POLICY BRIEF

From compensatory to transformative: Indigenous women teachers and the future of intercultural education in Argentina

ECHIDNA GLOBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Center for Universal Education at BROOKINGS

ZAYNAB GATES

Executive Summary

Despite three decades of policy development, the majority of Indigenous children and youth do not have access to Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) schools and a quality education, with Indigenous girls facing additional barriers rooted in gendered responsibilities and safety concerns. Drawing on storytelling interviews, focus groups, a survey, and a participatory workshop with Indigenous women teachers and policy actors, this policy brief explores the pathways Indigenous women navigated in their education, the barriers and supports they encountered, and what these experiences can reveal about building gender equality from a culturally grounded perspective.

Findings show how Indigenous women teachers faced social and cultural restrictions, made use of available supports and enablers, and emerged as key actors and critical agents of cultural transmission and change.

Based on the possibilities opened by this first wave of Indigenous women teachers in Argentina and centered on their experiences and voices, the brief offers recommendations to support IBE policy achieve its promise in three interconnected dimensions:

1) Create commitment for change based on the values of diversity, multilingualism, and gender equality.

2) Support Indigenous women teachers' capacities to lead transformative education through new roles and spaces within the school, and networks to expand their reach.

3) Align policy actors through the development of a shared vision and purpose for IBE that creates the cohesiveness needed for systemic change.

Introduction

Over the past 30 years, Argentina has made significant advances in recognizing Indigenous children's rights to relevant education through the development of an Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) policy (Argentina 2006; Hecht 2014), yet these advances have not translated into improved educational outcomes for Indigenous young people. Only two out of ten Indigenous children and youth attend IBE schools (Hecht et al. 2025; Ministry of Human Capital 2025b; INDEC 2024), and their learning achievements in Math and Language are on average ten percentage points below those of non-Indigenous children (Ambao and Bottinelli 2024). Indigenous girls face additional hurdles in their educational trajectory due to the weight of gendered responsibilities and safety concerns (Anaya 2012, 18; ENDEPA 2018b, 16; Asociación Civil Lola Mora and ONU Mujeres 2025).

The current IBE policy has fallen short in delivering educational experiences that are culturally grounded, develop students' diverse talents, and support them to contribute to their own and their communities' well-being. Efforts to implement IBE in Argentina have included the formation of new coordination units at the national and state levels, the creation of IBE teaching degrees and training institutions, the development of educational materials, and the launching of scholarships for Indigenous students.

Yet IBE implementation has lacked the systemic cohesion and sustained support to simultaneously address the many necessary components of the policy (ENDEPA 2018a), from curriculum, teachers, and schools to aligning around purpose, pedagogy, and mindsets (Sengeh and Winthrop 2022). Indeed, Hecht (2014) has criticized the design of the IBE policy itself for taking a limited view of IBE as a compensatory program; ENDEPA (2018a, 38) has also noted the failure to include broad Indigenous participation.

Teacher preparation, one of the primary levers through which IBE is translated into practice, exemplifies these gaps in both policy design and implementation. IBE teacher preparation programs, created as part of the IBE policy, continue to be influenced by traditional teacher training with cultural homogenization practices that focus on molding a national citizen, understood to be urban, monolingual, and monocultural (Hecht 2014; Guaymás and Hernández 2018). Shaped by Western-centered curricula, these training programs insufficiently address Indigenous knowledges and languages and lack strong links to IBE schools, thereby limiting Indigenous teachers' capacity to support their students (Unamuno 2015; Hecht 2014).

Indigenous teachers—the majority of whom are women—are key to reaching the promise of IBE. Indigenous women play a vital role in cultural and language transmission within their families, and their work as teachers extends their influence into schools and other social spaces.

Indigenous teachers—the majority of whom are women—are key to reaching the promise of IBE. Indigenous women play a vital role in cultural and language transmission within their families (Hirsch 2008), and their work as teachers extends their influence into schools and other social spaces. Through their lived experiences in the education system and deep knowledge of Indigenous values and practices, they are not mere policy implementers but critical agents interrogating gender expectations and norms (Hecht et al. 2018). Yet little is known about their experiences within the education system, both in terms of their own educational trajectories and their process of becoming teachers. Ignoring these experiences limits the ability of IBE policy and practice to effectively guarantee the right to education of a new generation of Indigenous girls and women, boys, and men.

This policy brief draws on the lived experiences and deep contextual knowledge of Indigenous women teachers to explore how the design and implementation of IBE policy can ensure children's educational pathways and their capacity to contribute to fulfilling the dreams of their communities. What emerges points to the importance of strengthening the role of teachers as key social actors in addressing the aspirations and needs of Indigenous young people in Argentina. Using storytelling interviews, it explains the systemic barriers faced by Indigenous women and highlights the crucial support they received to advance in their careers. The brief offers recommendations for policymakers, training institutions, Indigenous leaders, and the educational community, not only to protect the rights of Indigenous children and youth to a relevant education but also to reimagine a multilingual and multicultural educational system that fosters a more just, peaceful, and prosperous society.

Qom traditional educator Jessica Chara. Puerto Tirol. Photo by Ynty Wanady.

Background: Indigenous peoples in Argentina from invisibilization to recognition

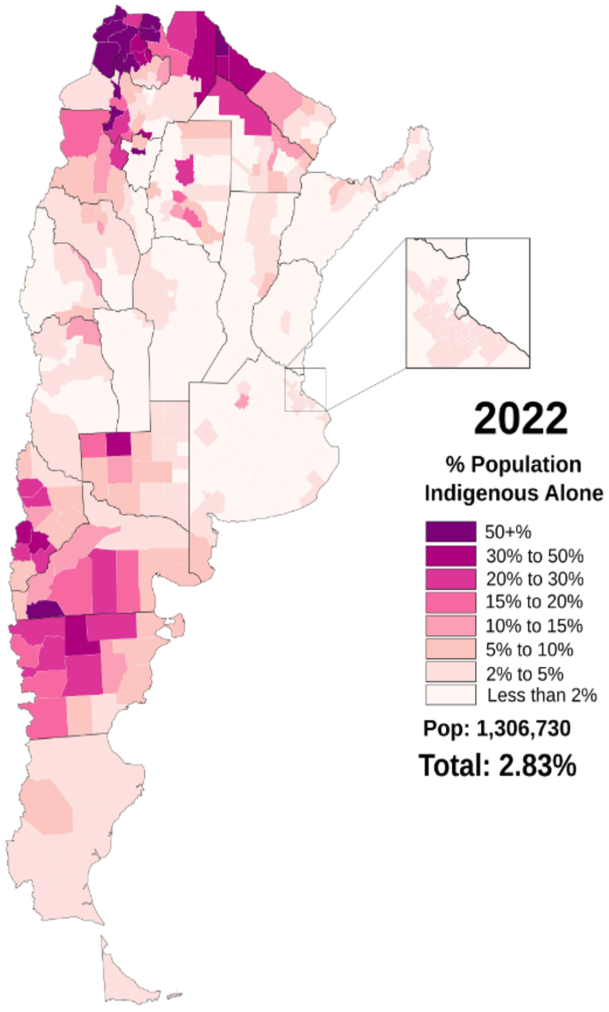
Policy changes in Argentina in the last 30 years regarding Indigenous peoples—such as the Constitutional Reform of 1994 that recognized the preexistence and rights of Indigenous peoples and the subsequent introduction of an Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) program in 2004—are significant efforts to change not only policies and practices but also beliefs and mindsets that have historically marginalized Indigenous people. The roots of these beliefs are deep and can be found in the construction of a national identity in the 19th century, in opposition to Indigenous communities, expressed through the dichotomy "civilization or barbarism" (Hirsch and Gordillo 2003). Policy changes are necessary, but only the first step toward a deeper transformation in how education recognizes, values, and promotes diversity.

In this section, I provide an overview of the situation of Indigenous populations in Argentina, the emergence of IBE, and its current state, to inform efforts to build an educational system that treats every child and youth with dignity and supports Indigenous communities' pursuit of a more just future.

