



@COVERSITIES

**IV PLANETARY GATHERING MEXICO  
2019**

**"LET UNION BE ALL IN OUR HEARTS. LET OUR HEARTS  
BE JOINED AS ONE"**





¡BIENVENIDAS A MÉXICO!



PÁTZCUARO. MICHOACÁN



# OUR HOSTS...

Cherán, an inspiring indigenous P'urhepecha's town where politicians, Police and cartels were expelled of the city in 2011. Since then, they have established a system of self-government based on Councils

Centro de Investigación y Estudios Transmodernos (CIET), a university with the mission of forming a healer in each house.





# ¡Fuerza Guerreres! Strength Warriors!

The gathering started with a ritual  
in P'urhepecha's tradition.

We ask the elements, the forest,  
the cardinal points, the spirits, our  
hearts, our ancestors, and our  
souls to be there, to share the  
space and to get strength for our  
lives and our paths.





“Butterflies, eagles, seagulls,  
fire flow,  
the trees cover us,  
the water listens to us,  
we walk and we want to connect.  
We search.  
Our ancestors arrive,  
they speak to us,  
they tell us to be attentive”  
(Lyric from the Ecoversities’s rap song)





Some organization to put a bit of structure... just a bit!



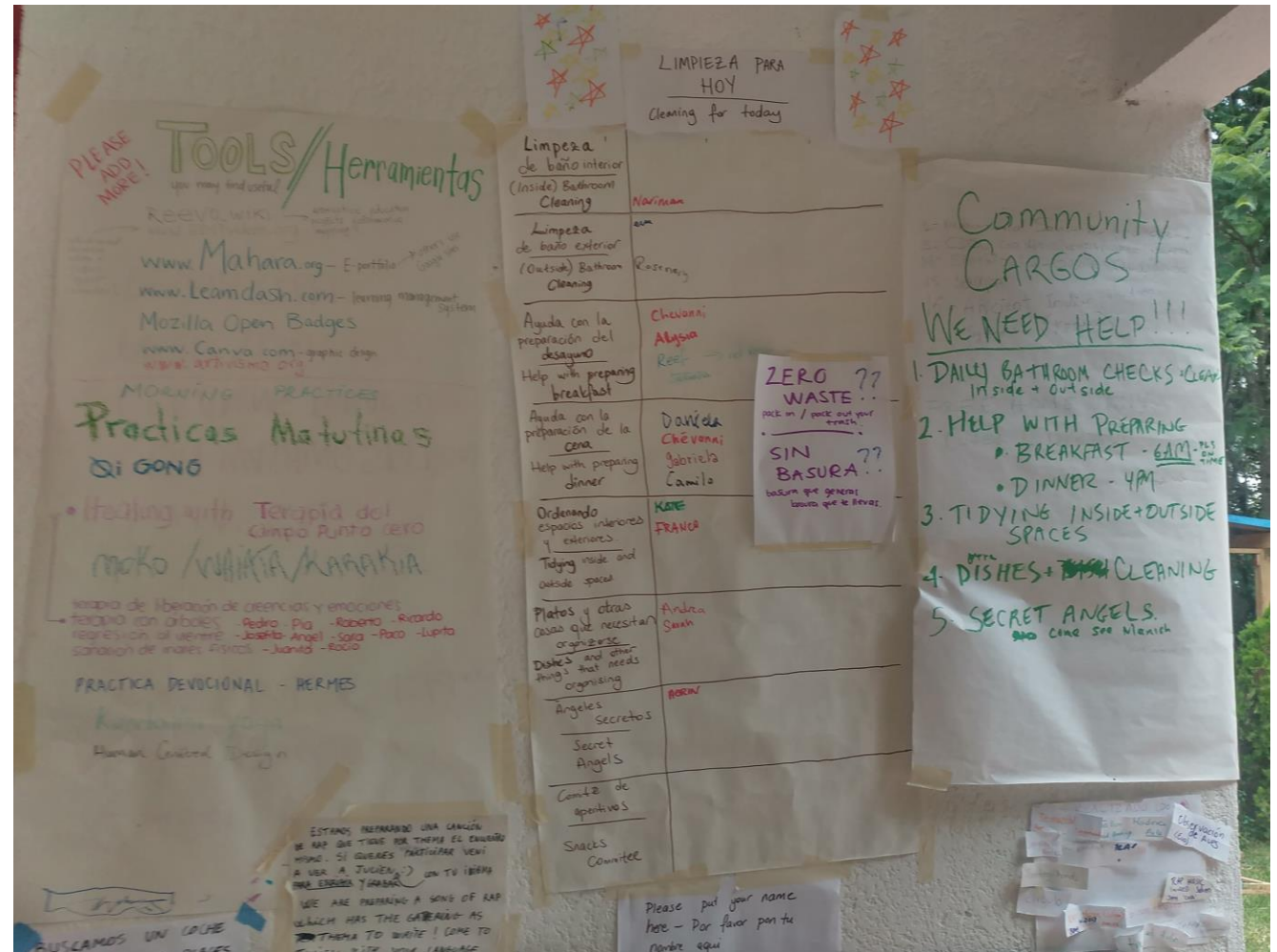
Sunday 26		Monday 27	Tuesday 28	Tuesday 29	Wednesday 30
morning		practice (self-organizing)			
Breakfast					
10:00		Check-in	Food Learning	Open space	
11:00		Feria de Proyectos	Journey to Cherán	for Workshops	
				(2 rounds)	



