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Educational experiences and future visions of Indigenous youth in Ecuador – Shared issues with the Nordic contexts

Short description / Abstract:

This presentation draws on research with Indigenous youth in Ecuadorian highland and Amazon regions, exploring how young people navigate identity and resilience within Intercultural Bilingual Schools, intercultural teacher education institute and youth leadership training school. Drawing on surveys, interviews and workshops conducted in 2025-2026, we reflect on how Indigenous youth articulate their own educational experiences, and what this means for decolonizing everyday pedagogical practices.

We centre youth through their voices and capacities as epistemic agents, as knowers and shapers of their educational contexts. From this position, we explore how Indigenous educational struggles, deepened by overlapping social and environmental crises, are confronted by communities, and how Indigenous understandings of environment, society and the future can inform –and challenge– dominant educational frameworks at the level of upper secondary classrooms and early post-secondary education.

This presentation is an invitation for dialogue. We are particularly interested in connecting the experiences of Indigenous youth in Ecuador with those of Sámi and other Indigenous youth in Nordic contexts. Key concerns that connect these geographically distant contexts include questions of language, identity, self-determination and the ongoing work of indigenizing formal education while sustaining the informal formation that is fostered within and provides support for Indigenous communities and organizations.

We welcome teachers, researchers, students, and all those working alongside Indigenous youth.