OVERVIEW: OVER 1 MILLION INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND 15 INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

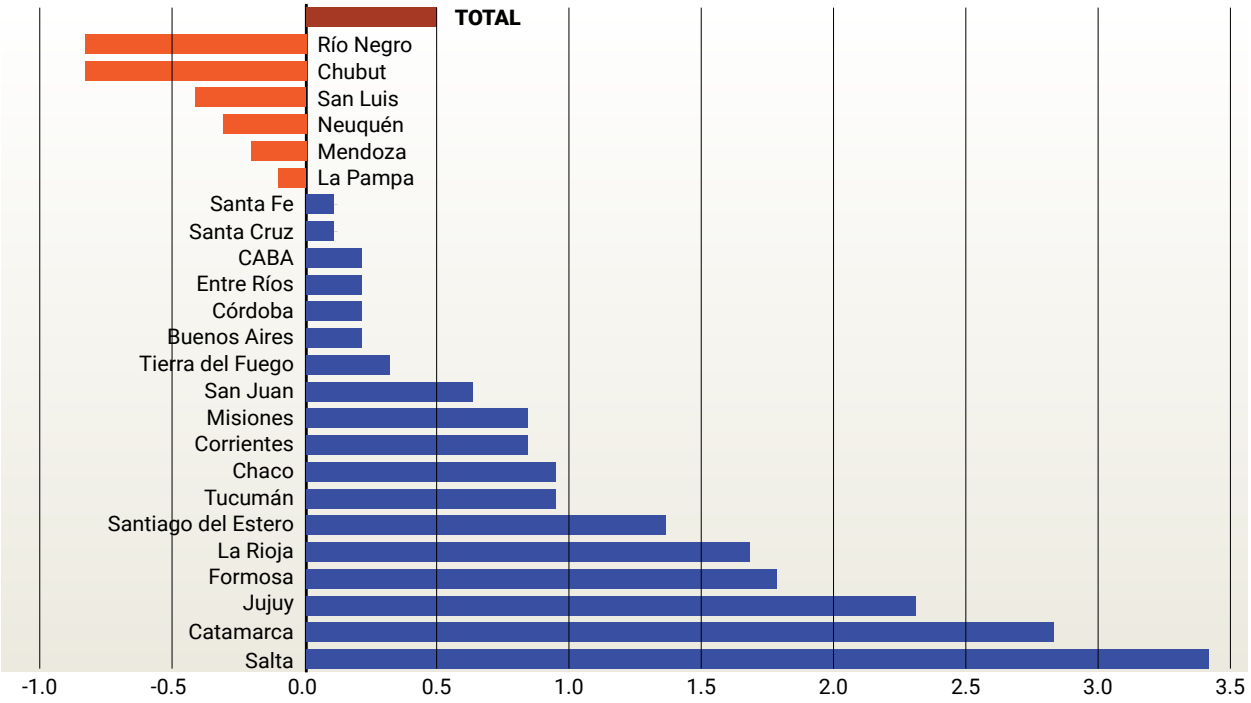
For most of the 19th and 20th centuries, official narratives in Argentina framed Indigenous populations as the Other, against which civilization and national identity were constructed (Briones 2005; Briones and Guber 2008). As a consequence, Indigenous peoples were erased from public discourse and considered "extinct", including in school textbooks (Artieda 2017; Hirsch and Gordillo 2003). Since 2001, official censuses have gradually, and with limitations, begun to collect data on ethnic diversity, making the Indigenous population more visible (see Figure 1) and showing their increasing share of the total population (see Figure 2). As of 2022, 1.3 million people in Argentina self-identified as Indigenous, belonging to one or more of the country's 58 Indigenous groups, including Mapuche, Guaraní, Diaguita, Qom, Kolla, Wichi, and Quechua, and speaking more than 15 different languages.

FIGURE 1.
Map of Indigenous population in Argentina, 2022 census



Source: Sargen220, 2024.

FIGURE 2.
Growth of the Indigenous population in Argentina, 2010-2022, by province



Note. Data from Census 2010 (INDEC, 2012) and Census 2022 (INDEC, 2024).

Argentina is considered a middle-income country (World Bank, 2025), with an average GDP concealing significant economic inequality and poverty concentrated in urban peripheries and rural areas. Indigenous populations are the poorest among the poor. One in four Indigenous households lives with unmet basic needs, compared to one in seven for non-Indigenous households (Anaya 2012). The percentage of Indigenous peoples living in poverty is highest in key provinces such as Formosa (74.9%), Chaco (66.5%), and Salta (57.4%) (Anaya 2012). While the national average of people with no health plan is 35.8%, this percentage goes up to 47% for Indigenous peoples, an indicator also reflecting their exclusion from formal employment (INDEC 2024). Among Indigenous peoples, Indigenous women face the combined effects of gender, ethnic, and class discrimination (Defensoría del Pueblo de la Nación 2021; Anaya 2012; González 2019; Bergesio et al. 2020).

Along with the denial of fundamental human rights, Indigenous communities' rights to identity, language, and freedom of belief have been systematically undermined for over two centuries. In this context, the significance of the policy shift to Intercultural Bilingual Education, though incomplete, becomes more evident.

THE EMERGENCE OF INTERCULTURAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION

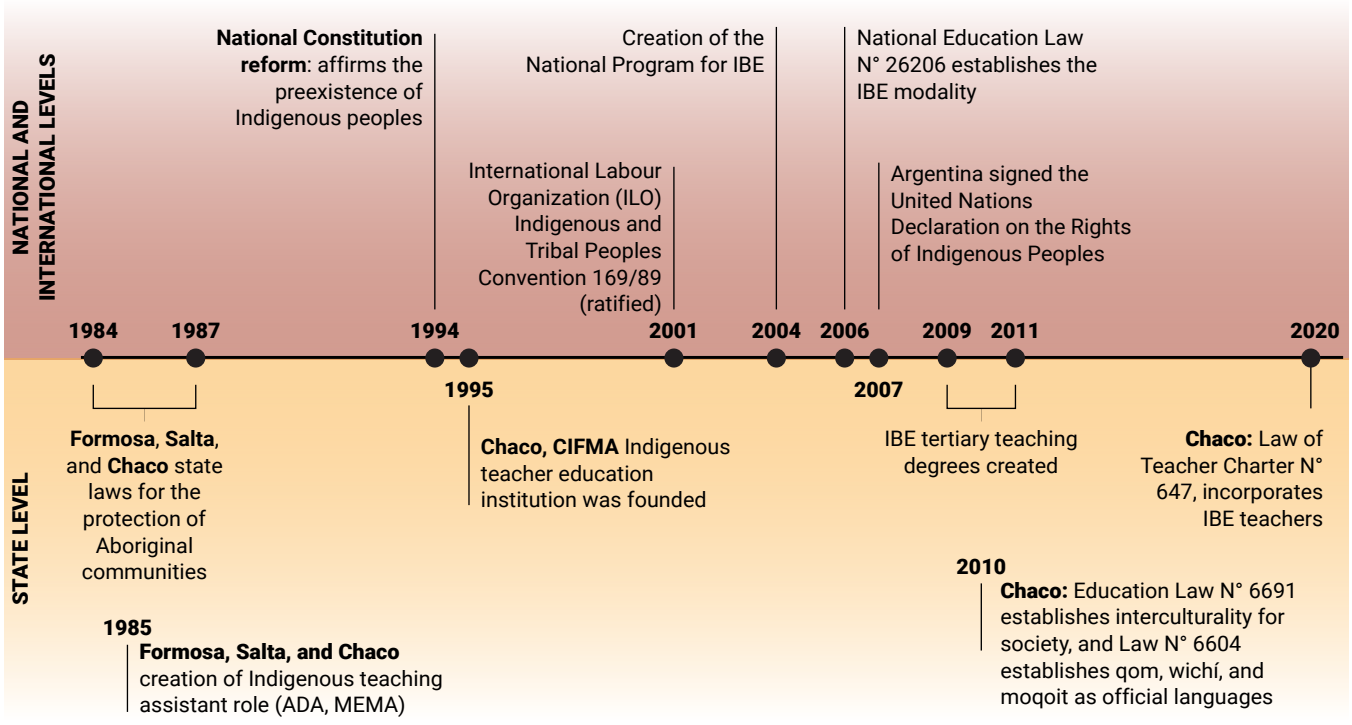
IBE policies in Argentina are the result of converging social and cultural processes at global, national, and local levels. During the 20th century, global discourses centered on our shared humanity and justice provided impetus to movements, among them, a global Indigenous movement (Smith 2012). The return to democracy in Argentina in 1983 sparked a renewal of laws and policies aimed at defending human rights and redressing

injustices. Locally, Indigenous communities and leaders leveraged the opportunities created, collaborating with activists, researchers, and religious and political leaders to turn decades-long struggles into new laws. These laws, passed since the end of the 1980s, addressed demands for intercultural education and health but were less effective concerning land rights, economic inclusion, and political participation.

In parallel, Argentine women's movements articulated their demands: first, to replace anachronistic laws that restricted women's agency, and then to develop policies and approaches to ensure gender equality across all areas (Giordano 2014). However, it was not until 2014 that a comprehensive perspective, such as the "Movimiento de Mujeres Indígenas por el Buen Vivir" (or in English, "Movement of Indigenous Women for the Good Life") emerged to highlight how intersecting gender and ethnic discrimination affect Indigenous women (Sciortino 2014; Gómez 2020; Ramírez 2021, 38).

Starting in the mid-1980s, educational policies recognized, for the first time, the existence of Indigenous students and the need to support their learning, especially as speakers of Indigenous languages (see Figure 3). Chaco and Formosa provinces were pioneers in recognizing Indigenous teaching assistants, albeit in a limited role, using Indigenous languages as bridges to learn Spanish and the national curriculum (Hecht 2014). The creation of the IBE modality in 2004 and its formalization with the National Education Law in 2006 expanded the scope of IBE policy by supporting new specialized teaching degrees and developing a curriculum designed to teach Indigenous cultures and knowledges. Nevertheless, the participation of Indigenous individuals and groups in shaping these policies was limited (ENDEPA 2018a, 38). The unfolding of these policies during a neoliberal turn in Argentina circumscribed their design to focalized aid programs for a minority, associating the need for interculturality and bilingualism exclusively to Indigenous populations (Hecht 2014).

