces where the future is built. We thus reflect our firm conviction that true change is achieved when communities are the protagonists of their own destiny, and together we can construct a more equitable, collaborative, and sustainable ethnodevelopment for Indigenous communities in Guatemala.





BECOMING NATÜN

Natün's history, like a river that has flowed through rocks, storms, and calm waters, has been shaped by courageous decisions, innovation, and a deep commitment to the Maya communities of Sololá.

Natün was originally founded through a different partner organization in 2005 after Hurricane Stan, which devastated rural and Indigenous communities in the Lake Atitlán region of Guatemala. Initially a humanitarian network providing emergency aid, over the years it evolved into a charity model of short-term direct assistance.

In 2018, Natün began a new chapter, starting a new partner organization and undergoing a significant change in leadership.

Three key lessons came out of this period, through which the organization has adapted to new changes and values:

- Reaffirming that the community is at the center of Natün's work, promoting its central role in every process;
- Consolidating a working approach "with" and not "for" communities;
- Upholding dignity, respect, and transparency as ethical principles for engaging with participants, communities, and donors.

Since then, Natün has transformed into an organization led by Indigenous leaders, focused on systemic change for the ethnodevelopment of Maya communities.



In 2025, the organization took a step forward by transitioning to a co-leadership model, integrating an Indigenous executive director from the local communities, thus forming an eight-member leadership team, the majority of whom are Indigenous women.

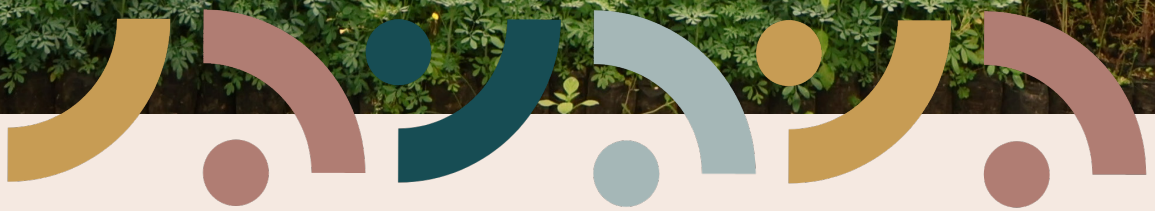
The creation of this strategic plan included the voices of members and leaders of partner communities, all Natün staff, and members of two boards of directors. This process included:

- A **Socioeconomic Study** of participants, to understand their family situations;
- **Community Assessments** working with community groups, women leaders and committees, to understand existing community strengths and needs;
- A **Context Analysis**, to consider local, regional, national, and international data and priorities;
- An **Impact Assessment**, to self-assess our actions and areas for improvement.



This meticulous process guides the organization's strategy from 2026 to 2030.

Natün's past has been preparation for what comes next. The challenges and changes along the way have strengthened the organization, and today those lessons guide us into a new stage of growth and impact.



INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES OF SOLOLÁ

Guatemala is a deeply diverse country, woven with threads of linguistic, cultural, and ethnic richness that are evident in every corner of its geography. At its heart are the Indigenous groups Maya, Garífuna and Xinca, and non-indigenous communities, all intertwined in a shared history of resistance, identity, and transformation.

The Maya people, principally in the Western highlands of the nation, are made up of 22 officially recognized ethnic groups. The Maya worldview, languages, and ancestral practices constitute the foundation for the identity of the majority of the Guatemalan population.

Natün carries out its work primarily in the department of Sololá, where the Maya heritage not only endures but flourishes. This territory, considered a convergence of ancestral identity, is home to an estimated population of 500,000 inhabitants in 2025. More than 96% identify as Maya, primarily belonging to the Kaqchikel, K'iche', and Tz'utujil ethnic groups. Sololá is a land of community knowledge, weavings that tell stories, rituals that honor nature, and a majestic natural environment, where Lake Atitlán shines as a sacred mirror and source of life, generating economic opportunities for the residents living in its surroundings.





Despite its immense cultural and natural wealth, the people of Sololá have traveled a long and painful path marked by racism, exclusion, and historical discrimination. However, far from being defeated by adversity, its communities have firmly woven a resilient identity, deeply organized and committed to transformation. They have survived centuries of injustice, and every day they rise with dignity to build a more just, equitable, and fulfilling life, where ancestral memory becomes strength and hope becomes collective action.

Resulting from this, the communities of Sololá face conditions of persistent vulnerability that limit their progress:

- **Economic:** Structural poverty, informal employment, and limited access to credit, which limits entrepreneurship. The economy relies on subsistence activities, while external migration is common, particularly among youth, due to a lack of opportunities. According to Natün's socioeconomic study, the daily income per person is an average of \$1.78, far below the extreme poverty line defined by the World Bank, which is \$3.00 per day.
- **Education:** While improved at the primary level, education still faces serious challenges at the secondary and higher levels due to a lack of investment in schools and limited infrastructure, particularly in rural areas. School dropout rates are increasing at these levels and educational quality remains a challenge, especially in relation to bilingual and intercultural education, the lack of materials, and the impact of child labor and seasonal migration, meaning many children are pulled out of school.

