

“Face to Face”

Some experiences of struggle and information with the LGBTQIAP+ indigenous and quilombola population in Brazil

APRIL 2023



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is the result of a brief study conducted as part of the [Rooted in Trust 2.0 Brazil \(RiT\)](#) project by the NGO [Internews](#). It examines the intersecting networks of media and information shared by LGBTQIAP+ (lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual and transvesti, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual and more) identifying members of some indigenous and quilombola communities, with a focus on structures of discrimination and subsequent mobilization inside and outside their territories. The study was developed and adapted in response to challenges, needs and interests presented by the respondents themselves, over the course of a broader Information Ecosystem Assessment.

This Information Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) was designed to **impact the humanitarian sector, journalists, and media's capacity to understand the different risks to safety and wellbeing faced by the LGBTQIAP+ community in Brazil**, and the ways that resistance messaging is created, disseminated and shared. Conducted between September and December 2022, this research encompasses the regions of Roraima, Pará, Amapá, and also had interlocutors from the states of Acre, Ceará and Espírito Santo.



IT WORKS TOWARDS THREE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To prioritize face-to-face communication strategies, such as conversation circles, while centering LGBTQIAP+ voices in all actions (“nothing about us, without us”);

2. To support the pre-existing communication initiatives inside the territories through improving access to equipment, training, resources, tools, applications, and energy networks (wi-fi, cellular range and electricity);

3. To create accessible databases that consolidate and map out the LGBTQIAP+ population, expertise, needs and demands, and centralize the informational resources required for effective support and mobilization.

Started in February 2022, the Rooted in Trust’s main objective has been to identify and strengthen what we call Information Ecosystems with some indigenous and quilombola communities in the states of Amapá, Pará and Roraima, and to develop actions and proposals to strengthen them in response to the “infodemic” that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study presented in this document arose when RiT already had about six months of activities, so it was developed after the Brazil National Information Landscape Report and the Community Information Landscape Needs reports for some quilombola and indigenous communities in Amapá, Pará and Roraima. With the purpose of complementing its initial scope,



BUT WHAT IS AN INFORMATION ECOSYSTEM?

Information Ecosystems are not just sets of news networks, media, and information channels. In the Rooted in Trust project, we understand Information Ecosystems as the way people consume, produce, contribute, interact and behave around the information flows that circulate among them. These flows are built and shared mainly on the basis of trust, which, added to information and media networks, will compose the Information Ecosystem.

For this reason, our project is centered on listening to and actively involving the communities and partners with whom we work, in order to value the dynamic, contextual, and diverse character of each ecosystem, which can only be understood and adequately addressed through the active participation of those who are part of it.

Once these ecosystems have been identified, we believe that through approach, listening, engagement, and training activities focused on the themes of information media, rumor and disinformation analysis, COVID-19, and vaccination, it is possible to contribute so that these networks become increasingly autonomous, safe, and healthy in the face of the challenges imposed, above all, by the circulation of fake news.

the research focus was on the potential specificities of the challenges faced by the indigenous and quilombola LGBTQIAP+ population, if possible in the states reached by the project, in relation to the dynamics of information and communication which, according to the original thematic cut, would have health, COVID-19 and misinformation as main themes.

However, in the course of the interviews and focus groups conducted, the participating interlocutors did not bring in their speeches many specific experiences provoked by COVID-19, but rather the need to narrate their respective life trajectories and personal and community experiences that were quite marked by the fact of identifying themselves as LGBTQIAP+ indigenous and quilombola people, and consequently the different episodes of discrimination and subsequent mobilization inside and outside their territories.

We were then building and adapting the research according to the interests and demands brought by the interlocutors themselves, so that its results would make sense and could actually be relevant to the contexts that were then presented. In this way, it was possible to identify important characteristics and needs in the dynamics of information and communication around these indigenous and quilombola LGBTQIAP+'s experiences that stood out to the health condition of COVID-19, its specificities, and some recommendations for future actions to strengthen its communicative actions.

The fact that the theme of COVID-19 did not appear strongly in these narratives not only pointed out the most relevant paths for these groups that we should follow, but also did not prevent us from reaching the initial goal of the study which was, mainly, to understand how and through which media these LGBTQIAP+ groups and individuals built their networks of receiving and sharing information, and what were the main challenges to be faced.

In these narratives, the roles of leadership and community engagement played by virtually all of the interlocutors participating in the research, the ways in which they organize and welcome each other as a group, the visions they share about what it is to be LGBTQIAP+ in the specific internal contexts of each of their communities, their strategies for mobilizing and sharing information within the communities about LGBTQIAP+ experiences, and ideas for increasing and qualifying the reach of these communication actions not only about the LGBTQIAP+ theme, but about the struggle of indigenous peoples in general, were highlighted.

THE KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY REVOLVED AROUND THREE AREAS:

- 1.** The specific discriminations faced by the LGBTQIAP+ community, and the challenges faced in effectively mobilizing support;
- 2.** The typical purpose and trajectories of "collectives," unified groups coming together to address and rally against specific injustices or community needs;
- 3.** The different direct and indirect ways that information and support is shared within the LGBTQIAP+ collectives, including digital communication, social media and face to face assemblies.

Despite the redefinition of objectives, this IEA presents results and reflections from an indicative study that we consider a crucial starting point for deeper analysis and immediate engagement actions.

We will present below the methodology used, the limitations

encountered, the key lessons learned, recommendations for engagement actions aimed at the humanitarian sector, journalists and communicators, and a list of references and indications for reading, as well as contacts with the main interlocutors of this work and other associations working on this important theme. **Enjoy your reading!**



"FACE TO FACE": SOME EXPERIENCES OF STRUGGLE AND INFORMATION WITH THE LGBTQIAP+ INDIGENOUS AND QUILOMBOLA POPULATION IN BRAZIL

LGBTQIAP+ BOX

Before we get to know the meanings of the acronyms of the LGBTQIAP+ movement, it is important to know that it has several possible variations of spelling, with more or less letters (like LGBTQIAP+ or LGBT, for example). This is because it is proper of the movement, necessarily a result of historical, political and social processes, to recognize that the theme of gender and sexuality is **dynamic, plural and contextual**, being updated in a lively way according to the changes experienced socially and collectively. The important

thing is to understand the acronym as a tool to ensure respect and recognition to the plurality of society, and not as something fixed, imposing, normative or limiting.