FIGURE 3.
Development of Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) policy in Argentina



Source. Based on Guaymás and Hernández (2018); Hecht (2014); ENDEPA (2018a).

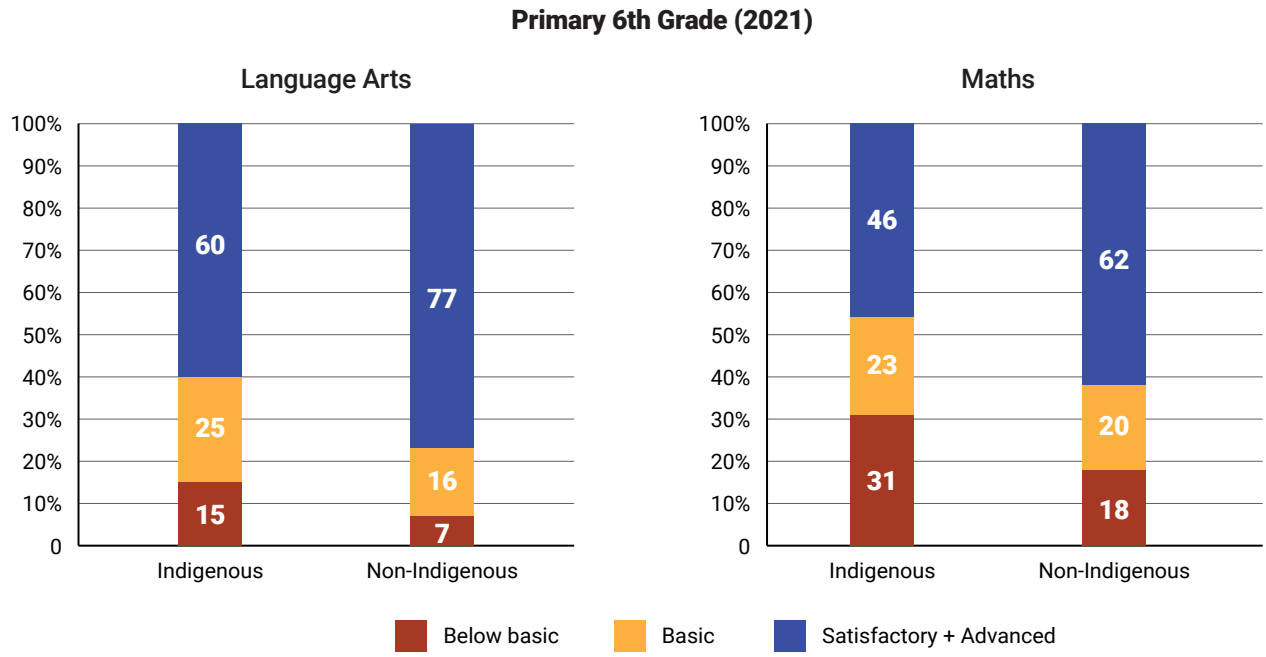
STATUS OF IBE

Two decades into the IBE policy change in Argentina, Indigenous children are still not receiving the quality education that is their right, as shown in lower learning results compared to their non-Indigenous peers. In part, this is due to very few children having access to IBE schools and IBE teachers. At the same time, IBE schools and teachers do not have enough support to focus on building a strong IBE school based on a dialogue of knowledge.[1]

A. Quality education is still missing for Indigenous students

Lower academic outcomes of Indigenous children and youth in Language Arts and Mathematics at the primary and secondary levels in the mandatory national assessment, Aprender, have been consistently documented—see Figure 4 (Ambao and Bottinelli 2024). At the same time, these results have not been sufficiently studied to understand how language, rurality, and other variables influence outcomes or to identify teachers and schools with higher results.

FIGURE 4.
Comparison of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students' learning outcomes, 2021



Note. Data for primary level (6th grade) from Aprender 2021 (Secretariat of Educational Assessment and Information, 2023).

Poorer educational outcomes impact Indigenous people throughout their lives. As an illustration, 58% of non-Indigenous women have a high school diploma or more education, while only 49% of Indigenous women are in the same situation (INDEC 2024). In 2025, workers with a high school diploma were estimated to earn 13% more than those without one. The earnings gap between workers with a high school diploma and those with a tertiary education was even larger, at 63% (OECD 2025). Challenges in access and completion of primary, secondary, and tertiary education condemn Indigenous youth to lower-paying jobs and deprive society of the contributions of Indigenous workers and professionals.

1 Dialogue of knowledge, in Spanish dialógo de saberes, is a concept that alludes to the interaction of different types of knowledge and ways of knowing, including scientific, traditional, and popular or people's knowledge, among others, based on the idea that each culture, community, or social group has valuable knowledge which can complement and enrich each other, with the purpose of finding responses to urgent social and environmental challenges (Val et al. 2019 and Argueta Villamar, 2012).

B. IBE schools only reach two out of every ten Indigenous children and youth

IBE schools are envisioned as a key step to protecting Indigenous children's rights to a quality education, yet this possibility is only within reach for a minority of Indigenous children and youth. Approximately 300,000 young people under 19 years old identify as Indigenous, but less than one in five attend an IBE school (see Table 1). Most Indigenous children and youth go to escuelas comunes (common schools), which lack IBE teachers, culturally relevant curricula, materials, or support for bilingualism. As a result, intergenerational transmission of language and cultural knowledge is heavily threatened. IBE schools are crucial actors, along with families and communities, to promote Indigenous culture and language, and when students attend a non-IBE school, their monolingual and monocultural practices further erode cultural and language diversity.

TABLE 1.
Number of Intercultural Bilingual Education Schools (IBE) in Argentina and students by educational level, 2024, compared to the number of Indigenous children and youth

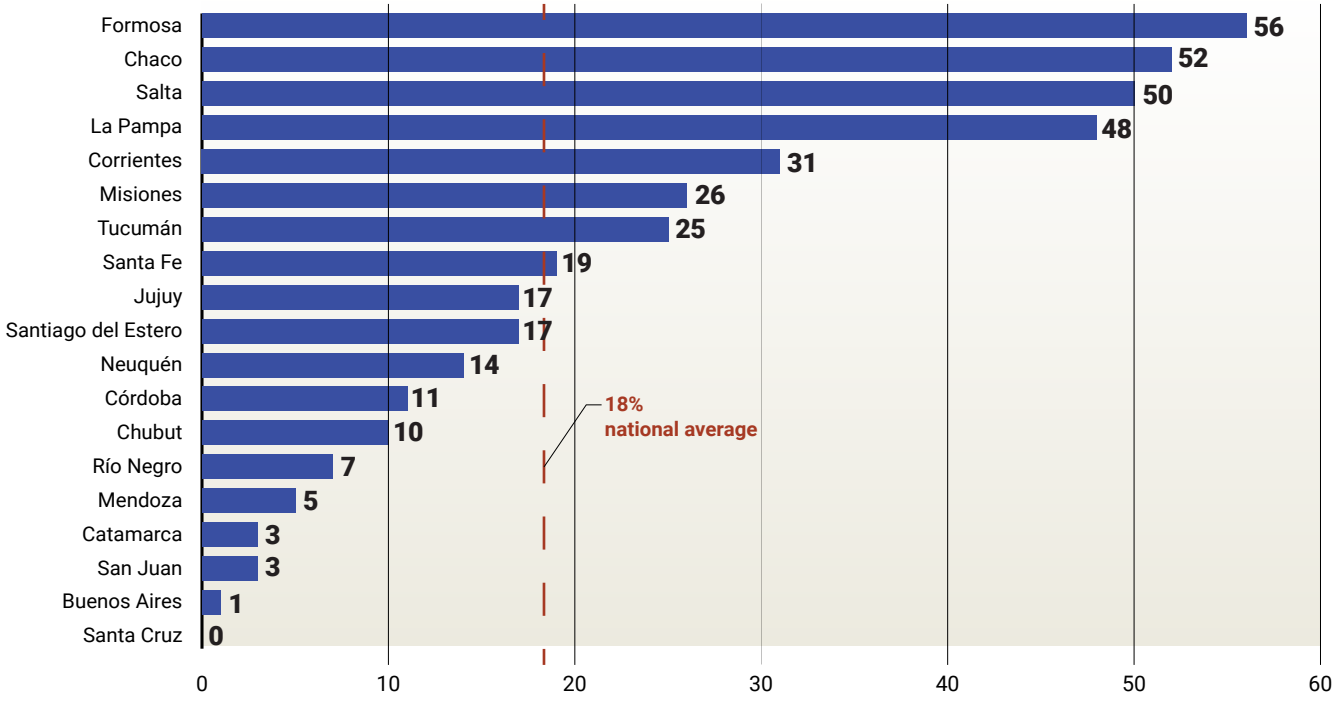
	NUMBER OF IBE SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN IBE SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN AND YOUTH*	% OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS IN IBE SCHOOLS
Preschool	113	9,757	54,582	18%
Preschool + Elementary	367	35,646	157,795	23%
Elementary school	185			
High School	78**	8,054	85,060	9%
TOTAL	**743**	**53,457**	**297,437**	**18%**

Note. Data from Mapa de pueblos indígenas, lenguas y educación intercultural en Argentina (Hetch et al., 2025), Relevamiento Anual 2024 (Ministry of Human Capital, 2025b) and Censo 2022 (INDEC, 2024). *Census 2022 (INDEC, 2024), Preschool years 0-4 years old, Elementary 5-14 years old, High school 15-19 years old. **Includes four schools that offer the three educational levels.