# Internal organization

Some structure was conceived at the beginning of the gathering. We made some sharing spaces agreements; we allow ourselves to be involve in the activities proposed, to be aware of each other, including the nature and every part of the space.

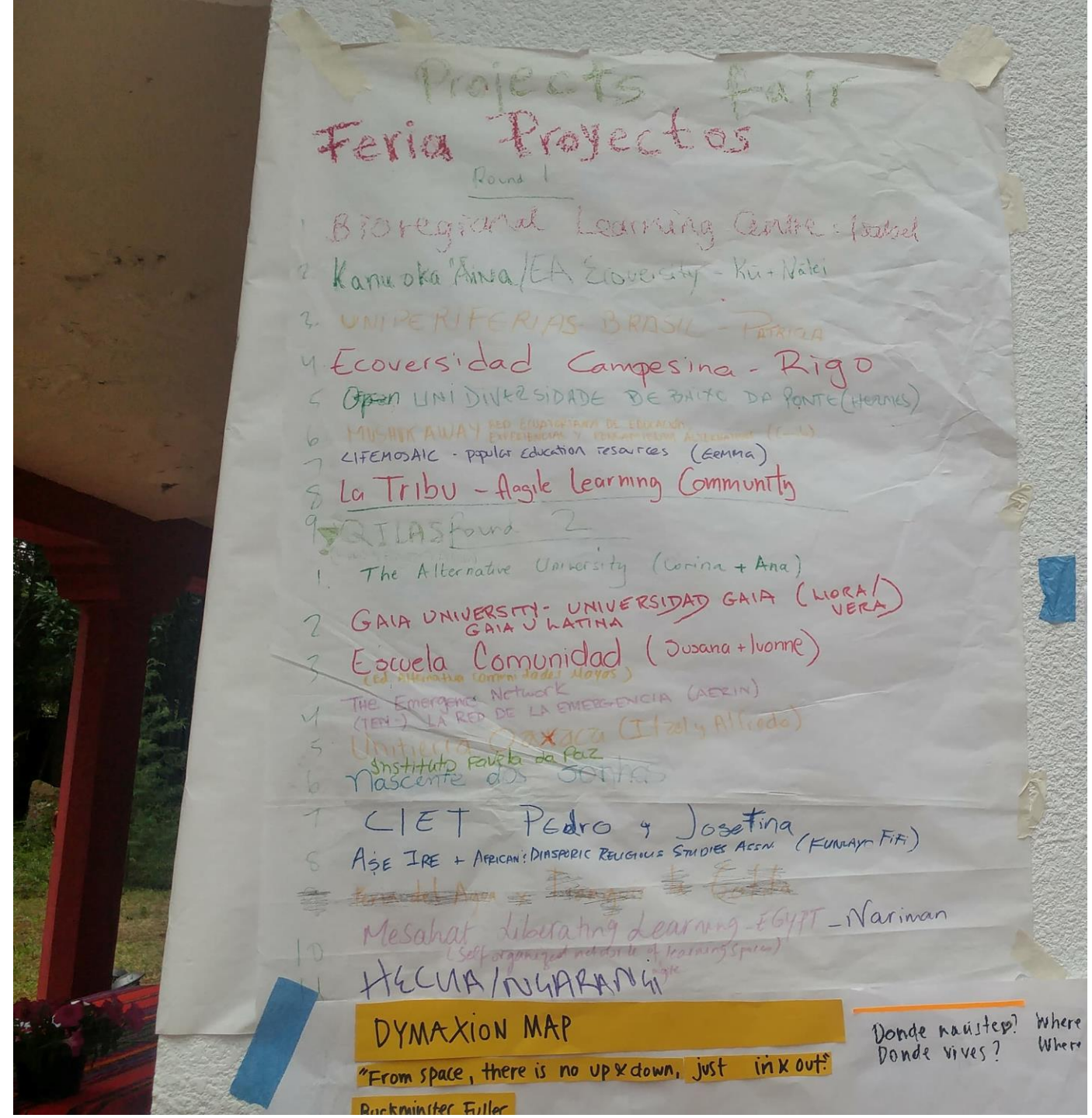
In addition, we recognized ourselves in our demands and our times, the need to work together, to weave. Also, to rest, and to digest every part of the gathering for our lives, our challenges, our warriors paths.