Sexual orientation is defined by who each person is attracted to affectively and sexually, while **gender identity** refers to how a person sees and identifies him/herself. The terms **cis** or **trans**, from cisgender and transgender, refer to whether or not a person identifies with the gender assigned at birth.

LESBIAN - A person who identifies as a woman and has affective-sexual attraction to people who also identify as women, whether cisgender or transgender. It is a sexual orientation.

BISEXUAL: A person who feels affective-sexual attraction toward people who identify with any gender. It is a sexual orientation.

QUEER: Na English term that refers to a person who either transitions between both, or does not desire or identify with standards of sexuality or gender, seen as limiting labels on identity and sexual expression. It can also mean "questioning. It is about both sexual orientation and gender identity.

ASEXUAL: A person who is not sexually attracted to any gender identity. It is a sexual orientation.

+: Plus sign. It encompasses all the other acronyms, that is, all the diverse possibilities of sexual orientation and gender identity that do not fit into the cis-heteronormative standard, and that do not appear in a highlighted position before the symbol.

L

G

B

T

Q

I

A

P

+

GAY: A person who identifies as male and has affective-sexual attraction to other people who also identify as male, cis or trans. It is a sexual orientation.

TRAVESTI, TRANSEXUALS, AND TRANSGENDERS: People who identify with a gender different from the one assigned at birth. Some transgender people resort to medical treatments, ranging from hormone therapy to sex reassignment surgery, and the terms "trans man" and "trans woman" are widely used in the community. It is a gender identity. The term "travesti" has an important meaning in the history of the LGBTQIAP+ struggle in Brazil. Popularly used to refer pejoratively to people who identify and express themselves as trans women, social and political movements fighting for LGBTQIAP+ rights led by these people have mobilized a reappropriation of the term, so it's very common that some trans woman identify themselves as travesti in this context of resignification and empowerment.

INTERSEX: A person who has clinical variations related to chromosomes or reproductive and/or sexual organs. It is an umbrella term describing people whose body sexual development does not match the binary norm. It is a gender identity.

PANSEXUAL: A person who feels affectively and sexually attracted to any sex or gender identity.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

As this study was conducted within the existing framework of the Rooted in Trust Information Ecosystem Assessments, its preliminary objective focused on how information is produced, consumed and shared within the indigenous and quilombola networks, during the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent misinformation campaigns.

However, important data on the specific needs and challenges of the LGBTQIAP+ community resulted in our decision to delve further into understanding how these groups seek and share information. As such, the research evolved into a parallel and complementary study, which forms the basis of a preliminary body of research on the LGBTQIAP+ experience.

We favored an ethnographic approach that would allow the construction of data in a qualitative way, focusing on bibliographic research, open individual interviews and focus groups with indigenous and quilombola people who identified themselves as LGBTQIAP+. As a key script, the interviews and focus groups were conducted from questions and conversations around information needs and gaps, preferred and most used media, barriers in accessing and sharing information, and other related topics.

It was during the first interviews and after the first focus group held that we found it necessary to change the methodological approach from media/information surrounding COVID-19 as the main theme, to listening to the topics brought up as most relevant to the participants, such as discrimination, violence, and organizing strategies. The script of questions and issues to be discussed was progressively adapted in order to reach the demands of the interlocutor groups, allowing the construction of a research relationship suited to these realities.

For example, instead of focusing on asking about rumors that circulated about and during the pandemic, we proposed in



the focus group a dynamic in which an LGBTQIAP+ flag was passed from participant to participant, for each one to talk about what it represented to them and their life experiences, in an attempt to demonstrate our embracement and also map how and what information about the research theme reached each of the interlocutors.

Due to the sensibility of the theme, both for the high rates of violence committed against the LGBTQIAP+, indigenous and quilombola population, and for the heterogeneity in the cultural construction of each people in their definitions and experiences in relation to sexuality and gender,

we defined that our interlocutors would be indigenous and quilombola people who identified themselves as LGBTQIAP+ and were active in associations or activists in this theme, independently of belonging or not to the communities and states already participating in the RiT.

That is, people who had already walked a public path, so that our contact, their participation and the subsequent publication of this work would not expose them to any risk

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS



inside and outside their territories and spaces of reception, besides identifying this opportunity as a mechanism in itself of support and dissemination of their activities.

Not only because of these conditions already mentioned, but also due to the short time available for the research,

it was not possible to demarcate many elements of intersectionality both at the time of selecting the participants and in the analysis of the data subsequently collected (such as schooling, social class, passability, both markers that we consider important to be observed and addressed in future studies). We privileged the interlocutors' interest in discussing the LGBTQIAP+ issue demonstrated by their public activism, and a diversity in terms of gender and sexuality.

Our network of interlocutors was built using the snowball sampling method. We started from internet searches of associations and individuals in the mentioned profile, in addition to our own research in the network of relationships and knowledge of all members of the RiT team and with our project's partners. The number and who would be the interlocutors was defined by the feedback in the contact and indications, by the availability of their agendas, and by the deadline set for the research. In all, 7 individual interviews were held, all conducted remotely, and 3 focus groups, all held in person, one

in Amapá, one in Roraima, and one in Pará, totaling 29 participants in total.

All interviewees self-identified as LGBTQIAP+, except for one who identified as a straight cis woman. The rest identified as trans women, cis gay men, and cis lesbian women. All were indigenous or quilombolas, whose communities were in 6 different Brazilian states (Espírito Santo, Ceará, Roraima and Acre - indigenous communities; Amapá and Pará - quilombola communities).

In the focus groups, indigenous people, quilombolas, and non-indigenous and non-quilombola people who were activists and leaders in the LGBTQIAP+ movement participated, with some participants identifying as cis straight women and men, but most self-identified as belonging to the acronym. People who identified as trans women, trans men, cis gay men, cis lesbian women, cis bisexual women, and cis pansexual women participated.