Two decades into the IBE policy change in Argentina, Indigenous children are still not receiving the quality education that is their right, as shown in lower learning results compared to their non-Indigenous peers.

The availability of IBE schools varies significantly across provinces, but even in the three provinces with the highest coverage—Formosa, Chaco, and Salta—IBE schools reach only about half of Indigenous children (see Figure 5).

FIGURE 5.
Percentage of Indigenous population (5-14 years old) in an IBE Elementary school, by jurisdiction,* 2024



Note. Data from Mapa de pueblos indígenas, lenguas y educación intercultural en Argentina (Hetch et al., 2025) and Census 2022 (INDEC, 2024). *Jurisdictions without reported IBE schools: CABA, Entre Ríos, La Rioja, San Luis, Tierra del Fuego, Región Metropolitana de Buenos Aires

There is no unified definition of an IBE school, with schools often being designated "IBE" based on the enrollment of Indigenous children rather than on the implementation of a particular educational approach (Unamuno 2015). Having 50% Indigenous students was a common threshold to consider a school part of the IBE modality (Alonso et al. 2007). To complicate matters, Indigenous enrollment, collected annually by school principals without an established procedure, is notoriously underreported (Ambao and Bottinelli 2024). Some reasons for underreporting are discrimination, i.e., not wanting to be considered an Indigenous school, doubts regarding its status as a rural school (another modality of the educational system), or rigid definitions of ethnicity (to be "pure" Indigenous). Transcending these challenges requires consultation with the community and culturally sensitive data collection (e.g., self-administered surveys or local Indigenous youth helping with the school census).

While the number of Indigenous students is helpful for assessing the need for IBE, the definition of an IBE school requires a holistic view that considers multiple elements—such as curriculum, practices, and purpose—to ensure that relevant learning opportunities are available for Indigenous students. And central to the life of the IBE school are IBE teachers.

C. Indigenous teachers are new social actors, yet their working situation is precarious

One of the major accomplishments of the consolidation of Intercultural Bilingual Education policy was an increase in the number of Indigenous teachers, from zero to 4,000, over 30 years, an estimated 60% of whom are women (Ministry of Education Formosa 2022; Valenzuela 2008).[2] Indigenous teachers include teaching assistants, selected by the community for their language and cultural knowledge, who do not require a degree, as well as fully certified teachers. Table 2 lists the various denominations IBE teachers have received. Currently, only 23% of IBE educators are teaching assistants (Ambao and Bottinelli 2024).

TABLE 2.
Denominations for IBE/Indigenous teachers

IBE TEACHING ASSISTANTS
Auxiliar Docente Aborigen (ADA, Chaco)
Maestros/as Especiales de Modalidad Aborigen (MEMA, Formosa)
Auxiliares Docentes Indígenas (ADI, Salta) o Auxiliares Bilingües
Maestro/a intercultural y maestro artesano (Río Negro)
Docentes idóneos
IBE TEACHERS (DOCENTES O PROFESORES)
Profesor/a Intercultural Bilingüe para el Nivel Inicial
Profesor/a Intercultural Bilingüe para la Educación Primaria
Profesor/a de Lengua y Cultura [Qom] para la Educación Secundaria
Licenciado/a en Educación Bilingüe Intercultural

The preparation of IBE teachers demanded new IBE teaching degrees. The Argentinian teacher education system relies on tertiary teaching institutions (profesorados) that offer non-university degrees. Due to the system's decentralized structure, once a degree program is approved by the Ministry of Education, the "profesorados" have considerable freedom to implement their curricula, leaving the door open for innovation at the level of teacher training institutions. Currently, 17 public institutions offer at least one of three IBE education degrees (see Appendix 1 for a complete list).

Official data on graduates of IBE teaching programs is not centralized, so it is not possible to trace the number of IBE graduate teachers in relation to teaching positions. However, analysis of available data in three provinces shows that 75% of graduates from IBE teaching programs have found work as teachers, although for the majority, these are not permanent positions (see Table 3).

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2 Data on teachers in general and Intercultural Bilingual Teachers is not collected by gender. I estimated this percentage with available data from two provinces, Chaco and Formosa. It is expected that the recent Teacher Census of 2025 will provide more updated information once its results are published.

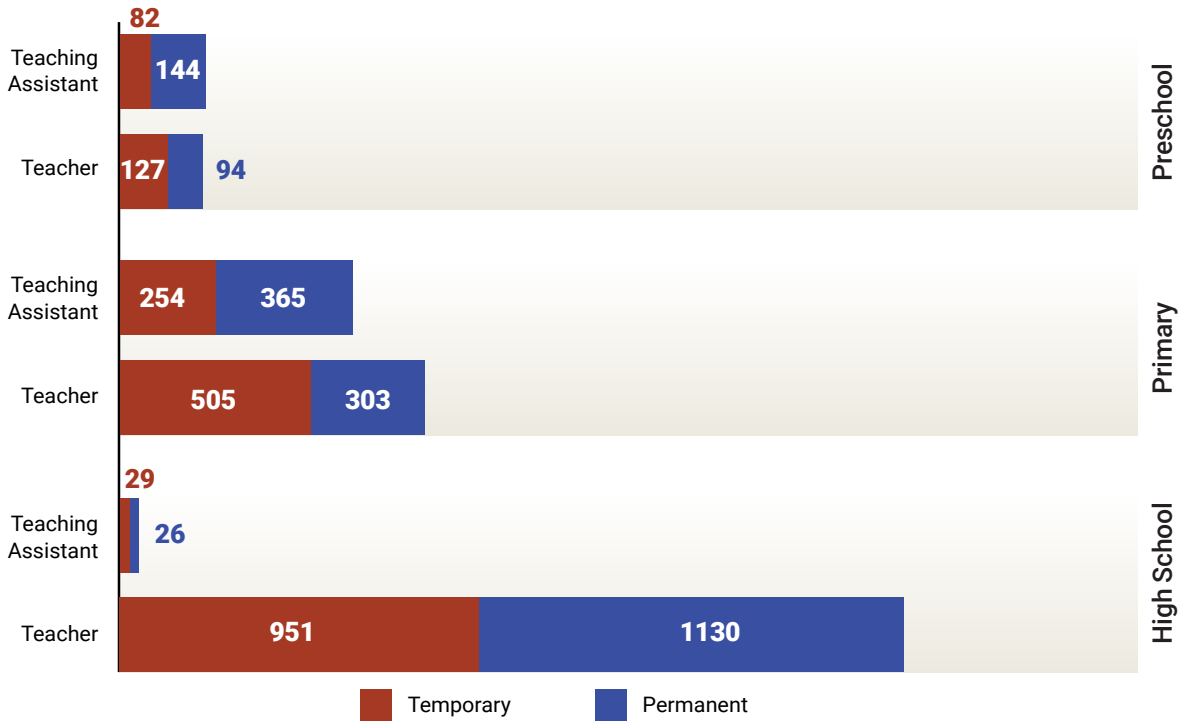
TABLE 3.
Situation of IBE teaching graduates in three provinces in Argentina

PROVINCE	ESTIMATED IBE GRADUATES*	IBE TEACHING POSITIONS**	% OF IBE GRADUATES HIRED	IBE TEACHERS WITH A PERMANENT CONTRACT	% OF GRADUATE IBE TEACHERS WITH PERMANENT POSITIONS
Salta	800	556	70%	347	43%
Chaco	700	612	87%	320	46%
Formosa	666	457	69%	124	19%

Note. Data from Ministry of Education Salta (2025), Subsecretariat of Interculturaly and Plurilinguism Chaco (2023), Ministry of Education Formosa (2022). *Salta data from 2025, Chaco data from 2023, Formosa data from 2021. **Data from Relevamiento Anual 2024 (Ministry of Human Capital, 2025b).

IBE teachers in general face unstable working conditions. Of the 4,010 IBE teaching positions reported in the annual school census, around half are not under a permanent contract, compared to the national average of 33% of teachers in the same situation (Alu et al. 2023), although this varies by level and position (see Figure 6). IBE teaching degrees remain one of the few tertiary degrees available to Indigenous youth interested in promoting their language and culture, yet concerns about the employment prospects are significant, as information about the lack of job opportunities and job security circulates among communities.

FIGURE 6.
Distribution of current IBE teaching positions by school level and position in 2023



Note: Relevamiento Anual 2023 (Ministry of Human Capital, 2025b). Temporary contracts include all non-permanent hires (short-term contract, travelling teachers, other specific projects or programs), and vacancies.

The need for IBE teachers who can reach all Indigenous children remains substantial. Both IBE and common schools need teachers trained in intercultural and bilingual competencies. Given the recent movement of the Indigenous population from rural to urban areas, many schools must be prepared to welcome Indigenous students. More broadly, all schools would benefit from explicitly incorporating an intercultural dimension into their school culture to prepare students for a multicultural, multilingual global society.