# Projects Fair

We had the opportunity to share our projects, our narratives, our agreements, how are we trying to change education, and what are we doing to change the world



## Projects Fair Feria Proyectos

Round 1

1. BioRegional Learning Centre - Israel
2. Kanuoka Aina/EA Ecosociety - Ku + Nalei
3. UNIPERIFERIAS BRASIL - Patrizia
4. Ecoservidad Campesina - Rigo
5. Open UNIVERSIDADE DE BAIXO DA PONTE (Hermes)
6. MUSHKAWAY RED EDUCATIONAL DE EDUCACIÓN EXPERIENCIAL Y PARTICIPATIVA (Cecilia)
7. LIFEMOSAIC - popular education resources (Emma)
8. La Tribu - Agile Learning Community

## Round 2

1. The Alternative University (Corina + Ana)
2. GAIA UNIVERSITY - UNIVERSIDAD GAIA (Liora / VERA)  
GAIA U LATINA
3. Escuela Comunidad (Juzana + Ivonne)  
(ed. alternativa comunitaria de Mayas)
4. THE EMERGENCE NETWORK  
(TEN) LA RED DE LA EMERGENCIA (AERIN)
5. Univercia Oaxaca (Izely Alfreida)  
Instituto Fomento de Paz
6. Nascente dos Sonhos
7. LIET Pedro + Josefina
8. AÏE IRE + AFRICAN DIASPORIC RELIGIOUS STUDIES ASSN (FUNAYO FIF)
9. ~~Escuela del Agua~~ ~~Escuela del Agua~~ ~~Escuela del Agua~~
10. Mesahat Liberating Learning - EGYPT - Nariman  
(Self-organized network of learning spaces)
11. HECUA/NUHARAN

DYNAMAXION MAP

"From space, there is no up & down, just in & out!"

Buckminster Fuller

Donde nasciste?  
Donde vives?

Where  
Where



“The entire experience was extremely textured, the initial part of the trip was to raise some funds that would allow me to go to take part in this experience. Having the grace and blessing of a community that sees the worth in having me go is a humbling experience as I still as from time to time deal with self-doubt, so this intention at its initiation saw the magic of community and how little bits of resources pulled together to make things happen.

Getting eventually to Mexico, Meeting everybody, I experienced some social anxiety, as the number of people present really overwhelmed me, however connecting with each person in my own time and space made me really have some deep connections and meaningful conversation around works that are very dear to my heart, such as liberation, children as people, spirits, education and more. Having Mexico as the setting, the narratives of struggles, liberation, food, and land, especially those with policing as state apparatus of oppression is scary, more so to hear all stories from real live people from their various different lands, and coming to the conclusion that we are all under the same bureaucratic capitalistic demonic curse. We all have realized this and we have chosen to act upon the sensitivity we have to this dying world by creating and connecting to indigenous, natural, regenerative ways to allow us to begin re-imagining a tomorrow.”

Chevanni Davids, South Afrika







# SHARING LOVE. CARING FOR EACH OTHER



We had a lot of time (never enough) to recognized our bodies, our minds, our ideas, our fears, our insecurities, our souls in hugs, in our eyes and into the beautiful world.







# VISIT TO CHERÁN





Cherán is the town of the indigenous P'urhepecha's people that has a beautiful example of organization, resistance, and other ways of understanding life, education, and the land.

Their political model is an example for other territories that want's to live with their own traditions.