The first focus group was held in the quilombola community of Carvão, located in the municipality of Mazagão, about 200km from Macapá - AP, and the last group was held at Malungu's headquarters, in the city of Belém - PA.

In the focus groups held in Amapá and Pará, its participants were all quilombolas, with the majority self-identified as LGBTQIAP+, but also members of communities that did not belong to the acronym. These meetings were jointly articulated by the RiT team and, respectively, CONAQ-AP and Malungu. Both quilombola associations have as planned actions the elaboration of documents and data to support the creation of specific coordinations on the



Quantitative of interviews and focus groups, indicating locality, ethnicity, quilombola community, etc

12 CIS GAY MEN



6 CIS LESBIAN WOMEN



2 TRANS WOMEN



1 TRANS MEN



3 CIS BISEXUAL WOMEN



1 CIS PANSEXUAL WOMAN



9 CIS STRAIGHT MEN/WOMEN



LGBTQIAP+ quilombola population in their territories, and these focus groups were the first events held on the theme.

The focus group held in Roraima was composed entirely of people who identified themselves as LGBTQIAP+. Indigenous and non-Indigenous people participated, the latter being representatives of the main LGBTQIAP+ associations in the state of Roraima (Athenas Cores Group, ATERR and Diversidade Group), as well as other people also belonging to the acronym who are activists in the movement. The group was held in the state capital, Boa Vista.

To foster accessibility and reciprocity with our research participants, we set an objective to make the research document publicly available online and open to contributions and observation along the course of the study. The final document will also be shared with respondents, to facilitate feedback and further conversation.

The limitations to the study were largely due to the short deadline and limited time allocated to collect data. This posed the impossibility of holding more meetings, interviews, and focus groups, in order to better deepen and detail the issues already discussed. Maintaining contact for new interviews and focus groups with the same participants would be important to resume in more detail the events, and media and communication actions carried out in the past by the interlocutors within their communities on the LGBTQIAP+ theme or even to propose partnership in the organization of workshops and conversation circles, besides allowing the cross-referencing of information and experiences heard from other participants.

In terms of bibliography, we consider that the discussion of the LGBTQIAP+ theme with indigenous communities and quilombolas in a contemporary political context is still very recent and not very extensive, besides the absence of

quantitative data on this population and identity clipping, which reveals other methodology limitations of this research.

For these reasons, there is no official data on percentages of the indigenous and quilombola LGBTQIAP+ population in Brazil - even general census data on the indigenous and quilombola population in Brazil is itself quite neglected by public agencies, and it is often more appropriate to seek this information from independent academic and journalistic research groups, and other organizations that advocate for indigenous and quilombola rights. However, given the heterogeneity of these experiences on gender and sexuality, especially among the more than 300 different indigenous peoples in the Brazilian territory, we believe that this type of data should be built in a qualitative way.

Also, safety and privacy of this population should also be considered first, because of the high rates of violence and vulnerability experienced by the LGBTQIAP+ population in Brazil. Even if admittedly underreported in terms of police records and in the mainstream media, as data from the Brazilian Yearbook of Public Safety shows, records of felony homicide against the LGBTQIAP+ population grew 10% between 2017 and 2018, yet more than half of Brazil's states did not report figures on violence against the community. In 2021, the Dossier on Deaths and Violence Against LGBTI+ in Brazil (ACONTECE - ANTRA - ABGLT) raised the number of 316 violent deaths, including homicide, robbery, and suicide. 45% of the victims were gay men and 44% were trans women.

So this work should not be considered as a map in itself, but rather as a contribution to the construction of a necessary and more complex mapping. And although its preliminary and indicative character is constantly reinforced in the text, it is safe to say that from it we were able to reach important considerations about the indigenous and quilombola LGBTQIAP+ population in Brazil, shared below.

KEY FINDINGS

As we have mentioned, the key findings belong to three main categories:

- 1.** Definition of Collectives - How and why collectives are formed.
- 2.** The different direct and indirect ways that information and support is shared within the LGBTQIAP+ collectives, including digital communication, social media and face to face assemblies.
- 3.** The specific discriminations faced by the LGBTQIAP+ community, and the challenges faced in effectively mobilizing support.

Below we present the unfolding of these findings:

✦ The LGBTQIAP+ movement among them is quite recent and under construction. There is difficulty of building a network of interlocutors for this study and, subsequently, the participants' narratives, demonstrate both the heterogeneity and sensitivity of the theme of gender and sexuality within indigenous and quilombola communities.

✦ Also, the existing movements are commonly called "collectives" ("coletivo" in Brazilian Portuguese). Collectives are the organized movements that bring together LGBTQIAP+ individuals under a common cause. In this research, we talked with representatives of the Coletivo Tibira and Coletivo Caboclas, for example;

✦ In general, these collectives or the individual actions of the participants in the LGBTQIAP+ theme within their indigenous communities and quilombolas originate from some prejudice episode experienced by them or by some member of the community, triggering then different mobilization and communication actions;



KEY FINDINGS

- ✦ This mobilization usually gains strength during a very typical movement shared among most of the interlocutors, which is to temporarily leave their community, either because of the discrimination episode, or to study at a university level or to work, enabling the construction of new networks of interaction and welcoming with other LGBTQIAP+ people, and strongly also through social networks (especially Facebook and Instagram);

- ✦ Most of the time, the moment of return to their communities is usually marked by the importance that the interlocutors attribute to giving continuity to the struggles developed in and by their territories. In the case of the LGBTQIAP+ theme, all interlocutors reported considering it important to address it in their communities after their experiences and learning. Although they recognize that this is a difficult and delicate task inside the territories, most of the indigenous interlocutors from the interviews reported performing local actions about LGBTQIAP+ experiences;

- ✦ Collectives communicate rely on social networks (especially Facebook and Instagram) and Whatsapp groups. In terms of dissemination and consumption of information, both the collectives, highlighting in this study the Coletivo Tibira (more than 30,000 followers on Instagram) and the Coletivo Caboclas (almost 3,000 followers on Instagram), and the personal profiles of the interlocutors on social networks (Instagram and Facebook) are usually used for dissemination actions. However, the most used means are the WhatsApp groups and the events organized face-to-face in the communities, much spread by word-of-mouth;

- ✦ The most important format for disseminating information is face to face events and listening / conversational rounds. It was found that personal and face-to-face sources of information were always deemed the most valued and trustworthy.