WHAT DOES IBE NEED TO REACH ITS POTENTIAL?

In summary, there have been significant advances in addressing Indigenous peoples' rights to culturally grounded education. Nevertheless, very few Indigenous students receive the support they need to succeed academically, develop their talents, and contribute to their families and communities. Moreover, while Indigenous girls and women are participating as teachers and students in IBE spaces, the lack of a focus on gendered experiences and segregated data by gender is a blind spot in the research on IBE as well as policy design and implementation. Working with Indigenous women teachers provides an opportunity not only to improve IBE policy design and implementation generally, but to explore how IBE could also advance gender equality in ways that are rooted in Indigenous knowledges and values.

Photo: Atsinay Kates - women-star, by Wichí artist Haylly Zamora Aray

Methods: Voices and stories of Indigenous women

The research for this brief was conducted within an ongoing conversation with Indigenous teachers in Argentina about education and the futures we envision for Indigenous children and youth. The study sought to understand the lived experiences of Indigenous women teachers to improve the design and implementation of IBE policy in Argentina. Recognizing the intersectional discrimination Indigenous girls and women face, the research also explored Indigenous women teachers' experiences with gender roles and norms, how they navigated change, and how Indigenous values can contribute to gender equality in education.

The research questions included:

1. What are the lived experiences of Indigenous women in their pathways to becoming teachers?

2. What barriers and supports do Indigenous women face in their educational pathways and during their teacher education studies?

3. What actions and processes could promote a gender transformative approach that is culturally relevant and Indigenous-driven in IBE teacher education and schools?

Research was conducted between July and September of 2025. Through storytelling interviews, conducted in Spanish, ten Indigenous women teachers reflected on their educational journeys. Storytelling interviews encourage interviewees to tell traditional and personal stories, helping to convey ideas and foster shared reflection (Iseke 2013). As part of the co-creation of knowledge, the interview transcripts were shared back with the teachers for their own use and purposes. Additionally, 34 teachers responded to an online survey.

To complement teachers' perspectives, I collected information from educational authorities and Indigenous students in IBE teacher preparation programs (see Table 4). Finally, I conducted a participatory workshop with 12 Indigenous policy actors in August to discuss the research questions related to gender norms and roles in Indigenous culture, IBE implementation, and Indigenous women teachers' educational trajectories.

TABLE 4.
Research techniques and participants

TECHNIQUE	PARTICIPANTS	ACTORS	PLACES
Storytelling interview	10 Indigenous women teachers	IBE Teachers	Chaco: Sáenz Peña, Sauzalito, Resistencia, Fontana, Puerto Tirol Salta: Yacuy
Interviews	4 educational authorities	Policy actors at the local, state, and national level	Buenos Aires, Chaco, and Salta provinces
Survey	34 teachers	IBE Teachers	Chaco, Formosa, and Salta provinces
Focus group	5 students 4 students	IBE Teaching students	Sáenz Peña, Chaco
Workshop	12 participants	Policy actors at the local and state levels	Resistencia, Chaco

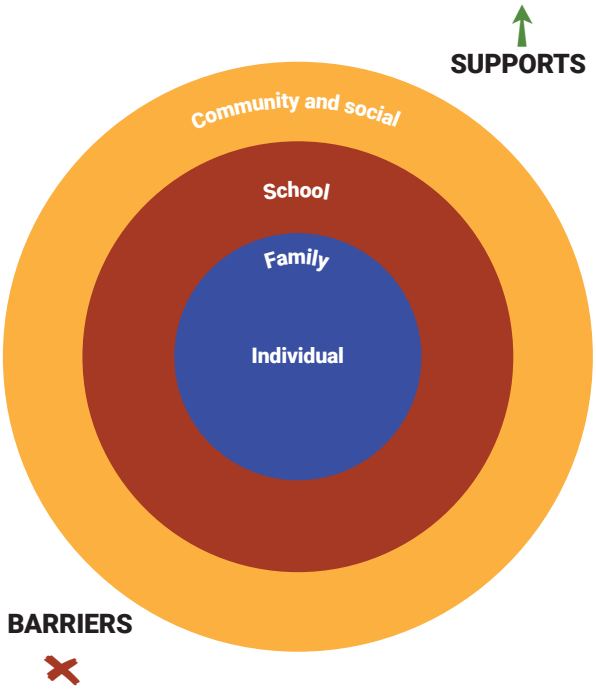
Findings: Indigenous women teachers' educational trajectories

AN ECOLOGY OF OPPORTUNITIES: INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S PATHWAYS INTO TEACHING

Findings are presented here through an ecological lens, viewing the individual as nested within the family, families within formal educational institutions and communities, and institutions within societies—see Figure 7 (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006; Vélez-Agosto et al. 2017). At the center, Indigenous women interact with numerous actors and forces across all other levels in their educational pathways. Some act as barriers, that is, the obstacles, difficulties, and limitations that Indigenous women face when pursuing their educational goals. Others serve as supports, which refer to the policies, actors, and actions that enable teachers to continue their formal education.

While there is overlap and connection among the barriers and supports, all can broadly be understood as structural or societal, operating more visibly at different levels of the ecosystem around Indigenous women teachers: the home, the school, the community, and the broader society. As will be discussed below, Indigenous women exercise increasing agency in the interplay between their individual decision-making and personal qualities such as perseverance and hope, and the structural barriers and supports that influence their lives.[3]

FIGURE 7.
An ecological system model



3 Teacher agency here refers to the capacity of teachers to enact change in schools. Teacher agency is related to teachers' well-being and the context that enables teachers to act in line with their understanding of what is valuable and feasible (Emans et al., 2024). This concept recognizes a reciprocal relationship between individual and collective action as well as the complex dynamic between those actions and the structural and cultural features of the context (Biesta and Tedder, 2007; Datnow, 2012; Priestley et al., 2015)

When sharing a preliminary analysis, a group of Indigenous teachers and leaders emphasized the need to account for the passage of time and to maintain a nuanced appreciation of progress in educational rights while continuing to address current challenges. In their historical perspective, teachers referenced a former time as a source of cultural knowledge, language vitality, cultural values, and community spirit. They and their parents benefited from this period but also experienced violent and painful interactions between Indigenous people and criollos.[4] In contrast, the present time was described as encompassing more positive educational experiences, such as speaking the Indigenous language at school, which must be protected and strengthened. When conveying teachers' voices, some share their experiences as children or young adult students, while others offer their perspectives on their students now that they are teachers. It is important to consider Indigenous leaders' simultaneous appreciation for progress and recognition of IBE policy limitations, and their dual reference to their own past experiences as students and the current ones they observe in their students.

» Barriers and supports at the family level

✘ Household chores burden Indigenous girls and women, limiting free and study time

Interviewed Indigenous teachers stated that, in childhood, girls and boys have an egalitarian experience with family responsibilities and chores. However, a closer look revealed that girls are expected to stay near their mothers and learn more about household duties and traditional crafts. At home, Indigenous girls were said to be more often asked to cook, clean, wash clothes, care for animals or vegetable gardens, help produce crafts for sale, and look after younger siblings. Like in many other settings, these responsibilities were described as weighing on Indigenous girls, restricting their time to study, rest, and play (Asociación Civil Lola Mora and ONU Mujeres 2025).

These gendered expectations were described as extending into school contexts, where girls were encouraged to play in less physically active games and were expected to be "well-behaved."

✔ Family encouragement and support sustain teachers practically and emotionally

One of the most important parts of teachers' life stories was the presence of a key figure who helped them envision a different future. One teacher shared:

> *"My grandpa always told me: 'You are going to be a teacher, so you don't have to be afraid, you don't have to feel ashamed, because I always dream that you will be a teacher'" (Tesa, Guaraní teacher).*

Teachers reported a common practice of extended families pooling their resources to support students who were far away or to provide housing for relatives who moved to pursue their education. Economic support was said to be paired with accompaniment, for example, one teacher shared:

> *"My family helped me finish my degree, my family here and my family there, my friends. With opportunities, jobs, and, I don't know how to call it, how to define it in Spanish, but to accompany from the heart, to provide emotional support, through their words and calls" (Norec, Qom teacher).*

Such support should not be underestimated, and it was salient among the teachers interviewed.

4 Term used in Argentina to identify non-Indigenous Argentinians, generally with European or mixed heritage.

» Barriers and supports at the school level

✘ Hostile and discriminatory school experiences interrupt educational trajectories

Teachers reported the burden of past hurtful interactions with non-Indigenous individuals and institutions, creating discomfort and fear as they entered the school. One teacher remembered,

> *"When [criollo] kids wanted to talk to me or play with me, I felt very afraid. Maybe they only wanted to play, I don't know. I even have a scar—before schools were fenced with barbed wire, I ran and got caught in the wire, and I still have the scar" (Atsinay, Wichí teacher).*

The teachers in this study expressed how this initial fear persisted and was often reinforced by exclusion, mockery, and rough play. Today, discrimination remains a common experience at schools for all children: One out of every three 6th-grade students has faced discrimination, and among all children who faced discrimination, 8.8% reported being targeted for being Indigenous (Secretariat of Educational Assessment and Information 2023; Scasso et al. 2019).