# Sharing conversations about education, life and organization...





what can be said about this place that we are in  
where you me and everything try to form a we  
the logic of language doesn't indicate peace  
but perhaps in ihsan we can be born again

let's stick to mujaawarah far away from dialogue  
muthannayat and groups, the secret is in the mix

the revolution is ongoing  
inside of us it is ongoing  
it has many fields (squares)  
not only in Tahrir

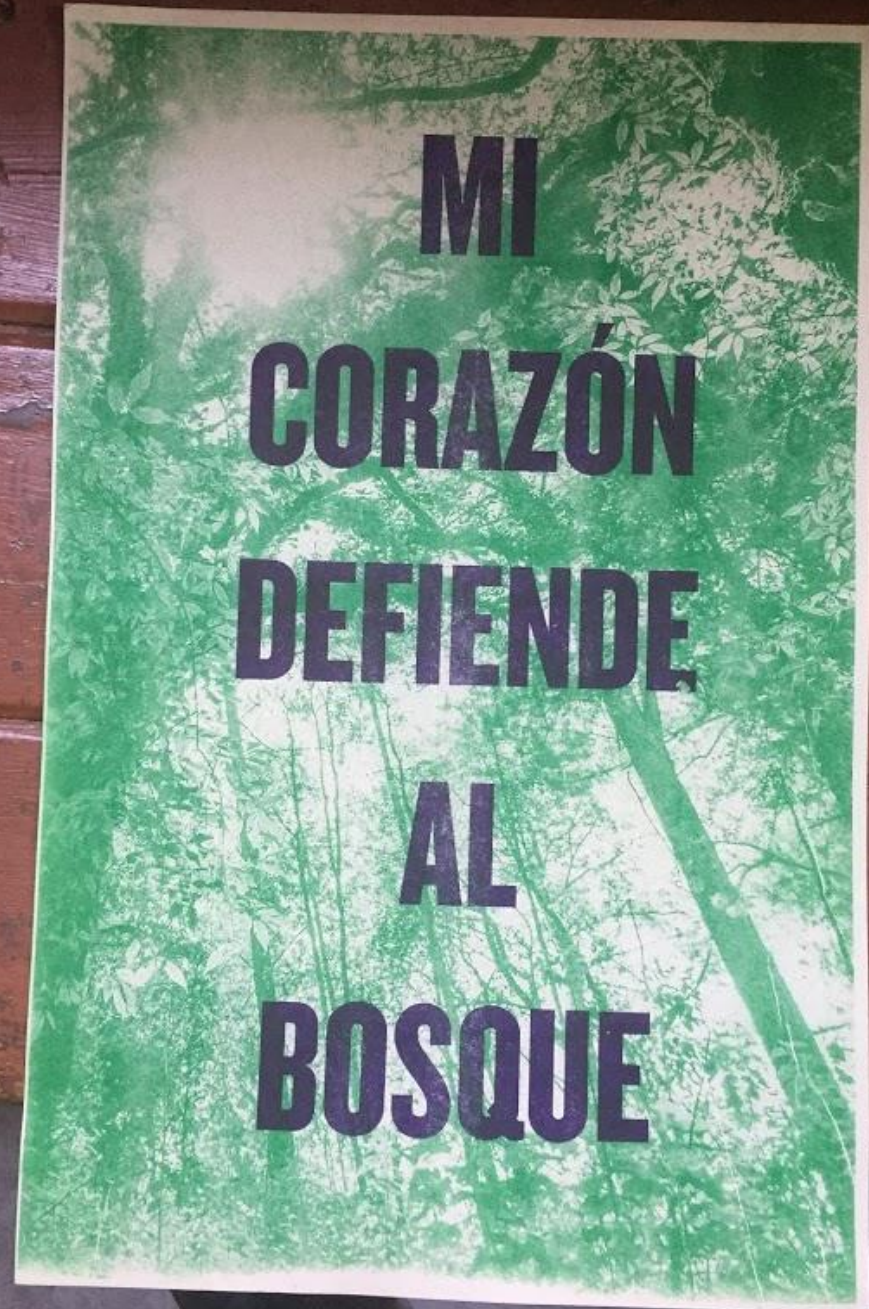
Beirut, Soor, Khartoum  
the situation is overflowing  
Cheran, Chile, and Ecuador  
we all play a role

and in Gaza every week  
hope is returning



More inspiration

“My heart defends the forest”









# Ancestral knowledge



Some people from the town shared their paths, some of their ancestral knowledge. We shared education approaches, healing, art, among other...





Some people visited the forest,  
others the mountain and others  
the city that was full of art...