- ✦ In the disseminating information is possible to identify

two focuses: promoting reflections and clarifications about what it is to be LGBTQIAP+, and creating a welcoming space for other LGBTQIAP+;

- ✦ Speaking specifically about the indigenous interlocutors from the interviews, it was also possible to identify that there are "inside" and "outside" actions, that is, actions that are thought for inside the territories and their ethnic members, and other actions that are thought for outside the territories and aimed at non-indigenous people.

- ✦ According to the quilombola interlocutors, these focus groups were the first time they had been presented with an opportunity to discuss the needs of the LGBTQIAP+ population in their territories, even though this had been a long-standing demand by some members of these associations;

- ✦ Logistical factors, such as the precarious supply of electricity and Internet in the regions of the territories, the instability or absence of wi-fi or mobile signal, as well as social factors, such as the ways in which communities develop their networks of trust and sharing of information seems to be the challenges faced to implement other means of communication than the face-to-face ones;

- ✦ Lastly, indigenous and quilombola movements and sectors engaged with the cause do not always evaluate positively the coverage made by the traditional media. As demonstrated in RiT's reports prior to this research, most traditional media outlets belong to groups strongly linked to agribusiness interests, religious and political interests. These groups are owners or shareholders of different communication vehicles across the country, from TV and Radio to online news portals. This prevents indigenous and quilombola peoples from relying on large local newspapers as sources of information, so they have organized their own strategies to guarantee and communicate the defense of their rights and territories.

The territory is increasingly having access to the Internet, I think that 40% of the people here already have access to the internet, for example. I think that both associations and NGOs should be investing in this area of communication, thinking about podcasts, for example, or short series about LGBT populations, agroecology, themes that are important to these communities that we want to reach.

It is always good for us to be thinking about these junctions with other people so that we can also get to know them and, who knows... we are always fighting for our territory, for this river that bathes us, for this forest that gives us such pure air, so it is very important that we are being heard, but also to be in this process of construction, both here and there. This is really important, that we are united, but that we can listen to each other.

LEONALDO BRANDÃO, QUILOMBOLA FROM THE MÉDIO ITACURUÇÁ COMMUNITY (PA), LOCAL COORDINATOR OF ARQUIA - ASSOCIATION OF THE REMNANT COMMUNITIES OF QUILOMBOS FROM THE ISLANDS OF ABAETETUBA AND MEMBER OF ADQ-UFPA

RECOMMENDATIONS



It is recommended to the humanitarian sector, journalists, and communicators:

- 1.** Prioritize actions that have as their main characteristic to be developed face-to-face in the communities, always in a collaborative way with them based on their own demands (“nothing about us, without us”);
- 2.** The most recurrent demand in the statements of the interlocutors, both those interviewed and the focus group participants, is that these actions should be promoted in the format of conversation circles within the communities;
- 3.** Support the creation of specific coordinations that address the needs of their LGBTQIAP+ populations with the people and associations involved in the interviews and focus groups in Amapá and Pará state (ADQ-UFPA, CONAQ Amapá and Malungu), as informed by their respective leaders;
- 4.** Support the communication initiatives already existing in the communities with audiovisual communication equipment, and through training workshops and capacity building in communication, and training both in the use of media tools and applications, and in the collection and dissemination of information;
- 5.** Strengthening accessibility points as access to electronic devices, such as cell phones and laptops, and quality and stable wi-fi signal and electricity, would allow for ease of dissemination and communication in and out the territories, specially those located far from urban areas.
- 6.** Work together with the communities strengthening their demands for the creation of databases that gather contacts of associations and activists of the LGBTQIAP+ quilombola and indigenous movement, as well as in the production of an independent census that can map this population and their specific contexts, according to their demands. Datas about violence, but also about education level, employment rates, involvement in leadership and community engagement activities would be important to qualify and point the actions and roles of the LGBTQIAP+ community inside their territories, and the treatment received.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS:

GENDER(S) AND SEXUALITY(S)

To discuss and present our data, there are important considerations to be made about the theme of gender and sexuality both in indigenous and quilombola experiences, and in the so-called “national society”, from which comes the acronym LGBTQIAP+ itself. These considerations are the result not only of the bibliographical research carried out, which privileged data from several independent and academic research institutes, as well as scientific articles produced in the field of Brazilian anthropology, but were also raised by the interlocutors participating in the study.

Historical, political, and sociological contexts must be taken into consideration in this reflection, since each community has its own rules, notions, and traditions, especially when it comes to indigenous communities. Although this is not the main theme of this report, it runs through it theoretically and methodologically, so we recommend that those interested read our bibliographical references at the end of this document for further discussion.

Still, what is worth highlighting in this document is the importance of understanding that gender and sexuality are cultural and social experiences, and not static or supposedly “biological” data. The conceptions and categories about them should, therefore, be understood as diverse and dynamic possibilities of being and living, so that each society has in its culture its sexual morals, rules, taboos and freedoms regarding sexual practices and its gender and identity categories.

indigenous and non-quilombola groups, in terms of their expressions on gender and sexuality today.

The colonialist logic of the Portuguese crown, especially, was based not only on the exploitation and submission of enslaved indigenous peoples and African peoples in terms of their labor power. Everything that differed from their models of kinship, sexuality, morality, religiosity, and science was banned, criminalized, and controlled by means of diverse and intricate relations of force and power established as a result of colonization. What Jesuits and Portuguese baptized as promiscuity, for example, was often part of a complex sacred shamanic system or political and social organization for indigenous peoples.