- **Health:** More than half of children under five suffer from malnutrition in Sololá, this statistic being even higher in rural communities with limited access to basic services, where there is a high dependence on community health workers. Although maternal mortality has decreased significantly, preventable deaths from postpartum hemorrhage and eclampsia are still recorded in municipalities with high levels of poverty, malnutrition, and poor access to health services, drinking water, and sanitation.



PERSISTENT GAPS

Studies by the Inter-American Development Bank show that gaps between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations persist in almost all human development indicators. Although there have been advances in infrastructure and social programs, Indigenous communities continue to face structural inequalities.

Despite this situation, Sololá flourishes with invaluable human, cultural, and natural capital. The resilience of its communities, their social organization, and their collective identity offer a fertile foundation for promoting equitable ethnodevelopment processes.

This contextual information serves as the basis for the design of Natün's strategic plan, positioning us as a key player in this effort by implementing programs that strengthen education, health, nutrition, and economic opportunities, with a culturally relevant, sustainable, equitable, and rights-based approach, committed to systemic change, and deeply rooted in respect for the dignity of Indigenous communities.

PARTNER COMMUNITIES

The communities we prioritize as partners share key characteristics, enabling long-term impact:

- **Origin and context:** Maya communities in rural areas, with limited access to public services and opportunities, and indicators that reflect conditions of underdevelopment.
- **Local organization and leadership:** Presence of community leaders committed to finding dignified solutions and willing to establish strong relationships with Natün as strategic partners.
- **Strategic alignment:** The needs and strengths identified in the community are mainly aligned with Natün's strategic approaches.
- **Geographic accessibility:** A location that allows for access and ongoing support from the Natün team, according to resources available.
- **Local capacities and resources:** Communities bring their own knowledge, capacities, and resources that, when working together, strengthen program implementation.
- **Territorial coordination:** The ability to coordinate efforts with other governmental and non-governmental organizations in the region, promoting synergies which instead of duplicating actions, strategically complement them to increase impact.
- **Participation with a transitional approach:** Communities participate in Natün's programs for a defined period, with a clear start and a planned exit. At the end of the support, they are expected to continue working autonomously, strengthened by the acquired capacities and without depending on the organization's direct support.

Based on our deep experience in Sololá, we are open to sharing and adapting this working model to other contexts, both regionally and nationally, where there is alignment in values for a transformative impact.



STRATEGIC PLAN

Department of Strategic Threads



Natün's commitment is centered on the ethnodevelopment of communities. This path is guided by six cross-cutting strategic threads that weave the programs together in the loom of development - closely aligning with the importance of weaving in the Maya culture.

Each of these threads runs through and intertwines the education, economic, health, and nutrition programs, connecting knowledge and practices. By weaving them together, a strong and colorful fabric is formed, where equity, justice, and inclusion are not just ideals, but living realities that are strengthened day by day to achieve systemic, long-term impact.

Thus, Natün not only implements programs and projects; it cultivates processes, accompanies, facilitates, and embodies hope and change with the hands of those who live in the communities.

DEPARTMENT OF STRATEGIC THREADS

Objective: Cultivate the wellbeing of Indigenous communities through implementing holistic strategic threads, as a basis for connecting programs, institutional and community actions, for long-term progress.



CULTURAL RELEVANCE

Recognize, respect, and promote the knowledge, practices, principles, and values of Indigenous communities.

Strategies:

- Uphold the Maya worldview, knowledge, practices, wisdom, principles, and values to center the local culture in all actions.
- Advance research, documentation, and sharing of Maya ancestral knowledge, practices, wisdom, principles, and values with the active participation of communities.
- Facilitate the active participation of community elders in passing on knowledge and stories to new generations.
- Use and promote Mayan languages.
- Develop and nurture a Maya team and Guatemalan board who are from the local communities, who lead the organization and all community programs and partnerships.



LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

Strengthen local leadership capacities to advocate for and build more just, resilient, and dignified Indigenous communities.

Strategies:

- Cultivate strong Maya leadership from the inside out by strengthening the capacities of Natün's team alongside community leadership, for community advocacy and transformation.



- Build the leadership of women and youth within community organizations, particularly community promotoras, through training, collective organizing, networking, and sharing experiences.
- Provide training and tools to Indigenous community leaders to strengthen their leadership roles, for active participation and advocacy in governance systems and self-sourcing community projects.



PARTNERSHIPS FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Connect and reinforce efforts between communities, institutions, and local leaders to strengthen ethnodevelopment.

Strategies:

- Strengthen relationships with community authorities and leaders, promoting two-way communication and recognizing women and youth as key participants.
- Drive community and municipal participation in program identification, design, and implementation, ensuring inclusive and representative processes.
- Build and consolidate strategic alliances with local, regional, national, and international governmental and non-governmental organizations, to facilitate inter-institutional links and enhance community progress.



- Act as a bridge between communities and the public sector, generating strategic collaboration that amplifies collective impact.
- Collaborate on community projects based on needs identified by leaders.
- Promote the creation of consortia, bringing together community and local organizations led by Indigenous people.



INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

Contribute to the exercise and full realization of Indigenous communities' individual and collective human rights.

Strategies:

- Collaborate in the implementation and realization of Indigenous rights through programs providing access to services.
- Raise awareness among communities and community leaders about Indigenous peoples' rights and legislation.
- Participate in spaces to advocate for the recognition and exercise of Indigenous rights.
- Promote inter-institutional coordination with public bodies for communities' access to and fulfillment of rights.