Indigenous teachers spoke of a heightened awareness of discrimination during their teenage years. The prejudice was described as so intense that they, as youth, or their students today, have hidden their Indigenous identity or place of residence for fear of ridicule. Discrimination was also reported to come from criollo teachers, authority figures in the classroom, with detrimental effects on Indigenous students. One teacher shared:

> *"[In high school] the first year was excellent. Then, I was promoted to the second year, and I had a very prejudiced teacher. She started to discriminate against me, saying things in front of my classmates … so I dropped out. Other teachers were supportive and helped me, but … I didn't want to go to school because of that teacher. I didn't want to go, so I started missing classes and then abandoned school" (Tesa, Guaraní teacher).*

As these Indigenous women teachers progressed in their educational paths, they became able to identify and name negative and hostile experiences as racist and discriminatory. They noted that even now, as adults working in schools, they still face rejection, lack of trust and respect, and discrimination. Sometimes, this discrimination is "masked," but Indigenous individuals perceive it when they are expected to do specific tasks, such as cleaning, while being discouraged from others, such as those involving decision-making and managing resources.

✘ Lack of collaboration between teachers diminishes the potential of IBE schools

Attitudes by non-Indigenous teachers perceived to express beliefs in Indigenous peoples' inferiority explain the challenges of collaboration between IBE teachers and non-Indigenous teachers. In some cases, IBE assistant teachers described working with a criollo partner and developing a positive working relationship, although not necessarily on equal terms. In other cases, when IBE teachers were responsible for a classroom, they reported feeling isolated. Significantly, this was felt to fragment IBE teaching within schools. Interviewed teachers reported that their participation was limited to serving as translators in key school activities, with no shared space to discuss how the whole school implemented or explored the IBE curriculum.

✔ Cultural-affirming spaces strengthen Indigenous identity

For most teachers, their years of studying to become educators provided a joyful encounter with their cultural identity and knowledge. Interviewed teachers reported marveling at seeing their values, stories,

and practices validated in a higher education setting. They expressed happiness at speaking the language, talking to knowledgeable elders, learning new cultural content, and gradually seeing themselves as the next generation of culture and language advocates. These experiences strengthened their commitment to persist in their studies, complete their degrees, and become the new generation of cultural promoters.

✔ **Decolonized and critical content nurtured Indigenous identity and action**

Interviewed teachers greatly valued critical and decolonial educational content during their teacher education programs. Lived experiences were said to give teachers a sense of the injustices their communities and they themselves face. Their studies help them understand how these injustices arise from deliberate economic and social policies and how poverty and exclusion are created by society. Specifically, teachers valued a critical perspective toward official historical narratives and historical figures -such as Sarmiento-, exposing the structural and historical roots of racial discrimination.[5] Lastly, new knowledge about Indigenous communities' initiatives, struggles, and collective projects seemed to foster a sense of Indigenous agency, in contrast to narratives of submission or passivity.

✔ **Mentoring and relationships promote a new sense of agency**

Interviewed teachers conveyed deep respect for their educators in the profesorados. Indigenous teacher educators became a source of Indigenous knowledge, identity, self-love, and commitment. Teacher educators often hold other leadership roles, serving as artistic, political, or religious leaders. The relationship between teacher educators and students transcended the classroom, and conversations, encouragement, and care became a form of mentoring in learning to exercise their teaching roles. One teacher shared how mentorship from teacher educators helped change her self-perception:

> *"But now I realize that it is we who must make them [teaching materials]; it depends on us, and we have achieved things. Two times we have organized gatherings for Intercultural Bilingual Teachers" (Wela, Wichí teacher).*

The years spent studying to become teachers were also described as times when relationships were built between people from different Indigenous communities, and when gender roles and expectations evolved beyond traditional norms. These experiences and relationships showed them how to "be" and "act" as Indigenous teachers, navigating constraining school cultures still dominated by Western culture and the ideal of a national citizen. However, their teacher agency has started to show in relation to Indigenous language teaching and cultural brokering with Indigenous families.

» Barriers and supports at the community and societal level

✘ **Male-dominated public spaces negatively affect Indigenous women teachers' self-confidence**

Most leadership roles within churches, community organizations, and educational institutions remain male-dominated. Indigenous women teachers in the focus group and workshop reported that talking to strangers, presenting to the class during their student years, and speaking in public were significant barriers in their educational pathway. Related to this, one teacher expressed,

> *"I did not have faith in myself" (Mapic, Qom teacher).*

5 Domingo F. Sarmiento (1811-1888) is revered as a teacher and educator. His texts and ideas exemplify the profound racism at the origin of Argentina's educational system (cfr Hirsch and Gordillo, 2003; Guaymás and Hernández, 2018).

Traveling for professional activities is therefore not undertaken lightly, as it requires Indigenous women to feel confident in themselves and safe in the male-dominated spaces they are invited to. To assume leadership roles, Indigenous women teachers reported renegotiating activities and roles with their male partners, a specific skill needed to expand their opportunities to influence education.

✘ Early pregnancy and motherhood hinder educational attainment

Teachers discussed how early motherhood affected their educational paths. Several had to pause their secondary education and restart it once their children were older. While the teachers interviewed were able to overcome this barrier, they recognized that many other Indigenous girls remained out of school. Most Indigenous teachers expressed concern about the high rate of early pregnancy among their students, a concern that is supported by available data. One in every seven Indigenous girls between 15 and 19 years old has at least one child, double the national average, and 2% of Indigenous girls have a child by 14 years old (INDEC 2024).

Care responsibilities also affected when and how individuals could pursue postsecondary education. For example, alternative schedules, such as evening or weekend classes, were highly valued. When entering the workforce, teachers with children must also navigate childcare issues. In Indigenous contexts, caring for children is viewed as a shared responsibility among a network of related women, including grandmothers, aunts, and cousins, with less participation from men (Asociación Civil Lola Mora and ONU Mujeres 2025). Data from the Teacher Survey reflect these patterns: 75% of respondents were parents, and among them, 53% reported relying on grandmothers and extended family members for childcare, and 33% on the children's fathers, while 13% reporting being solely responsible.

✘ Distance and lack of resources complicate Indigenous women teachers' educational trajectories and working conditions

For secondary education, interviewed teachers reported having to travel farther than they had for primary school or to relocate to a different town. When high school studies were interrupted, reentry was usually offered at night school, which presented another barrier, especially since safety issues for Indigenous girls continue to be a major concern. Access to tertiary or university education remained even more difficult, and young people were forced to relocate to continue their studies. This proved challenging both financially and personally. One teacher recalled her struggles:

> *"The distance from my family was the most difficult, and the fear of losing my language or my culture or my way of life by becoming urban. Then, economically, because I had to pay for everything, copies and all. A lot of things, rent, and others. Constant challenges." (Norec, Qom teacher).*

Another major obstacle teachers described was the lack of resources for school supplies, shoes, uniforms, transportation, food, rent, and utility bills. In response, many student teachers spoke of running informal initiatives to sell food, clothing, or traditional crafts, or operating convenience stores to supplement their income. One final dilemma shared by teachers concerns the calculations required to decide whether to accept a teaching position. They described considering distance, transportation costs, hours worked, and the type of contract (temporary or permanent) to determine whether the expected income would exceed the assistance available to non-employed individuals.

✗ **Language barriers and weak academic quality delay studies and lead to drop out**

Interviewed teachers reported language-related barriers operating in two ways. In their own educational experiences, some teachers described not receiving support for learning Spanish when they entered school as first graders. The students in teacher education programs reported challenges with reading comprehension and many difficulties with academic tasks in Spanish and a lack of adequate academic and linguistic support, which undermined students' confidence and motivation, increasing the likelihood of delayed studies and eventual dropout.

As students enrolled in teacher education programs, the challenge was also about feeling comfortable using the Indigenous language in educational settings. Some reported not speaking the Indigenous language and were unsure whether they would acquire the necessary skills during their current studies.

✗ **Safety concerns and gender-based violence are grave threats to Indigenous girls and women**

There are no consolidated statistics on gender-based violence and ethnicity in Argentina, but Indigenous teachers mentioned the topic with caution and concern. In many cases, sexual attacks against Indigenous girls were said to remain unpunished even when the perpetrators were identified. In the north of Argentina, for example, Indigenous women's organizations have denounced the horrific cultural practice known as chineo, the rape of Indigenous girls by criollos, which is frequently carried out with impunity (UNICEF 2024; Osorio 2025; Pérez and López 2024). Teachers in this study shared their concern for Indigenous girls' safety, and many times their response, as well as that of families and communities, has been to ask the girls to stay home and avoid celebrations or night activities. These responses limit girls' social participation and opportunities.

✔ **Strategic use of a weak web of interconnected public policies**

While there is an absence of a systemic approach to support Indigenous women's educational advancement, Indigenous women reported making strategic use of scattered and modest resources, especially during their years studying to become teachers. Interviewed teachers mentioned the importance of the Universal Allocation per Child (UAC) policy, a monthly conditional cash transfer for parents without stable income, typically disbursed to the mother, which reaches almost all Indigenous families. Other policies mentioned were: Becas Progresar, a modest scholarship program, and subsidized student transportation, particularly in urban areas. Additionally, subsidized electricity, state-level food aid programs, and school supplies were said to provide further support.