However, anthropology teaches us that these relations of oppression and subjection are much more complex than they may appear at first glance, so that for every form of violence and domination there are, at the same time, reactions and spaces of resistance, dispute, reinterpretations and negotiations.

As highlighted by the research participants, the LGBTQIAP+ struggle should be understood as the struggle for indigenous and quilombola rights and territories, since both are inseparable from a post-colonial thought that provokes reflections on the right to diversity of being and living in the world.

So, what we mean is that each indigenous and quilombola people, and especially indigenous peoples, have their own markers of sexuality and gender, just as Western non-indigenous and non-quilombola society does, which is where we are referring to when working with LGBTQIAP+ language. The acronym itself and its entire political, historical and social trajectory belongs to a specific social context that will

“I think that the focus group is a great way for us to share these informations, because I think that everything starts when we understand ourselves, because from the understanding that we are not an aberration, we are not wrong, we are not an option - and also to understand that the colonization process that had an impact inside the communities caused these violences to be reproduced - is also a step. Starting from the information, from this understanding, of being this dissident body, of understanding your own body, of understanding all this narrative, is a strategy. Because if we can also bring this to the bases, we decolonize this thought, we don't make people feel deprived of being themselves.”

DANILO TUPINIKIM, INDIGENOUS TUPINIQUIM FROM THE CAIEIRAS VELHA INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY (ES), ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE TIBIRA COLECTIVE



In the specific case of indigenous and quilombola communities in Brazil, there is no way to ignore the reflexes of colonization and consequently of Christian religions in the relations established between these groups and non-

SOME CONSIDERATIONS: GENDER(S) AND SEXUALITY(S)



often not find symmetry within an indigenous or quilombola community.

However, the cutting approach we use to conduct this study is precisely from the relations and interactions established among people representing the struggles of indigenous peoples and quilombolas and who self-identify as LGBTQIAP+, that is, people and groups for whom the LGBTQIAP+ language makes sense, especially when considered in this specific context of social interaction with public policies, national media and communication.

In this sense, it is safe to say that, from this study, we found that these relationships are marked by much of the stigmas and prejudices originating from non-indigenous and non-quilombola society against its LGBTQIAP+ population, in which every experience that escapes from an alleged heteronormativity and binarism of female and male gender is the target of repression, inside and outside of the territories.

Consequently, it was also possible to observe different and effective mobilization strategies performed by the interlocutors to fight against such violence and other challenges, such as the “accumulation” of prejudices very commonly expressed by the offensive phrase often heard by the interlocutors: “Besides being indigenous, are you also gay/butch?”.

In this report, we will present some of the main ways in which the participating interlocutors consume, produce and share information in the community context to which they belong. Furthermore, we will explore the ways in which these information networks uphold existing narratives surrounding LGBTQIAP+ identities, both empowering and oppressive, and how informational systems are created and shared as tools of communal and personal resistance.”

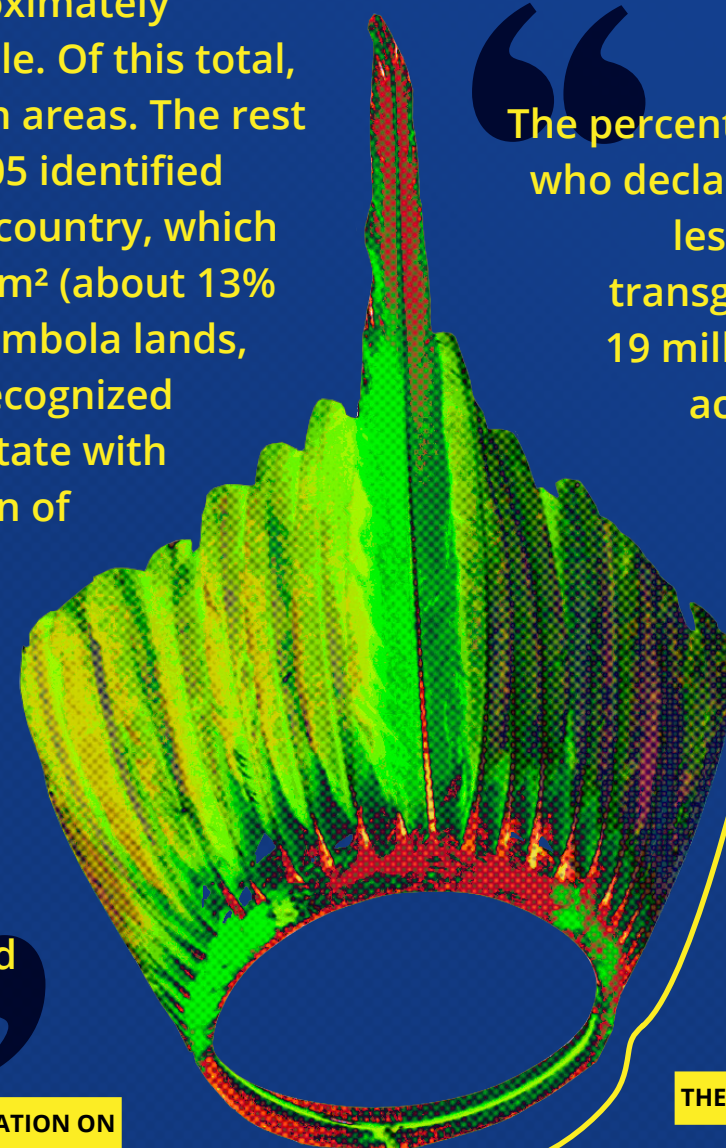
“In Brazil, there are approximately 896,900 indigenous people. Of this total, about 36.2% live in urban areas. The rest occupy approximately 505 identified Indigenous Lands in the country, which cover about 1.2 million km² (about 13% of the country). For quilombola lands, there are 404 officially recognized territories. Bahia is the state with the highest concentration of quilombola localities, followed by the states of Minas Gerais, Maranhão and Pará. There are quilombola localities distributed in all states of Brazil, with the exception of Acre and Roraima”

(EXCERPT TAKEN FROM A RIT BR PUBLICATION ON QUALITY OF ENGAGEMENT, 2022)

“The percentage of adult Brazilians who declare themselves asexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender is 12%, or about 19 million people, taking into account IBGE population data. This is what an unprecedented survey conducted by researchers from Unesp and USP shows, published in the scientific journal Nature Scientific Reports.”