“The next day we went into the city of Cherán, from the 100 participants, I was lucky to have lunch with Manish who shared how he was able to turn around the logic of the capitalist economy in India, and offer gift economies instead at his own university Swaraj. Luckily enough, I was sitting down to Ana, an incredible and inspiring Romanian friend, who was able to set up an Alternative University in Bucharest. We spoke about 4 hours straight sharing stories and dreams we both had, I am very grateful for this new connection, I feel support for my own project with Ana, we are now sharing documents, ideas, and life about the transformation of education around the world. The reality is that any encounter was meaningful, people who come to the gatherings are activist, educators, wizards, we all want to help construct a new world which is not full of greed, hate and violence, but one where community primes and learning is a pleasure and not a jail. This is the reason coming to the gathering is like coming home to family, we are all warriors of the same cause”

Francisco Morejon, QILAS, Ecuador





Let's make art... let's make a rap song!



“What inspired me of the Ecoversities gathering in Ciet Mexico was the growth and numbers of people who attended this year. This was my fourth gathering and this was the biggest and most diverse Ecoversities gathering in my experience. This year was the most intentional programming that I saw held for young people and children, one day there was a writing workshop for kids and as I walked passed these young people writing, they were focused and engaged; it was a beautiful sight. Followed by this was hearing the finished product of these young people writing that was integrated with adult voices for a 38 minutes hip hop song. What inspired me about this particular project was the organic approach of this project, when Julian who was co-creating the song, asked me to write a verse, I hesitated for a minute but then I did it and then I got excited at writing and found myself engaged in this project a few minutes into writing, feeling like those young people I saw earlier in the week writing for the same project but the project had grown over the days in this organic ways”.

Brandon Hay, The Black Daddies Club, Toronto.



“Here in ecoversities sharing our paths  
nesting much love and receiving much,  
much more.

This is our art,

to dream and

without knowing why

We find each other

To walk together through the pain

Of living and fighting this cruel system.

United with joy

we stand with courage

warriors in the little school of love”

Aquí en ecoversidades compartiendo  
nuestro andar anidando mucho amor y  
recibiendo mucho más

Ese es nuestro arte es el de soñar y sin  
saber por qué se da el encontrar.

Acompañan el dolor contra el sistema  
explotador.

Unidos con alegría nos paramos con  
valor guerreros y guerreras en la  
escuelita del amor.

(Originally in Spanish)

[https://soundcloud.com/jilefra/ecoversi  
dades-2019-michoacan](https://soundcloud.com/jilefra/ecoversidades-2019-michoacan)









We are art  
We are magic



*how are you feeling?*

baffled. better. believing... wanting to remember. the wisdom of children like the wisdom of trees and stones, whispers loudly, can you hear it?

*where's baby sufi mama?*

here...

*where's baby sufi?*

with faith and gratitude... release.

*did you understand... they're finally living in peace?*

i will no longer hold in silence that which poisons me. i will say it fiercely with love, a cacophonous whisper....

Palestina presente!

no peace without justice and dignity.

Dina Bataineh, Taghmees, Jordan



# Playing











During the days we had the opportunity to share with kids, we went to play, to see birds, to see how they draw life, how they protect and care for each other, and nature in ways that we should not forget.





ACTIVITIES





Cooking, sharing spaces, activities, life....



We co-created activities  
We co-created spaces  
We co-designed projects  
We co-held each other  
We co-appreciated each other









We faced many challenges during the week,  
challenged our structures, our lives, our ways of  
being and interacting with the planet....





While I was still at the IV Ecoversities Gathering, it was often challenging to put into words what I was feeling and thinking. And that's the way it is so far. Undoubtedly, the Meeting crossed me at different levels and provoked numerous reflections on my role in my community and what can effectively be done to collaborate with the transformations we want to see in the world...For me, the most obvious purpose of our experience in Mexico was to connect with the Emerging and Emergency. Look at what is not ready, for what is not done or unconstructed yet in us and in the world. And that necessarily put me in the face of who I am and who we are..

The time and richness of perceptions and demands, in different dimensions, remains one of the greatest challenges in the present, but also dynamo to continue materializing and sharing dreams.

The certainty that we are together and holding hands in this search and achievement makes everything much more stimulating and real”

Nelson Vilaronga, Ecoversity of the Circus



“During the days we spent together, I completely lost my sense of time, which made me think of the meaning of “time”. Maybe I lost sense of the modern way of defining time, the linear term that defines it from left to right and days with numbers. In the gathering I was more rooted to people, land, stories and my story, as if my gravity increased to what is connected to nature and our nature. With gravity and connection, time slows and goes with our pace, I created harmony with time instead of struggling and running after an illusion of time”

**Reef Fakhouri, Taghmees, Jordan**



How to connect together  
More...  
Como podemos conectar mas  
diferentes lugares / temas / personas?

Como  
Seguir  
en  
contacto?