GENDER EQUITY

Reduce gender gaps in social, economic, and political spheres, grounded in the Maya principle of duality and complementarity - recognizing women and men as distinct, equally valued, and interdependent, contributing in balance to collective harmony.

Strategies:

- Facilitate gender equity in the organizational culture through an



institutional gender equity policy.

- Provide culturally relevant training and awareness-raising on gender justice, duality, and complementarity in the organization and with program participants.
- Provide guidance and referral for cases of gender-based violence to appropriate services.
- Integrate positive and non-violent masculinity across the organization and programs.



ENVIRONMENT

Promote the conservation of Mother Nature based on Indigenous ancestral values, principles and practices to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Strategies:

- Promote environmental education internally and externally through compliance with environmental policy, campaigns, workshops, and educational tours.
- Strengthen community forest management with a systemic approach, seeking sustainability, restoration, conservation, and responsible community use for wider climate, water and environmental benefits.





PROGRAMS



Nutrition & Health

Nutrition & Health



Improve the nutrition and health of women and children through a holistic approach that strengthens prevention, self-care, and the availability of healthy foods.

Integrated Women's Health

Contribute to improving the physical and emotional well-being of women of childbearing age by raising awareness and providing care for sexual, reproductive and mental health, with a rights-based approach.

Creciendo Sano - Malnutrition Prevention

Promote comprehensive nutritional education and services to help reduce the risk of childhood malnutrition.

Ancestral Agriculture

Contribute to the production of and access to nutritious, culturally appropriate organic foods, to reduce malnutrition.

Natün Strategic Actions

- Training in sexual, reproductive, and mental health for youth and women of childbearing age.
- Providing access to medical care and diagnostics for women of childbearing age and pregnant women.
- Creating spaces for knowledge sharing and collaboration with Maya Midwives and the Ministry of Health.

- Educational, community, institutional and interinstitutional initiatives, with follow-up, that lead to lasting changes in behaviors to prevent malnutrition.
- Monitoring malnutrition cases through medical consultations and providing medications, vitamins, and nutritional kits to high-risk families.

- School and community gardens with training in proper harvesting and nutritious recipes.
- Capacity building to implement agricultural production units, with specialized support.
- Community native seed banks.

Community Results

SHORT TERM (1 -2 YEARS)

Integrated Women's Health

- Women have access to health services in order to detect diseases early.
- Women are trained in sexual and reproductive health, and mental wellbeing as part of their holistic health.
- Maya Midwives strengthen their capacities to promote and increase the early detection of warning signs in women and newborns.

Creciendo Sano - Malnutrition Prevention

- Mothers of children under 5 years of age strengthen their capacities to receive adequate health and nutrition care through access to preventive services.
- Mothers increase their knowledge about health and nutrition through practical and contextualized training.
- Mothers and communities have a research plan to understand the causes and effects of malnutrition, which can serve as a basis for proposing local solutions.

Ancestral Agriculture

- Families improve their capacities to ensure the availability and access of healthy and culturally appropriate food through strengthened agricultural and livestock units.
- Communities identify native seeds for conservation and restoration, applying appropriate harvesting, post-harvest, and storage methods.

MEDIUM TERM (3 -4 YEARS)

- Women of childbearing age and pregnant women increase their awareness of healthy family development.
- Families participate in informed decisions about sexual and reproductive health and mental wellbeing with a rights-based approach.
- Maya Midwives optimize community care for women during pregnancy and childbearing years.

- Families regularly utilize preventive health services, promoting complete vaccination schedules, supplementation, and growth monitoring.
- Mothers visibly adopt better feeding and childcare practices.
- Natün, mothers, and community authorities participate in a consolidated child nutrition monitoring and research system.

- Families are strengthening their agricultural production units toward sustainable, climate-resilient production aimed at generating income through technical training.
- Communities are rescuing, conserving, and exchanging native seeds, using existing seed banks.

LONG TERM (5+ YEARS)

Integrated Women's Health

- Women of childbearing age and pregnant women have consistent access to preventative healthcare services, improving their health and nutrition, as well as that of their children.
- Women adopt sexual and reproductive health and mental wellbeing practices that strengthen their decision-making capacity within the family, contributing to greater autonomy.
- Maya Midwives identify pregnant women early in the first trimester for better care and health outcomes.

Creciendo Sano - Malnutrition Prevention

- Children under 5 years of age show significant improvements in their Z-score, which promotes a reduction in chronic, at-risk, and acute malnutrition.
- Mothers and communities have strengthened their health resilience through organized networks and coordination with local services.
- Communities are involved in disseminating and raising awareness about the causes and effects of malnutrition in their context.

Ancestral Agriculture

- Families with sustainable and climate-resilient production units, with local farmland transformed to contribute to food security and income generation.
- Communities with strengthened and diversified seed banks, supported by the cultivation of local farmland, ensuring the continuity of native seed exchanges and conservation.

Strategic Threads in Nutrition & Health

CULTURAL RELEVANCE:

A comprehensive intercultural model that centers ancestral knowledge and technical expertise in health, nutrition, agroecology, and education, strengthening community networks and actions in the

LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY:

Community leadership of women and Maya midwives to promote their autonomy in reproductive health, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE:

Community and inter-institutional partnerships to jointly design and implement health and nutrition programs tailored to the local context.