(NATURE, 2022).

THERE IS NO DATA ON INDIGENOUS AND QUILOMBOLA POPULATIONS THAT ARE LGBTQIAP+.



COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION AND TRUST

From the dialogue built with the participants of the interviews and focus groups, it is very evident the quality of the engagement performed by the indigenous peoples and quilombolas in Brazil in an autonomous way, through various communication activities always concerned with articulating and reaching the largest possible number of people within the communities. The ability to make technical and creative use of the available means of communication, which are often scarce and insufficient, also stands out.

Reflecting a colonial heritage that has not yet been overcome, the struggle of native peoples in Brazil has accumulated a series of disrespects to their rights, and in communication and information it is no different. Since the low representation of their realities in the national media as shown by the Brazil National Information Landscape Report and the Community Information Landscape Needs reports, when not omissive in relation to the agendas of indigenous and quilombola movements or acting as an instrument at the service of vested interests in their exploitation, added to the persistent precariousness in the supply of energy, Internet and cell phone signal inside the territories, are some of the challenges faced by native peoples.

When we turn our gaze to the LGBTQIAP+ population or to moments of global crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the violence and inequality of treatment to which indigenous peoples and quilombolas are subjected becomes even more explicit.

However, as we have already discussed here, it is necessary to recognize that, in the middle of so many attacks and challenges, there is a huge active and tireless process of resistance and struggle. In the construction of this study,

we had the opportunity to get to know some significant aspects of the communication and information networks developed by several representatives of the indigenous and quilombola movements. Next, we will learn a little about these experiences of struggle and information with



the indigenous and quilombola LGBTQIAP+ population in Brazil, and possible collective actions to support and strengthen these networks.

“DURING THE PANDEMIC IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT, BECAUSE MANY OF THEM HAD TO STAY IN THIS SITUATION OF LIVING WITHIN A FAMILY THAT DOES NOT RESPECT THEM”

Just like the entire LGBTQIAP+ population in Brazil, according to data from studies published in 2020 and 2021 by the #VoteLGBT organization, indigenous and quilombola LGBTQIAP+ people also suffered specific and expressive impacts as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The isolation with their families and communities often exposed them to the direct confrontation of prejudice, due to the social confinement at home, and other times exposed them even more to the virus, in cases where they were expelled from their homes.

According to multiple respondents in our focus groups and interviews, the restrictions on mobility and access imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic worsened quality of life and mental health. They had experienced different expressions of violence at home due to their LGBTQIAP+ identity, including the harsh obligation to silence and conceal their sexualities at home.

Actions of information sharing, listening and welcoming groups are fundamental to manage these conflicts and fight the prejudice that falls upon the LGBTQIAP+ population. An intriguing situation during one of the focus groups was when one of the participants narrated having

...
been expelled from home during the pandemic when she assumed to be a lesbian woman to her mother. Without knowing any kind of organization or collective that could help her, she left on an aimless trip together with two other friends who were also lesbians. At the time of the focus group, she had already returned to the community and was trying to settle down with her family again. The curious thing is that it was only in this same focus group that she learned about a shelter initiative for LGBTQIAP+ youth who suffer violence that operates in the region next door to hers, but that she had never heard of before.

“TALKING FACE TO FACE, US FOR US”

The preference for actions to engage and strengthen information and communication networks that are developed in a personal and face-to-face manner is perhaps the greatest consensus among the different interlocutors who participated in this study. It is worth remembering that they belong to very diverse cultures, communities, and experiences, but they always constantly emphasize the importance of building the movement physically and locally, this being the most reliable way to build and share information. For this reason, this is the title of this document.

Still, apps like WhatsApp and social networks like Instagram and Facebook are also quite present, as important complementary tools. Independent community radios, production of printed materials, and sound cars were also mentioned. All these means of communication are used to disseminate information and, especially, events organized in the communities where, in person, spaces of engagement, awareness, and welcome will be built.

Privacy and security issues end up limiting and defining the interaction with the research participants, also affected by the short time available for it (4 months for the research). This means that, although most participants reported having experienced discrimination and violence for being LGBTQIAP+, few gave more specific details of these traumatic experiences. However, derogatory “jokes,” threats of “corrective beatings,” isolation from their families by church representatives in their communities were quite recurrent in their narratives. It is these episodes that motivate the temporary exits from the territories and, at

the moment these people return, inspire them to carry out activities to fight against this kind of discrimination.

The limitations to the development of these actions within the territories range from the very prejudice and refusal of some community leaders to join this discussion, to the lack of resources, mainly the absence of a physical space to hold these events. The research participants who are most active in the development of these activities reported that they frequently use their own homes for this purpose, because they often do not feel comfortable using the collective spaces in their own communities.

“I think that here in my quilombo during the pandemic it was very hard, I think for all of us, and for us LGBTs even more, because, for example, I know stories of families that ended up discovering that the person was LGBT and that became very difficult because you can't leave home, you have to live and face that directly, so for us who are LGBT, during the pandemic it was very difficult, because many of them had to stay in this situation of living within a family that does not respect them.”

LEONALDO BRANDÃO, CIS GAY MAN, QUILOMBOLA FROM THE MÉDIO ITACURUÇÁ COMMUNITY (PA), LOCAL COORDINATOR OF ARQUIA - ASSOCIATION OF THE REMNANT COMMUNITIES OF QUILOMBOS FROM THE ABAETETUBA ISLANDS AND MEMBER OF ADQ-UFPA



We have several groups on WhatsApp. That is what people use there the most. There is no phone signal, it is only wi-fi (...). But it is only wi-fi, because there is still an internet connection that has arrived, they managed to install an antenna and its all, because otherwise we wouldn't even be able to talk to each other. (...) It is divided like this [the WhatsApp groups]: there are the indigenous leaders, the cacique... it is because it is by village too, and there is the family representative, because otherwise we wouldn't all be in the same group. So it is divided like this: (...) the person responsible for the family gets into this group and passes it on to everyone in the family. So, for example, when there is a meeting, when there is some important information, we share it with each other. And, for example, if there is news there that is not true, someone will know about it and will tell. Talking face to face, us for us. This is one of the most effective ways - if not the only one - because many people, for example, don't want to read a long text on Instagram, don't want to read a long text on WhatsApp, and many people don't read it.