In higher education, Intercultural Bilingual Degrees offered close to students' residences were highly valued. One institution in Argentina, CIFMA, was valued by teachers in this study for its boarding option for individuals living far away. In two cases, teachers from transnational Indigenous groups reported receiving relevant training or materials from a neighboring country, Bolivia, thereby benefiting from another country's IBE policy. Sporadic state-funded programs that support rural families, artisan women, cultural initiatives, and university student housing were also identified as part of teachers' web of support, as were a few NGO-led programs.

THE DYNAMIC OF CULTURAL PERMANENCE AND CHANGE

To advance in their educational journeys, the interviewed Indigenous women overcame barriers and effectively leveraged support at the family, educational institution, and societal levels. In their role as Indigenous women teachers, they are entrusted with the protection and promotion of Indigenous culture and languages. In this role, one of the most significant dynamics they described

revolved around themes of cultural continuity and change. As Indigenous women teachers, they are responsible for telling traditional stories, speaking Indigenous languages, and sharing cultural practices and knowledge. At the same time, their own educational journeys position them in new family and community roles that shift gender norms and expectations and provide Indigenous girls (and boys) with different role models. Two examples illustrate how teachers are neither preserving a static notion of culture nor merely "modernizing" it.

The first one is about cultural practices related to menstruation. The start of menstruation marks an important moment in girls' lives. Many Indigenous cultures place great importance on this event. Traditionally, girls have been advised to rest for a few days or weeks and to avoid certain activities, foods, and places, such as being near water. The belief is that inattention to these prohibitions carries negative consequences for the individual and their community. Interviewed teachers noted that although they teach this ancestral practice, its observance is declining. Part of the reason is the requirement to attend school every day, along with other sources of information, like social media, which is destigmatizing menstruation.

Interviewed teachers noted that an important dimension of these practices was that grandmothers, aunts, and older women would talk with girls, sharing cultural knowledge about "the good and the bad," reflecting on who they are, fostering a sense of belonging, and offering advice on their adult roles and future lives. As an Indigenous scholar, I argue that this dimension is at the core of those practices. So, while we can accept and even promote changes in cultural practices that mark the first menstruation, a change that is already happening, we must also work to strengthen what is at the core: the intergenerational conversations that nurture identity and a sense of community.

Similarly, in terms of gender relations, teachers can envision alternative ways to relate, grounded in non-hierarchical relationships, reciprocity, and collaboration. As one teacher stated:

> *"As a woman, I would like men to be at the same level, and not above. To walk beside me, to study next to me, and that his knowledge is equal to mine" (Nala, Qom teacher).*

These perspectives shared by some teachers show how traditional Indigenous values and beliefs, such as reciprocity and collaboration, have the potential to be extended and reinterpreted to transform current unequal gender relationships.

These values could also strengthen messages about building a society that values diversity. A teacher shared:

> *"Our Indigenous identity is to be collaborative, to extend your hand and help whoever needs you".*

This attitude, maintained even amid painful historical relationships among peoples, can serve as a powerful source of deep, meaningful collaboration to create a new, nurturing educational experience for Indigenous children and youth through IBE schools.

As Indigenous women teachers, they are responsible for telling traditional stories, speaking Indigenous languages, and sharing cultural practices and knowledge. At the same time, their own educational journeys position them in new family and community roles that shift gender norms and expectations and provide Indigenous girls (and boys) with different role models.

Recommendations

This policy brief describes significant progress in implementing Argentina's Intercultural Bilingual Education policy, the most salient being the emergence of Indigenous teachers. While many challenges remain in terms of the limited participation of Indigenous educators in policy design and implementation, which hinder the desired social and pedagogical outcomes, Indigenous women teachers are key to addressing them. As women, they play a central role in transmitting language and culture to new generations. Indigenous women also have unique lived experiences dealing with limiting gender stereotypes and norms, and the weight of poverty and discrimination. As students, they have overcome many barriers and found sources of support to pursue their formal education. As current teachers, they have the opportunity to influence the lives of their students and their families.

While change can begin with a dedicated teacher, lasting and systemic change to ensure that Indigenous children have a relevant and empowering education requires the efforts of many actors and institutions working in a coherent and systemic manner. For this reason, recommendations are organized around three dimensions, a model known as the "three C's,"[6] which highlights the need to strengthen commitment to support change, capacity to eliminate systemic barriers toward that change, and cohesion among different actors about what is needed to transform systems toward a clear and shared purpose. While the list of recommendations presented here is not exhaustive, it includes six priority goals, actionable steps, and suggested timeframes to achieve each.[7]

COMMITMENT

GOAL 1: CHANGE SOCIAL MINDSETS TO MOVE FROM DISCRIMINATION TO VALUING CULTURAL DIVERSITY, MULTILINGUALISM, AND GENDER EQUALITY		
Actionable steps	Actors	Timeframe
Mobilize societal actors with media campaigns to value diversity, Indigenous knowledges, and the role of Indigenous women teachers as champions of education.	Educational and Indigenous leaders, journalists, the university community, school principals, teachers, and authorities	1-2 years
Incorporate an intercultural approach to education in all pre-service teacher curricula.	Educational authorities, principals, and teachers	3-5 years
GOAL 2: ADDRESS THE EFFECT OF INDIGENOUS GENDER NORMS AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR CHANGE		
Promote conversations within Indigenous leaders and organizations about equality, including gender equality, rooted in Indigenous storytelling. Identify cultural values conducive to gender equality.	Indigenous leaders, religious leaders, and IBE teachers	3-5 years

6 The 3 Cs framework has been developed by colleagues at the Center for Universal Education in partnership with the Knowing-Doing Network. Please see: https://www.brookings.edu/projects/knowing-doing-network/.

7 Several of these recommendations overlap with a recent conceptualized model on IBE quality (cfr Santos et al., 2025).

CAPACITY

GOAL 3: ENHANCE INDIGENOUS WOMEN TEACHERS' CAPACITIES TO INITIATE AND LEAD EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN THEIR SCHOOLS		
Actionable steps	Actors	Timeframe
Conduct a participative assessment of Indigenous women teachers' needs for teacher training, including the exploration of building relationships with families, adopting a dialogue of knowledges approach, and identifying cultural values to understand and promote gender equality.	IBE teachers, Ministries of Education at the provincial level, organizations working with IBE teachers, and IBE school principals	1 year
Pilot a teacher training program focused on these needs and priorities, and document Indigenous teachers' participation and changes in classroom and school practices.		1-3 years
GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN IBE CURRICULUM THROUGH A PROCESS OF ACTION-REFLECTION AND A DIALOGUE OF KNOWLEDGE.		
Actionable steps	Actors	Timeframe
Include in regular teachers' work meetings at IBE schools discussions to redefine the role of the teacher and learner, teaching and learning practices, and content and materials that incorporate insights from a dialogue of knowledges (Indigenous, traditional, scientific) and reflection on teachers' practices and school culture.	IBE school principals, IBE teachers, all teachers, and education authorities	1-3 years
Appoint an IBE pedagogical leader in each school to oversee curricular development efforts, and to collaborate with teachers to reflect together, identify lessons learned, and share those lessons	Ministries of Education at the state level, principals, teachers, and families	1-3 years

COHESION

GOAL 5: DEVELOP A SHARED VISION AMONG POLICY ACTORS ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF IBE POLICY AND SCHOOLS		
Actionable steps	Actors	Timeframe
Facilitate conversations: collaboratively formulate and respond to reflective questions to advance a shared vision about the transformation of IBE, including the purpose of education for Indigenous communities, the value of contributions from diverse communities to society, and the role of IBE schools. Expand the conversation about the values of justice and equality for Indigenous and non-Indigenous girls and boys. Meet to discuss, gather data as needed, and agree on the key elements of the response	Education community: students, teachers, principals, families, community, and educational leaders	1 year
Write the Institutional IBE School Project expressing the shared purpose	IBE school principals, teachers, and educational authorities	1-3 years
GOAL 6: BUILD AND STRENGTHEN SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS BASED ON SHARED PURPOSE.		
Actionable steps	Actors	Timeframe
Assist the school principal in building the school-community relationships (with support from the IBE pedagogical leader) and foster connections across different communities (Indigenous, criollos, urban, rural, educators, families, elders, artists) through a network of individuals and organizations working on Indigenous communities' well-being.	Education community: students, teachers, principals, families, community, and educational leaders	3-5 years
Clarify career pathways for Indigenous women teachers to become principals and offer training and mentoring through the Indigenous women teachers' network	Educational authorities	5-10 years

Appendix 1. Tertiary Teaching Preparation Institutes offering Intercultural Bilingual Education Teaching degrees