COLLABORATE  
How do we  
connect  
ourselves to  
other movements  
that align to  
our values

How can we have  
the other bring  
into our world  
what we need  
as part of the  
gathering?  
How can we be  
present with them?

¿Cómo hacemos  
para que todos  
los integrantes de  
nuestras comunidades  
puedan viajar y  
quejer proyectos  
por doquier?

¿Cómo se tejen  
las redes para  
amplificar la  
conciencia y la  
acción?

¿Cómo encontrar  
el mestizaje  
entre nuestros  
saberes y conocimientos  
desde nuestros  
lados?

What are different  
forms of governance  
decision making, operation  
and organizing inside  
different eco-systems?  
how to learn

What is the Earth asking  
of your group in this  
time?  
How are we living in relation  
with her & each other?

¿Cómo crear  
estructuras  
que permitan  
y apoyen al  
aprendizaje emergente

Solidarity  
economic and  
ecologies between  
us as initiatives &  
communities?

How do we  
imagine and  
create life beyond  
the money system?

How do  
we see  
all these  
projects  
as one?

How can we  
support kids  
map their own  
paths?

¿Cómo ayudar  
como adultos  
a aprender de  
los niños y  
cómo ellos aprenden  
en comunidad?

Sustainability  
How do we make  
our projects viable  
w/o having to rely  
on grants and  
outside (govt)  
agencies

How ecovillages  
relate to the  
arrest and the  
state?

¿Cómo poder  
ser sustentables  
(auto-sustentabi-  
lidad)  
¿Cómo me sostengo?

What are different  
economical, financial  
models, see different  
ecovillages? More on  
Solidarity, gift and  
conviviality?

How do we  
deepen  
knowledge  
& respect  
our differences?

¿Sabemos  
cómo educar  
a los niños  
de otra forma, re-  
de que forma?

How can we  
design programs  
that don't have  
age as a limit?

How to  
MOBILIZE  
YOUTH  
ABOUT THE  
ENVIRONMENT  
CRISES AND  
CONNECT  
THEM

HOW DO WE PRESENT  
OUR CULTURAL  
DIVERSITIES WITHOUT  
ECLIPSING, BLOCKING OR  
HUMANITY FROM  
CULTURAL EVOLUTION

¿Como não repro-  
duzir o que  
nos criticamos?

are personal stories of  
No connecting to their  
pastors and indigenous  
traditions?

"POWER"  
"Empowerment"  
Question  
And complicate  
these terms. Use  
indigenous  
paradigms

¿Cómo es mejor  
hablar sobre violencia?  
What's the best way  
to talk about  
Violence?

¿Cuanto es lo  
más dispuesto a  
tirar el sistema  
de dentro de  
nos?

HOW CAN WE  
MORE SPACE TO  
EMOTIONS AS ESSEN-  
TIAL RESOURCES IN OUR LIVES  
INSTEAD OF THEM BEING  
GOOD/BAD?

THREE SECTORS - (How do  
we connect them?)  
- PERMANENT & THE ARTS -  
Where is the heart?  
- CONNECT RESOURCES  
- STRATEGICALLY TO SUPPORT  
- URGENCY OF THE TIMES -  
How to connect - together

Como abrir  
la conversación  
sobre privilegios  
en América Latina

How can we co-create  
a culture that  
celebrates our human  
anxieties that have  
fought for the  
liberties we now  
enjoy and may carry  
into the future?

Less represen-  
ted groups -  
how do we  
bring them in  
more?

el futuro de  
acreditación,  
reparaciones, y  
descolonización  
decolonization



“This year with the presence of Black and African people from the Diaspora at the Ecoversities gathering in Mexico, I found it was refreshing to include race when speak at the gathering about the intersections of oppressions that is happening on a global level and not feeling out of place or worried that no one in the space will quite get where I am coming from when space was introduced to the dialogue. In the Ecoversities gathering over the years, I have been one of the few Black folks in the space and sometimes the only Black man directly involved in the gathering over the entire time, which at times can feel isolating. Even though they maybe some Black men in the space at previous gatherings, our geographic locations on this planet and experience with how our Blackness has been taking up sometimes shapes our positionality.

Talking with a Black woman who was visiting the Ecoversities gathering for the first time, who was coming from California and does work around African Religion and spirituality. Her and I shared rooms and we were able to check in at the end of the day of the gathering or chat about Black life”

Brandon Hay,



“You know, I can only say that my multiple stories and my most profound experiences at this Ecoversities had happened at the fire place.

it was about very sincere personal conversations with the people. The magic of relations and talks, practices behind each of us, and the fireplace to me was the most opening one a catalyst of exchange of many stories, like the one we had that night that led to the queer space or the one that we had with Yeyo and Brandon about masculinity and feminisms”

Nikolay Oleynikov, Free Home University.