DANILO TUPINIKIM, INDIGENOUS TUPINIQUIM FROM THE CAIEIRAS VELHA INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY (ES), ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE TIBIRA COLLECTIVE.

For them, being gay or a *travesti* was something supernatural - they didn't have a sense of respect or even a sense of trying to understand what it was, what was happening to that person at that moment, the reasons... or if it really came from birth, the way of being, of dressing that way. There were many conversations that we had to take inside that community to understand and assimilate what was happening to those people. And when we took speakers to the conversation rounds, people who were already leading the movement in the city and in other capitals, like Belém (PA) - we brought people from Belém to speak - they were opening their minds in a totally different way, making their judgments, but not that judgment of killing you or suffocating you. They were those judgments of wanting to understand, wanting people to explain to them what was happening at that moment - what was the process, at that moment, of those people.

BEYONCÉ BATIDÃO, QUILOMBOLA FROM THE COMMUNITY OF CAMAÍPI AND MAZAGÃO (AP), MEMBER OF CELGBT - STATE COUNCIL FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGESTITE, AND TRANSGENDER POPULATION OF AMAPÁ.

The research can generate a questioning within the communities about the theme, I think this is positive, because this makes that, if inside the community, the people that are inside the community, can't talk yet, at least the questioning from outside can generate a reflection inside. But the actions for these people have to be taken by us, I think that from the outside we can't come and say let's talk about the indigenous LGBTQIAP+ theme here, it doesn't work, it isn't going to happen and it won't work. But then I think that a very good result is to generate questioning within the communities, because this makes people start to reflect about it.

TARRISON NAWA, INDIGENOUS NAWA FROM THE COMMUNITY LOCATED IN THE SERRA DO DIVISOR NATIONAL PARK (AC), JOURNALIST AND ANTHROPOLOGIST, MEMBER OF THE COMMUNICATION SECTOR OF COIAB - COORDINATION OF INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS OF THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON



“WE ALWAYS THINK ABOUT THE COLLECTIVITY”

Another important aspect to be highlighted is the fact that, although obviously not all the leaders of all the indigenous and quilombola communities in Brazil are LGBTQIAP+, all the quilombola and indigenous interlocutors who collaborated in this study are leaders or activists in their communities.

That is, their engagement goes beyond the LGBTQIAP+ movement itself, incorporating this struggle for diversity in the exercise of identities precisely into the struggle of the indigenous and quilombola movement, that is, the struggle for the right to territory and maintenance of the rights of being and being of the original peoples.

Although we have not delved deeply into this data, in most of these narratives it was possible to note the decisive role that each of the interlocutors played in their communities in the most varied mobilizations. In the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of them acted in the so-called front line.

We have social action projects throughout the year, not only for the LGBT class, but also for the elderly, children, adolescents, partnerships with the Child Protection Service, with the State Attorney General's Office. We carry several flags, but the main ones are the social and LGBT ones here in the state. We always think about the collective.

BEYONCÉ BATIDÃO, QUILOMBOLA FROM THE COMMUNITY OF CAMAIPI AND MAZAGÃO (AP), MEMBER OF CELGBT - STATE COUNCIL FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSVESTI AND TRANSGENDER POPULATION OF AMAPÁ

The city hall guaranteed the person who came to apply the vaccine [for Covid-19], but it was us who organized the school, organized the line, did the triage. Here in our quilombo it was very nice, because we involved the community, especially the nursing, biomedicine, and medical students, so they were the ones that did the triage to know if the person had a fever, if they had the flu, if they were feeling well, they checked their temperature.

LEONALDO BRANDÃO, QUILOMBOLA FROM THE MÉDIO ITACURUÇÁ COMMUNITY (PA), LOCAL COORDINATOR OF ARQUIA - ASSOCIATION OF THE REMNANT COMMUNITIES OF QUILOMBOS FROM THE ISLANDS OF ABAETETUBA AND MEMBER OF ADQ-UFPA.

“MOST OF THE PEOPLE WHO DID THE MOST WORK WITHIN THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES WERE PEOPLE FROM THE ACRONYM”

Finally, it is worth mentioning a very interesting fact that is almost a paradox, and that relates to the communitarian and collective nature of LGBTQIAP+ associations and individuals in indigenous and quilombola communities.

While episodes of violence, repression, and prejudice against indigenous and quilombola LGBTQIAP+ populations are undeniable, many communities have and recognize in their leadership are people who identify

themselves as LGBTQIAP+. These people demonstrated to be fundamental to the struggle of native peoples in general, but above all they are important figures who make a daily difference in their communities. Even so, they still suffer episodes of discrimination because of their sexuality. This observation is important in the context of any research with LGBTQIAP+ populations, as it demonstrates the complexity of the different forms of prejudice and discrimination faced by them.

Perhaps this observation shared here, which portray a complex, contradictory and dynamic reality, typical of social interactions, are the clue capable of providing interesting reflections and future studies capable of contributing to and strengthening the fight against prejudice and violence of gender and sexuality. This is what we hope these data can offer to the readers.

THE FIGHTS SHOULD ALSO BE MADE OF DREAMS.

Maybe some people don't like to talk about it and say 'I am this' or 'I am that,' but we know that most of the people who did the most work within the indigenous communities were people of the acronym, because they were people who had the concern and the sensitivity to deal with it.

TARRISON NAWA, INDIGENOUS NAWA FROM THE COMMUNITY LOCATED IN THE SERRA DO DIVISOR NATIONAL PARK (AC), JOURNALIST AND ANTHROPOLOGIST, MEMBER OF THE COMMUNICATION SECTOR OF COIAB - COORDINATION OF INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS OF THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON.