	PROVINCE	CITY	INSTITUTION	CODE
1	Chaco[8]	Pampa del Indio	Instituto de Educación Superior de Pampa del Indio	2200536
2		Presidencia Roca	Ues de Presidencia Roca del Ies De Pampa Del Indio	2200536a
3		Pampa del Indio	Instituto de Educación Superior Centro de Estudios Superiores Bilingüe Intercultural (Ies Cesbi)	2202165
4		Presidencia Roque Sáenz Peña (Tres Isletas y La Leonesa)	Instituto De Educación Superior (Ex - Cifma)	2201135
5		Juan José Castelli	Ues de Juan J. Castelli del Ies (Ex-Cifma)	2201135a
6		El Sauzalito	Ues de El Sauzalito del Ies (Ex-Cifma)	2201135b
7		Nueva Pompeya	Instituto de Educación Superior "Cacique Francisco Supaz"	2202388
8		Resistencia	Instituto de Educación Superior "Ralaxaic Nme Enaxamaxac" (Nueva Visión)	2202395
9	Formosa	Ingeniero Guillermo N. Juárez	Instituto Superior de Formación Docente e Investigaciones Para Comunidades Aborígenes y Sectores Marginales	3400335
10		El Potrillo	Instituto de Educación Superior Docente y Técnica - Intercultural Bilingüe	3400954
11	Salta	Tartagal	Instituto de Educación Superior Nº 6029	6600302
12		Isla De Cañas	Instituto De Enseñanza Superior "Dr. Arturo Loutaif" Extensión Áulica Isla de Cañas	6600628a
13		Iruya	Instituto De Enseñanza Superior "Dr. Alfredo Loutaif" Extensión Áulica Yruya	6600628b
14		Nazareno	Instituto De Enseñanza Superior "Dr. Alfredo Loutaif" Extensión Áulica Nazareno	6600628c
15		La Unión	Instituto De Educación Superior N° 6049 Extensión Áulica La Unión	6601567a
16	Santiago del Estero	La Banda	Instituto Superior Jesús, El Maestro	86010899
17		Bandera Baja	Instituto De Formación Docente Nº 21	8601524

Source: Ministry of Human Capital, 2025a.

8 In Chaco, additionally there is the Centro Educativo Superior Bilingue Intercultural Moqoit CESBIM, E.P.G.C.B.I.I. N°8, El Pastoril, en 2023 (created in 2012 as a special project).

Appendix 2: Methods

Qualitative approach with storytelling interviews (Iseke 2013) with teachers, interviews with educational authorities, focus groups with students, and data survey questions.

DATA SOURCES

Survey: 34 Indigenous teachers responded to the survey, 32 women and 2 men, belonging to the following groups: Qom (n=15), Wichí (n=11), Kolla (n=3), one of each: Diaguita, Moqoit, Guarani, Vilela, and one with multiple heritages. The average age was 39 years (min=27, max=57). Among respondents, 85.3% (n=29) speak at least one Indigenous language.

This was a convenience sample. The survey was distributed among key networks (via email and WhatsApp): students at two teaching institutions (profesorados) in Chaco, a network of Qom language students, and teachers connected to the Ministry of Education in Formosa and Salta.

Storytelling interviews: 10 Indigenous women teachers. This was a convenience sample. In the survey's final question, teachers were asked whether they would be willing to participate in an interview. If so, they could leave their name and contact information. All those who expressed interest were contacted; however, due to availability, only six self-nominated teachers were interviewed for this research.

Additionally, I contacted four Indigenous women teachers who had previously collaborated on another research project to expand their storytelling, addressing specific questions about their lived experiences and observations on gender equality. In total, I conducted 10 storytelling interviews.

	PSEUDONYM	AGE	INDIGENOUS PEOPLE	RESIDENCE
1	Mapic	39	Qom	Resistencia, Chaco
2	Tesa	50	Guarani	Yacuy, Salta
3	Atsinay	53	Wichí	Sauzalito, Chaco
4	Chera	40	Qom	Sauzalito, Chaco
5	Norec	35	Qom	Resistencia, Chaco
6	Khates	+50	Qom	Saenz Peña, Chaco
7	Ada	39	Qom	Saenz Peña, Chaco
8	Nala	37	Qom	Resistencia, Chaco
9	Iss	48	Qom	Resistencia, Chaco
10	Pumjwa	49	Wichí	Resistencia, Chaco

Interviews: 4 Intercultural Bilingual Education policy actors. This was a purposive sample of policy actors at the provincial level, drawn from three provinces (Salta, Chaco, and Formosa), and one at the national level to obtain a variety of perspectives.

Focus group: 2 focus groups with Indigenous students from two Intercultural Bilingual degrees, preschool and secondary level. One with five students in their last semester before graduation and one with four students in their first semester at Saenz Peña, Chaco.

This was a convenience sample. For these two focus groups, I visited four courses (each with 15 to 25 students) to invite and explain the purpose of the research. The first small groups (of four or five students) who agreed to be interviewed (from the first and last semesters) were interviewed.

Informed consent

Interviewed teachers and policy actors provided verbal (oral) informed consent to be interviewed and recorded. As the researcher, I explained the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, the anonymity, their choice to answer or skip questions, and to stop the questions at any time. Additionally, all teachers were offered a transcription of the interview for their own use, as part of the Indigenous methodology approach I have been developing in my research agenda.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data were transcribed with assisted IA and reviewed by the researcher. Reviewed transcriptions were shared with interviewees as part of the reciprocal relationship built. Data were organized by source and coded in NVIVO, using broad deductive categories and complemented by inductive codes. Preliminary analysis was discussed with three teachers and one educational authority to inform the process.

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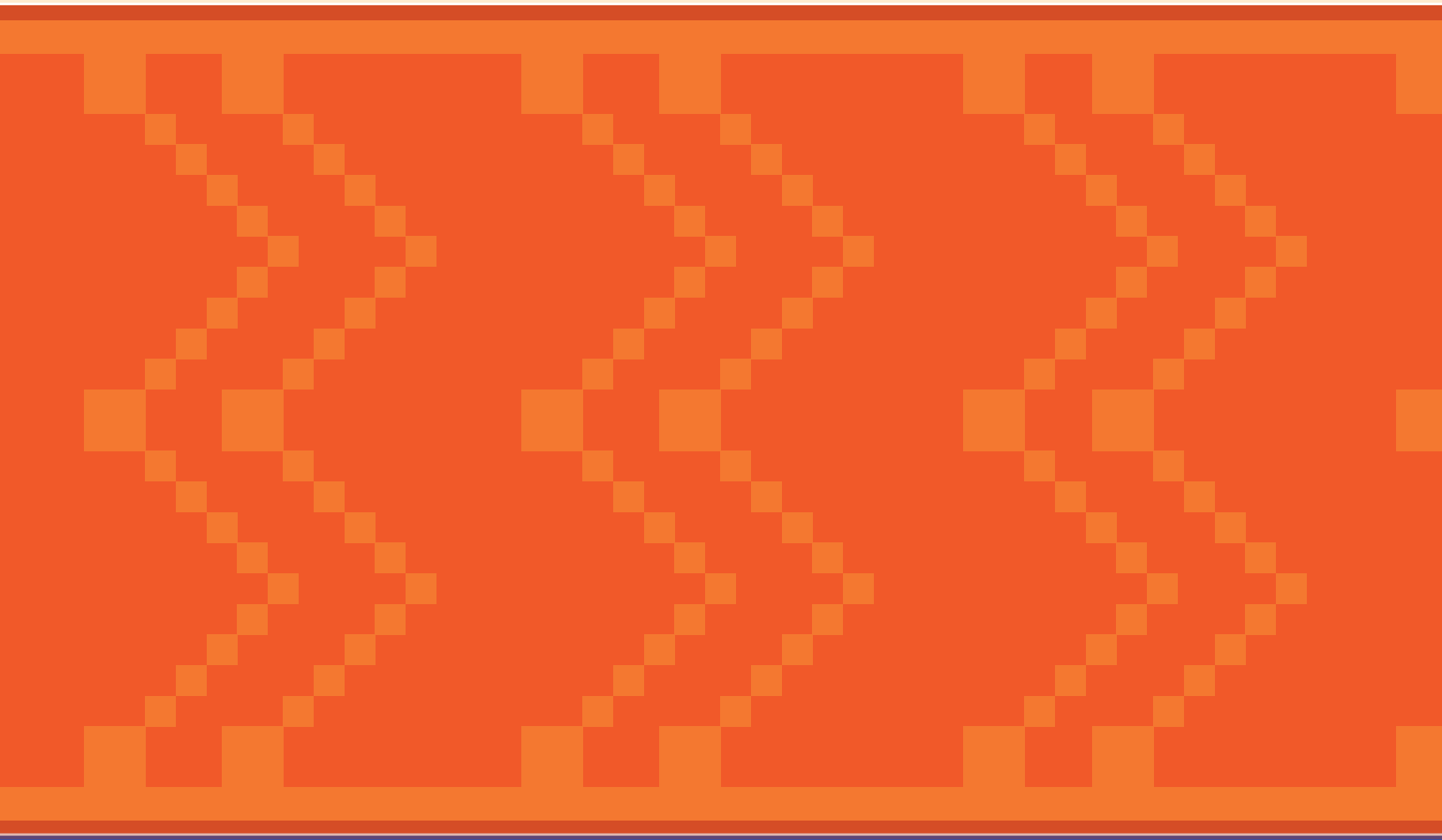

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