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS:

Exercise of sexual and reproductive rights, women's rights and specific rights of Indigenous women.

GENDER EQUITY:

Training and support to recognize gender gaps and strengthening women's autonomy, while raising awareness among men about positive masculinities.

ENVIRONMENT:

Environmental element in community health to prevent diseases and promote healthy environments through education, critical thinking, and actions to care of and conserve nature.



Education

Education



Foster the personal, community, and social development of children and adolescents by strengthening their leadership, communication, identity, science and technology skills, through culturally relevant curricula and the active participation of families.

Preschool Nutrition Centers

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Ensure holistic development in early childhood before entering school, strengthening motor, cognitive, early literacy, and life skills through play-based activities, while accompanying this process with parents who are trained and committed to actively support their children.

Learning Enrichment

PRIMARY YEARS

Support the academic success and overall development of children in public schools through culturally relevant curriculum reinforcement, while fostering life skills and cultural identity, with the guidance of parents trained in respectful parenting.

Youth Leadership Pathways

YOUTH & ADOLESCENCE

Expand educational, professional, and civic opportunities for youth & adolescents to ensure their successful integration into society, by strengthening their linguistic, technological, academic, leadership, and socio-emotional skills, with the support of their families and their participation in culturally-relevant community and social advocacy processes.

Natün Strategic Actions

- Running bilingual preschools to prepare students for entering primary school.
- Monitoring and treating malnutrition in early childhood.

- Curriculum and life skills enrichment, through after-school classes and workshops with primary and middle school students identified as needing extra support.

- English & Kaqchikel classes
- Workshops and training in science and technology
- Leadership, socio-emotional, and professional skills workshops.
- Civic education and integration into social advocacy networks.
- Financial incentive for participation.

FAMILY TRAINING AND INVOLVEMENT IN HOLISTIC EDUCATION:

- Ongoing training and active engagement of mothers, fathers, and caregivers to strengthen the family-school connection and support the holistic development of children and adolescents.

Community Results

SHORT TERM (1 -2 YEARS)

Preschool Nutrition Centers

- Young children have strengthened skills in motor development, autonomy, and understanding of their environment through play-based and contextually relevant activities.
- Children have foundational skills in logical thinking and early reading, prepared for the transition to primary school.
- Parents have enhanced abilities to actively and respectfully support their children's holistic development.

Learning Enrichment

- Children make significant improvements in Communication, Language, and Mathematics within the school curriculum.
- Children, families, and schools strengthen identity and life skills through participating in culturally relevant educational processes.

Youth Leadership Pathways

- Youth & adolescents with basic bilingual, technological, and socio-emotional skills actively participate in their educational and family environments, respecting and valuing their culture.
- Youth & adolescents have foundational skills in leadership, teamwork, and decision-making, and integrate into local participation networks.

MEDIUM TERM (3 -4 YEARS)

- Children graduate preschool with age-appropriate holistic development, ready to successfully transition to primary school.
- Families actively participate in monitoring their children's learning and well-being, reinforcing educational continuity.
- Teachers and local school staff equipped with updated methodologies and assessment tools to support child development approach.

- Children have the competencies and skills needed to pass their grade in key academic areas, demonstrating greater autonomy in their learning process.
- Families actively support their children's education and development at home and at school.
- Communities and teachers implement culturally relevant and contextually adapted methodologies in school enrichment programs.

- Youth & adolescents successfully complete academic and technical training, applying their knowledge in education, work, and social life.
- Families strengthen an educational and culturally enriched environment through positive parenting and active support.
- Youth & adolescents participate in local committees and municipal coordination spaces, fostering leadership and civic education.

LONG TERM (5+ YEARS)

Preschool Nutrition Centers

- Children enter and remain in primary school highly prepared for adaptability and academic achievement, reducing school dropout.
- Communities replicate and adapt the educational experience in new settings, strengthening the program's reach and sustainability.
- Community organizations and local actors promote public policies supporting early childhood based on the program's documented experience.

Learning Enrichment

- Children have increased school retention and academic success, reflected in reduced academic level repetition, dropout, and school abandonment.
 - Families and communities actively engaged in supporting schooling, promoting educational continuity.
- Schools and community partners consolidate contextualized curricula and strategic alliances to improve education quality and access.

Youth Leadership Pathways

- Youth & adolescents share and teach language and technical skills with their parents and within the community, contributing to continuous learning.
- Youth & adolescents have their own organized enterprises, strengthening the local economy and community autonomy.
- Youth & adolescents engage in local and municipal advocacy spaces and are organized under a formal structure to support community ethnodevelopment.

Strategic Threads in Education

CULTURAL RELEVANCE:

Bilingual and intercultural education curricula that include the Mayan language, history, and identity of Indigenous peoples, as well as knowledge and expertise in Maya science and technology.

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS:

Exercise of the rights of children and adolescents, including the right to bilingual and intercultural education.

LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY:

Leadership from early childhood through adolescence, promoting active and meaningful participation, critical thinking, and the engagement of families and facilitators in the learning process.