“I was deeply touched by the final activity of sharing ‘death’-related stories. To me it was the most vulnerable moment of the gathering. It allowed me to reach a spiritual depth and touch I had not experienced at a gathering before. It was inspiring to listen and translate simultaneously from English to Portuguese. It felt as if I was experiencing it twice, as listener and as messenger or translator”

Karim-Yassin Goessinger, CILAS, Egypt





HEALING AS A CENTRAL PART OF THE GATHERING



“This Tomorrow needs medicines and the Tezmascal is one of those key and important medicines, the ritual of this medicine is really powerful as it recognizes the female element in power, the alchemy of earth, air, fire, water and ether creates a magic that is impossible to write in language, the importance of theses natural indigenous medicines are in humanity’s healing”.

Chevanni Davids, South Afrika



Different healing practices from all over the world shared to everyone in the gathering.  
Here, a Temazcal for children





“Four years ago, and during my first visit to Mexico, I tried to experience temazcal, but I ran out of it in less than 5 minutes. I am claustrophobic, fear completely controlled me and I thought that I will not be able to make it, but deep inside I felt that I missed out on something. This time in CIET, I really wanted to try the experience again, with the help of my friends Dina and Maru and the healer I was able to enter the temazcal and stay for the whole ceremony. Inside, I cried for a bit and felt fear but I survived. I don't claim that I got over my fear of closed dark places, but I realized that the idea of fear kills more than fear itself and blocks us from trying, maybe now I know how to deal with some of my fears with the importance of having people around”

Reef Fakhouri, Taghmees, Jordan



# RECOGNIZING TRAYECTORY. GRADUATION DAY FOR HEALERS IN CIET







During Ecoversities we were invited to the graduation of many healers that had come in a long path of learning how to help to heal the spirit, the body, and the soul.





Ancestral  
learning  
trajectories  
were recognized







# DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS







After a day-long workshop led by artists **Kate Morales**, **Daniela Brasil**, and **Nikolay Oleynikov**, - the 100-headed international group brought to the common altar their ancestors, including the ones that formed us politically and otherwise. Who informed our paths, and inspires us to keep on fighting for a better future no matter what. What we are doing now, we are doing because of they've practiced what they've preached: Paolo Freire, Berta Caseres, Marielle Franko, subcomandanta Ramona and Joe Strammer, Micha the cat and nonna Mimma, Nastya Baburova and Stas Markelov - presente!



“It was no surprise that the subject of death was present throughout the week. The organizers of the gathering had intentionally chosen the dates to coincide with *el Día de los Muertos*. There was space created to share stories about our relationship with death and grief. We created artistic renditions of our deceased ancestors (of origin and choice). Together, on October 31<sup>st</sup> we built a most spectacular collaborative altar in the Michoacán style honoring it all. Not surprisingly, the co-creation had its challenges. Many Mexicans had different ideas about the holiday, what it means and the rites involved in honoring our dead. Many altar-builders had very specific ideas about the way it should be done and what should (and should not) be included”

Aerin Dunford, The Emergence Network, Oaxaca, México.







**Ayotzinapa 43 students. Most of the activists in Mexico strongly reject to believe that they are dead. Nevertheless we brought them all up, but off altar!**



BERTA CASERES

MARCH  
THREE  
2016  
HONOLULU  
KAS

my life is  
my message.



GRANDMA









**Absolute Freire**



SHARING WISDOM TO TAKE IN OUR HEARTS TO OUR LIVES. TO OUR  
PROJECTS. TO SHARE WITH THE WORLD ...



Everyday,  
every  
conversation  
had so much  
wisdom from  
everyone's  
experience  
and paths



“From this experience I take away the narratives, methodologies, and pedagogies of people I have met and how they have woven and embraced their indigenous practices and legitimized them through their continuous practice and recreations such as Pedagogy of Aloha and the Agile Learning Centre. The diligence and courage to be resilient when dealing with resistance left me in awe, such is the story of the “Zapatismo”. Another key takeaway is the role of women in healing and liberation and the parallels of these elements globally. This experience has better equipped me in defining the ends on the initiation of our ecoversity in South Afrika and the role of our ecoversity to our community and the world, I am very grateful to have been a part of this journey”.