CONCLUSION

For it to be possible to prepare an Information Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) with a given group or community, it is necessary to establish with it a relationship of dialogue that is mainly collaborative and trusting.

This means that the active involvement of the community is fundamental and indispensable to identify how their information and communication networks work, to map the challenges they face, and to get to know their demands, so that actions can then be designed to strengthen them, considering primarily the dynamic, diverse and specific characteristics of each Information Ecosystem.

We believe that it has only been possible to carry out this study with the generous and voluntary collaboration of all the participating interlocutors, so that any actions to be developed and proposed based on it can only be carried out successfully if they also count on the active involvement of each community.

The fight for the rights of indigenous peoples and quilombolas in Brazil is secular and permeated by challenges and violence. The COVID-19 pandemic was just one more aggravating factor, which made explicit how the Brazilian state unequally distributes access to human,

constitutional, and health rights among its population. The infodemic is also nothing new for indigenous peoples and quilombolas, who have always suffered from true campaigns of defamation and misinformation about their rights, their cultures and, as we have seen in this report, their diverse forms of expression of sexuality and gender.

Even so, the indigenous and quilombola communities demonstrate a very noticeable quality in terms of engagement, resistance, and struggle, especially in terms of an autonomous, independent, and internal organization in the strategies for this confrontation. In terms of communication, we saw that their communication and information networks are quite reliable among the members of their communities, and even in the face of limitations of access to the Internet, electricity, and devices such as cell phones and laptops within their territories, they have great reach among themselves. Perhaps their biggest challenges are in being heard, respected, and recognized outside their territories, as the mainstream media and public institutions do not produce reliable information about them.

Our expectations are that future research will be carried out to deepen the important demands and specificities of the contexts presented, based on the paths and interlocutors initially pointed out here. Also that the recommendations of this report reach humanitarian and communication organizations that are committed to engage in the struggle.

We hope that the data described and demonstrated here will serve to provoke actions of engagement, strengthening, dissemination, and support regarding the struggles of LGBTQIAP+ indigenous peoples and quilombolas for their rights to be and live according to their own traditions, being essential for this the guaranteed right to their territories and identities.



SOME IMPORTANT

CONTACTS OF

COMMUNICATORS,

ACTIVISTS, ASSOCIATIONS

AND DOCUMENTARIES

PUBLICATIONS

Vote LGBT + Via
Campesina + Manifesto
"Colorindo a luta em
defesa do território"
(Manifest Indigenous
LGBT "Coloring the fight
in defense of territory")

ASSOCIATIONS

Coletivo Tibira
Coletivo Caboclas
Coletivo Sapato Preto
ADQ-UFPA
ATHENA CORES - RR
Grupo Diversidade - RR
ATERR - RR
@indigenaslgbtq
@indigenaslgbt_crateus

ACTIVISTS

Danilo Tupinikim
(Indigenous Tupinikim, Tibira Collective, Caieiras Velha
community - ES)

Jessyka Yakecan Potyguara
(Indigenous Potyguara, Caboclas Collective, Crateús - CE)

Tarisson Nawa
(Indigenous Nawa, community in the Serra do Divisor
National Park Area, AC, AC)

Beyoncé Batidão
(Quilombola community of Camaipi and Mazagão - AP,
Amapá State LGBTQIAP+ Council)

Leonardo Brandão
(ADQ-UFPA, quilombola community of Médio Itacuruçá, PA)

Jonas Gomes
(ADQ-UFPA, quilombola community of Baixo Itacuruçá, PA)

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(Land without Sin)
+
Sempre Existimos (2021)
(We Have Always Existed)
+
Perudá (2019)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

* **AC**

State of Acre

* **AP**

State of Amapá

* **ADQ - UFPA**

Quilombola Students Association of the Federal University of Pará

* **APIB**

Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil

* **APOINME**

Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of the Northeast, Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo's States

* **ARQUIA**

Association of the Quilombo Remnants Communities of the Abaetetuba Islands - PA

* **ATERR**

Association of Travestis, Transsexuals and Transgenders of the State of Roraima

* **CE**

State of Ceará

* **CELGBT**

Amapá State Council on the Rights of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Travesti and Transgender Population

* **COIAB**

Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon

* **CONAQ**

National Coordination of Quilombola Rural Communities

* **ES**

State of Espírito Santo

* **IEA**

Information Ecosystem Assessment

* **LGBTQIAP+**

Lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual and "travesti", queer, intersex, asexual and more

* **MALUNGU**

State Coordination of Associations of Quilombo Remnants Communities of Pará

* **NGO**

Non-governmental organization

* **PA**

State of Pará

* **RiT**

Rooted in Trust

* **RR**

State of Roraima



CREDITS

TEAM

RESEARCH, ANALYSIS AND TEXT

Paloma Monteiro

(INTERNEWS, RESEARCH)

REVISION

Xiomara Huni-Carston

(INTERNEWS, RESEARCH SPECIALIST)

Heber Costa

(INTERNEWS, REGIONAL MANAGER)

Isadora Starling

(INTERNEWS, PROJECT MANAGER)

Valentina Calado Pompermaier

(INTERNEWS, RESEARCHER)

ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT IN THE FOCUS GROUPS

Paloma Monteiro

(INTERNEWS, RESEARCHER)

Samilly Valadares

(INTERNEWS, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND
AND ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER)

Julhy Van Den Berg

(INTERNEWS, CONTENT CREATOR)

Yasmin Silva Calandrini de Azevedo

(INTERNEWS, PROJECT OFFICER)

Conaq-AP

Malungu

ILUSTRAÇÕES E DIAGRAMAÇÃO

Julhy Van Den Berg

(INTERNEWS, CRIADORA DE CONTEÚDO)

Ganaëlle Tilly

(INTERNEWS, SPECIALIST GRAPHIC DESIGNER)



**This study was produced as part
of the Rooted in Trust project,
developed by Internews in Brazil.**



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