GENDER EQUITY:

An equitable and inclusive educational model that fosters harmony, respect, and shared responsibility from early childhood, through training in gender and positive masculinity.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE:

Partnerships and coordination with community and educational leaders to collaboratively design and implement educational programs.

ENVIRONMENT:

Teaching content that promotes environmental awareness, critical thinking, and actions to care for and restore Mother Nature.

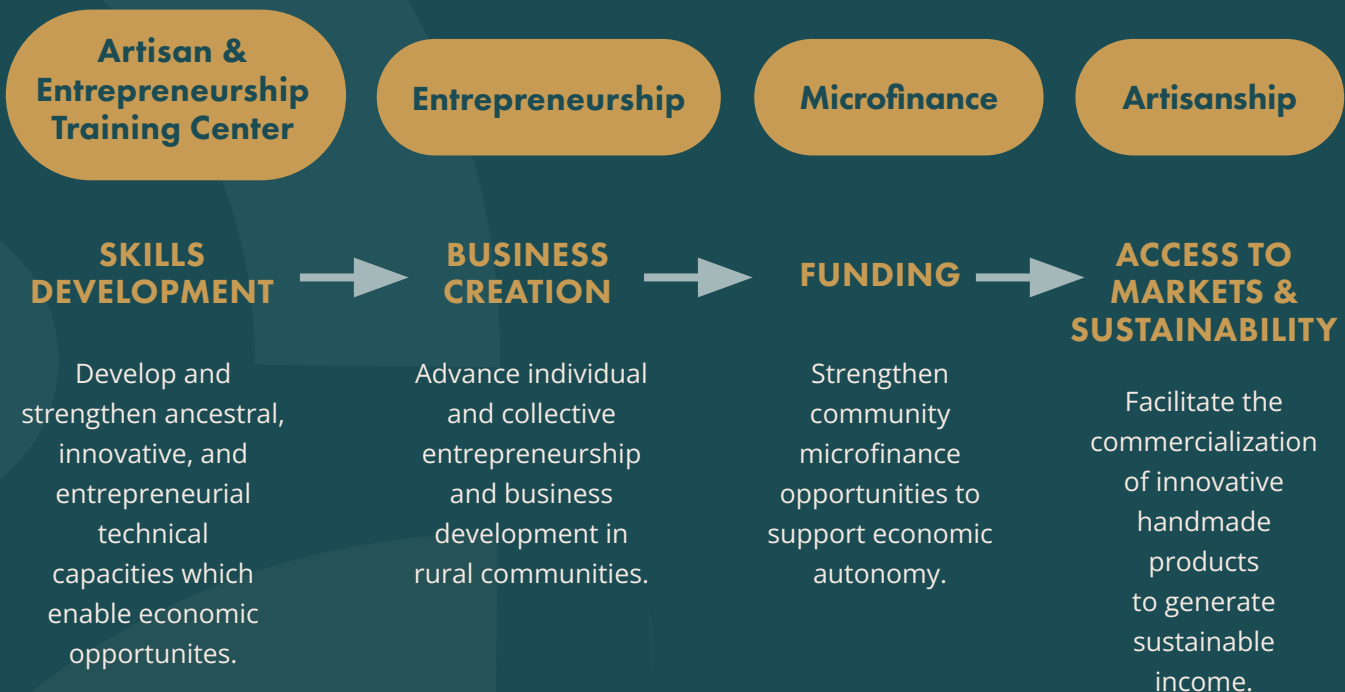


Economic Development

Economic Development



Improve community economic autonomy, through capacity building in entrepreneurship and business skills, with technical and financial support.



Natün Strategic Actions

- Community-based training centers offering vocational courses.
- Entrepreneurship skills training directed toward students, entrepreneurs, and youth.
- Leadership training for women entrepreneurs.

- Advisory services and technical support for the creation, growth, and formalization of small businesses.
- Financial skills training for entrepreneurs.
- Exchanges and networking opportunities for new entrepreneurs.

- Creation, formation, and autonomization of savings groups and community banks.
- Provide competitive microcredit financing for local and youth-led small businesses.

- Creation, training, and formalization of artisan groups.
- Provide access to international markets to sell handmade products of partner artisans under fair trade standards.

Community Results

SHORT TERM (1 -2 YEARS)

Artisan & Entrepreneurship Training Center

- Youth and adults reclaim and preserve ancestral techniques through vocational courses in diverse trades.
- Communities strengthen their technical and entrepreneurial capacities, transferring applied knowledge for local ethnodevelopment.
- Participants design and produce innovative product lines that merge ancestral techniques and designs with modern approaches.

Entrepreneurship

- Participants establish new small businesses by applying the EGL methodology (Entrepreneurship, Growth, Leadership).
- Small businesses advance in their formalization with the support of individual and group advisory services.
- Small businesses at different stages—start-up, growth, and consolidation—are identified and strengthened.
- Small businesses and entrepreneurs are ready to participate in visitor tours.

Microfinance

- Community savings groups are strengthened, achieve independence, and consolidate their savings culture through the creation of new groups.
- Members of savings groups strengthen their capacities in administration and community leadership.
- Emerging small businesses and established businesses gain access to financing that drives their growth.

Artisanship

- Artisans develop innovative and diverse products that meet international quality standards.
- Marketing and sales channels facilitate stable income from handmade artisan products.
- Artisan groups generate a fair income through the sale of their products.