Chevanni Davids, South Afrika







“I’ve returned to Egypt with the intention and confidence to set up an Ecoversity in the Western Nile Delta (in the province of Beheira) along the Nubaria arm of the Nile. I had contemplated this step for the last three years and now feel encouraged to take it, to prepare for it and to execute it. I feel strengthened by the alliance to reach out and to request support, guidance and collaboration from other Ecoversities Alliance members. I also return from the gathering with more trust in online learning and am considering to incorporate it in a new study programme I’m conceptualizing. As for the residential component of the learning journey I’m envisioning, the gathering restored my faith in the importance of the martial arts - mindfulness training, breathing manipulation and body postured-, and the culinary arts - cultivating, harvesting and communicating with/through food. The gathering consolidated my understanding of regenerative practice. It has encouraged me to claim, return and work the land”

Karim-Yassin Goessinger, CILAS, Egypt



“The most important reflection for me, the gold nugget, that this last gathering left me was to witness the immense variety of creative proposals that from all corners of the planet are dreaming, flourishing and exercising other ways of learning.

During the meeting and in the days after the meeting, there was evidence in my head and in my heart that the Learning Revolution is underway and irreversible... I found in the vast majority of the participants the clarity that there is not only one method to accompany the learning process, that wisdom is there in the world available for all of us, and that is not about teaching, it's about helping one another how to learn”

Yeyo Beltrán, México.







*“Ilkhara kheir”*  
“shit is good /bless”

More and more challenges to come....



# Are we practicing what we say?

Limpeza de baño interior (Inside) Bathroom Cleaning	Narayan
Limpeza de baño exterior (Outside) Bathroom Cleaning	Rosmary
Ayuda con la preparación del desayuno Help with preparing breakfast	Chavara Alayna Ravi
Ayuda con la preparación de la cena Help with preparing dinner	Daniela Chavara Patricia Camila
Ordenando espacios interiores y exteriores Tidying inside and outside spaces	MATE FRANCE
Platos y otras cosas que necesitan organizarse Dishes and other things that need organising	Andrea Sarah
Ángeles Secretos	ROHAN
Secret Angels	
Comité de aperitivos	
Snacks Committee	

Community  
CARGOS

WE NEED HELP!!!

1. DAILY BATHROOM CHECKS <sup>clean</sup>  
Inside + Outside
2. HELP WITH PREPARING  
• BREAKFAST - 6AM <sup>7:30 time</sup>  
• DINNER - 4PM
3. TIDYING INSIDE + OUTSIDE  
SPACES
4. DISHES + ~~WASH~~ CLEANING
5. SECRET ANGELS  
<sup>NO ONE SEE NIKHIL</sup>

ZERO ??  
WASTE  
PICK UP / PICK OUT your  
trash

SIN ??  
BASURA  
basura que genera  
basura que se levanta

“Throughout the gathering I was thinking a lot of our elder Munir Fasheh’s saying “*Ilkhara kheir*” which translates to “shit is good /bless”. The challenges we had in the space allowed for the contradictions to emerge on the surface; between what we say and what we practice. Unfortunately, we talk a lot about self-care and the care of the group, and this time our shit was there in front of us but we didn’t know how to deal with it, to care about the space and the people we are sharing it with as a first step to care about nature and our well-being wasn’t present to a certain extent.

Shit allowed me to connect with my feelings and see clearly that more work needs to be done on the roots and not on the branches, allow for more stories to be shared, marginalized voices to be heard without struggling and ideas to emerge without the control of the unaware frames. How to keep this space a welcoming learning one from the youngest to the eldest”.

Reef Fakhouri, Taghmees, Jordan



# *Where do I go with all this shit?*

I have faith. I believe in the spirit of *mujaawarah* in its infinite forms and the strength of the fabric it allows us to weave in order to hold in space, time, and beyond. i believe in the wisdom of keeping *mujaawarah* as free of the taint of modern, colonial, and capitalist relations as possible, in a world that is drowning in their folly. this is what i fight for and struggle against.

I remember, there is no justice in burying a wrong, just like so many bodies choking on untold stories. i re-member, there is no place for hurt that breeds anger... share it, channel it, spread it thin to dissolve... release.

the wisdom of children, like the wisdom of trees and stones, whispers loudly....

Tod@s presente!

Dina Bataineh, Taghmees, Jordan



Thank you to CIET's team, Cherán, Gerardo, Josefita and Pedro for hosting us 👉👉👉









A poem in video from the gathering

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g5ddAfdy26NP9XIbkem73WwDKGk2XDAB/view>