MEDIUM TERM (3 -4 YEARS)

- Participants show sustainable improvements in their household and community's financial situation.
- Women participants

- Local small businesses grow sustainably and adopt environmentally friendly practices.
- Youth create small businesses which lead to innovation in their communities.
- Formalized businesses strengthen

- Savings groups consolidate at different levels of maturity and expand with new members.
- Financially excluded families engage in community financial programs through targeted education and training.
- Community banks and cooperatives

- Handmade products gain entry into international markets and fair trade networks.
- Artisans' incomes increase sustainably through local, national, and international sales.
- Artisans strengthen their capacities in quality control,

Artisan & Entrepreneurship Training Center

take on leadership roles in community and economic spaces, influencing decision-making and expanding opportunities for participation with a gender equity lens.

Entrepreneurship

their administration and access to services and financing.

- Youth gain access to employment opportunities in business management.
- Small businesses at different stages—start-up, growth, and consolidation—are identified and strengthened.
- Small businesses and entrepreneurs are ready to participate in visitor tours.

Microfinance

are established, strengthening their management with capable leaders and skilled financial administration.

- Emerging small businesses and established businesses gain access to financing that drives their growth.

Artisanship

innovation, and technical training.

- Artisan groups generate a fair income through the sale of their products.

LONG TERM (5+ YEARS)

Artisan & Entrepreneurship Training Center

- New small businesses stabilize and contribute to local economic development.
- Participants access sustainable employment opportunities.
- Innovative product lines achieve wider market positioning.

Entrepreneurship

- Small businesses establish strategic commercial connections and attract external investment for technological upgrades and expansion.
- Youth access business internships that open opportunities for employment and the creation of new small businesses.

Microfinance

- Savings and credit cooperatives stabilize and actively include women and financially excluded families in community financial management.
- Small businesses and entrepreneurs maintain access to competitive financing that supports their consolidation and growth.

Artisanship

- Natün's Artisanship gains market positionality as a solid commercial entity, facilitating the sale of products from multiple artisan groups.
- The sales and marketing platform is formalized and strengthened, progressing toward sustainability and the generation of sustainable income in the long term.

Strategic Threads in Economic Development

CULTURAL RELEVANCE:

Preservation and dissemination of ancestral knowledge in backstrap weaving and hand embroidery through culturally relevant training, community businesses, and fair sales of products reflecting Maya artists' identity.

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS:

Exercise of economic rights for women, youth, and Indigenous communities.

LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY:

Local leadership, especially of women and youth, driving economic development through training, innovation, inclusion, and sustainability.

GENDER EQUITY:

Training, business support, and leadership strengthening for women and youth, ensuring their full and inclusive participation toward economic autonomy, with actions to raise awareness of positive masculinities.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE:

Community and inter-institutional partnerships to coordinate and implement programs that promote local economic development, income generation, and employment.

ENVIRONMENT:

Environmental education and the green economy through training and sustainable businesses that link local ethnodevelopment with the care and conservation of Mother Nature.





**ORGANIZATIONAL
STRENGTHENING**



Flexibility, Adaptability & Innovation

VALUES

Our values are at the core of everything we do; they are the foundation that guides every decision, every action, and every relationship we build.

- **Cooperation** – We work as a kind, effective and supportive team in collaboration with our communities.
- **Integrity** – We act honestly and ethically, thereby earning the trust and confidence of both communities and supporters.
- **Transparency** – Our processes and use of resources are reasonable, justified and clearly communicated.
- **Respect** – We treat all people kindly and fairly, with dignity and empathy.
- **Humility** – We recognize our role as facilitators, centering and valuing local expertise. We evolve based on constant learning and self-improvement.
- **Accountability** – We thoughtfully and responsibly manage our resources to ensure both efficient use and intentional impact.
- **Reciprocity** – We believe in dignified, equitable relationships with our community, fostering agency, active participation and service to others.

GOVERNANCE

Our ingredients for success in implementing the strategic plan...

1 BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

Natün comprises two partner organizations, one in Guatemala and one in the US, working together under a shared vision. This dual structure represents a unique opportunity to strengthen collaborative governance and ensure equitable decision-making.

Strategies:

- Two boards of directors (in Guatemala and in the US) with complementary and defined roles, clear coordination mechanisms for joint strategic decisions.
- Balance of power, ensuring that no board holds greater authority than the other, and ensuring equal rights and responsibilities, trust, and co-responsibility.
- Spaces for structured dialogue to review progress and align objectives.

2 STRUCTURE

Our structure is carefully designed to be clear, inclusive, and truly human-centered: a framework where every voice resonates, every action leaves its mark, and every effort becomes an essential part of a purpose that unites us.

Strategies:

- Functional organizational chart that reflects clear, yet flat, hierarchies.
- Transparent lines of communication and decision-making.
- Precise roles and functions aligned with the organization's purpose.
- Organizational culture based on living our values and staff empowerment.



3 LEADERSHIP MODEL

Our leadership model is based on the balance of power and leadership within a qualified, multidisciplinary, and predominantly female Indigenous leadership team.

Strategies:

- Implementation of co-leadership at the executive level.
- Strengthening leadership and decision-making capacities through professional development, with a collaborative and restorative approach.
- A Leadership Team as a collaborative decision-making model.
- Visibility and empowerment of female Maya leaders.

4 ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE

Committed to ethical practices, we guarantee transparency, efficient use of resources, and compliance with applicable laws.

Strategies:

- Transparent resource management through internal control systems.
- Accountability through reports to donors, communities, and the boards of directors.
- Regular independent external audits.
- Legal compliance with applicable laws and regulations in Guatemala and the United States.
- Values-based institutional culture guiding every decision and action.



5 FINANCE

With diverse and robust revenue sources, unrestricted financial reserves, and sound internal financial management of funds, we are able to have accountability, flexibility, and agility in our expenditures.

Strategies:

- Revenue sources that are strategic and geographically diverse to support our work including individual donors, foundations, multilateral institutions, ambassadors, diaspora, businesses, sales, and local partnerships.
- An unrestricted reserve fund.
- Strong and robust internal systems to manage funds and grants with transparency and accountability.

6 TEAM AND CULTURE

Maintain team unity and cohesion, creating a satisfied, committed team with low staff turnover, working together to achieve our purpose and increase our external impact.

Strategies:

- A diverse and multidisciplinary team, predominantly Indigenous and from local communities, with a deep understanding of the local context and culture.
- Opportunities for professional growth and development, including individual and group training and specializations.
- Well-being and a friendly, healthy, and safe work environment, with job security and fair and competitive compensation.
- A safe physical space, with the necessary equipment and technology to achieve goals.



7 PROGRAMS

Monitor and evaluate the impact and efficiency of our programs, enabling internal self-reflection and learning, and external accountability for the use of resources to communities and donors.

Strategies:

- Clear, realistic, and measurable impact objectives and indicators.
- Efficient internal data collection and systematization systems.
- Tools and training necessary to facilitate programmatic learning.

8 STRATEGIC POSITIONING

Continue defining and consolidating our role in the local, regional, national, and international ecosystem, expanding our impact, contributing to advocacy, and sharing our experience, model, and voice beyond the communities where we work.

Strategies:

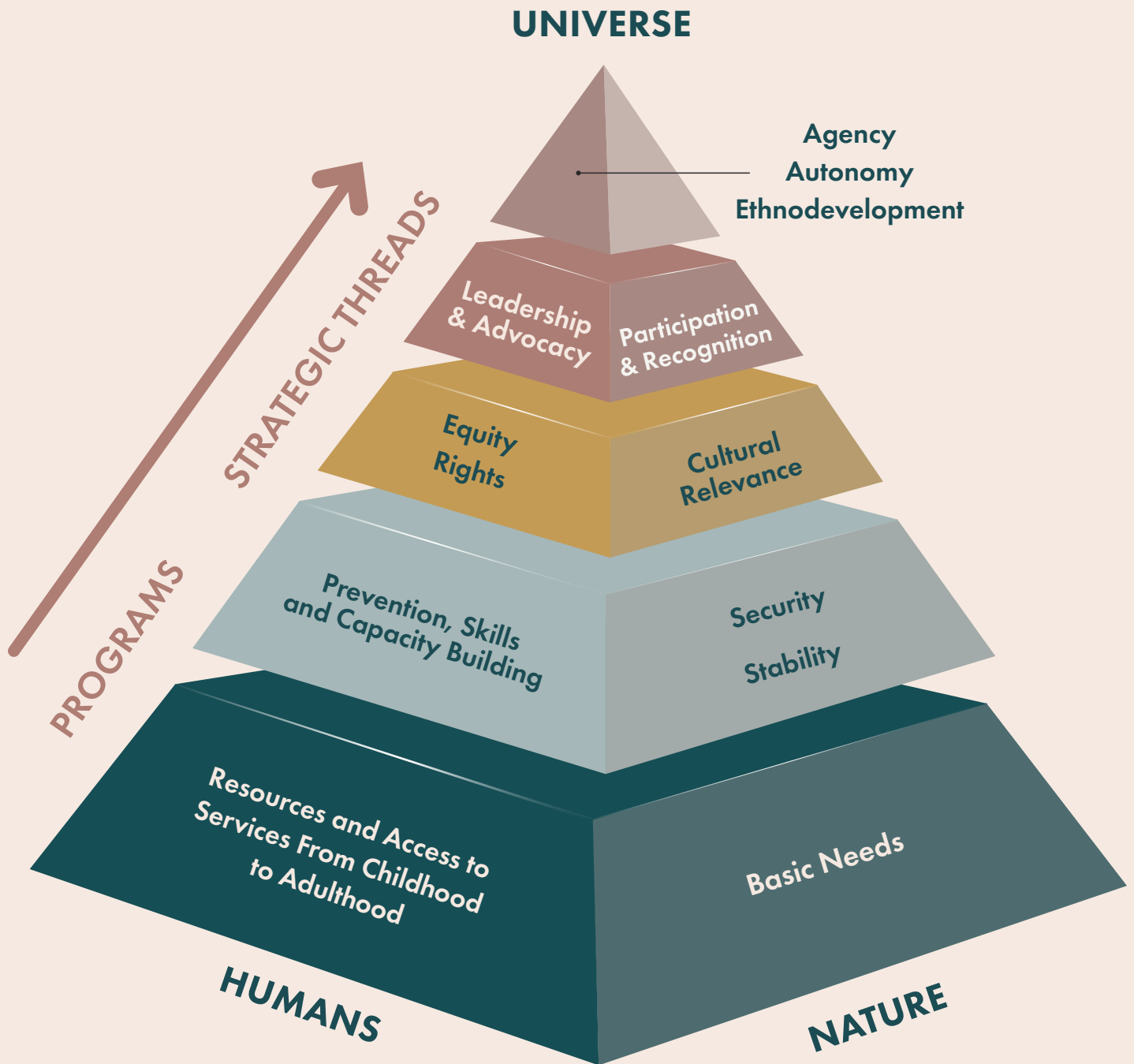
- Local: Partnerships and participation with Indigenous communities, and public and private institutions.
- Regional and national: Strong participation in advocacy and third-sector networks.
- International: Participation in relevant forums and conferences, seeking opportunities to influence local leadership and Indigenous community voices.





SUMMARY OF STRATEGY

Pathway to Indigenous Autonomy





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

NATÜN IS A CONCEPT:

An ecosystem made up of multiple elements, each equally important in contributing to balance and prosperity, always encompassed by our guiding values.

We are grateful to our partner communities, staff, donors, two boards of directors, and numerous alliances that together form Natün and elevate the Maya communities of Sololá.

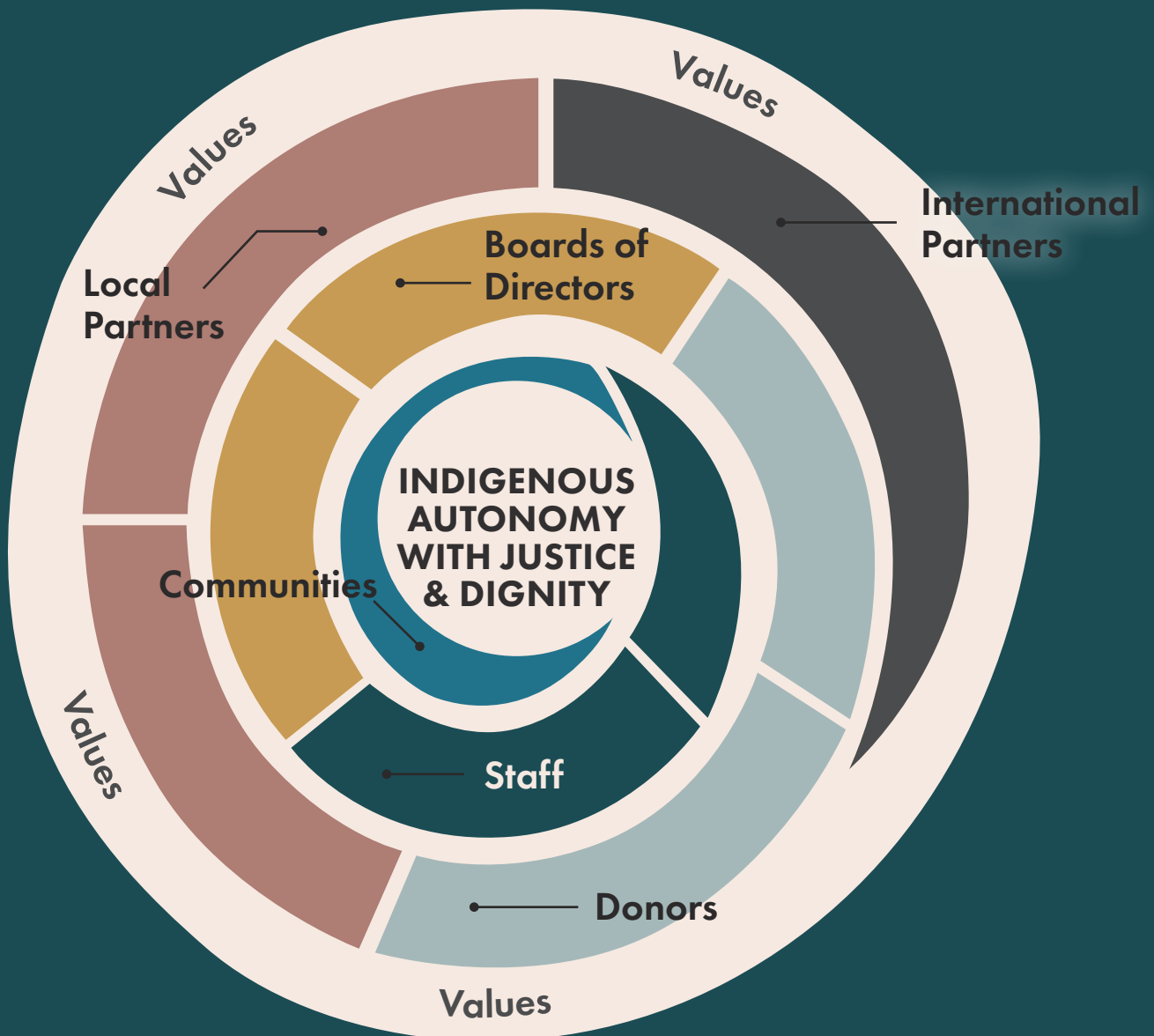




Illustration by Justien Heideman



JOIN US

As we look to the future, we invite you to continue this journey with us.



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