



## **Indigenous Women Lead: Charting a Just Recovery from the Pandemic**

### **Speaker Bios**

#### **Representative Deb Haaland, 1st District of New Mexico**



Rep. Haaland is a 35th generation New Mexican who is an enrolled member of the Pueblo of Laguna, and also has Jemez Pueblo heritage. After running for New Mexico Lieutenant Governor in 2014, Haaland became the first Native American woman to be elected to lead a State Party. She used her experience reaching out to communities who are often forgotten during the electoral process during the two Obama presidential campaigns. During her time as State Party Chair, she traveled to Standing Rock to stand side-by-side with the community to protect tribal sovereignty and advocate vital natural resources. Congresswoman Haaland is a former tribal administrator and has administered a local service provider for adults with developmental disabilities.

After a lifetime of organizing communities to stand up for New Mexico families, Congresswoman Deb Haaland was elected as one of the first Native American women to serve in Congress. She serves in leadership roles as the 116th Congress Freshman Class Representative to the House Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, House Democratic Region VI Whip (Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona) and Deputy Whip for the Congressional Progressive Caucus. Congresswoman Haaland earned degrees from the University of New Mexico and UNM Law School.

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#### **Martha Ntoipo, Founder and Executive Director, Pastoralist Information Development Organization (PIDO) - Tanzania**



Martha Ntoipo is a Maasai, Indigenous women leader from Tanzania. Martha brings years of experience advocating for climate justice Indigenous Peoples' rights. Martha founded the Pastoralist Information Development Network (PIDO), a women's organization that works at the community level to help Pastoralist Maasai communities in Namanga, Longido, and other communities in Tanzania to adapt to climate change, promote education for Indigenous girls, and campaign against FGM, early forced marriage and other harmful traditional practices, and promote programs for food security and HIV/AIDs care. Today, Martha is providing workshops and leading campaigns with other Indigenous women and girls to collectively advocate for their rights and promote climate justice. She also raises awareness among boys and men, and leading campaigns against FGM of Indigenous girls in Maasai communities.

Martha was a Mandela Washington Fellow in 2017 to bring the perspectives of young women mobilizing for climate justice solutions at the local level.

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### **Yasso Kanti Bhattachan, Vice Chair, National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF) - Nepal**



Yasso is an eminent Indigenous women leader, activist, and scholar from Nepal. She belongs to the Thakali Indigenous Peoples, whose ancestral lands are at Thasang in Maitang (Mustang district) in the trans-Himalayan region bordering the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China.

Yasso has dedicated her career to bring visibility and legal recognition to the rights of Indigenous women and girls in Nepal. She brings decades of experience advocating for Indigenous women's rights and climate justice at the local, national, and international levels. She is one of the founding members and advisors of the National Indigenous Women's Federation (NIWF), an umbrella organization that works with Indigenous women to empower them and advocate for the elimination of social, political, cultural, religious and linguistics discrimination.

Yasso contributes to ensuring that Indigenous women are trained and have the resources to adapt their farming techniques to preserve and promote Indigenous practices that protect Mother earth from harmful chemicals. Most recently, Yasso has been playing a critical role in advocating at the international and national levels for the full recognition and inclusion of Indigenous women and girls in the Nepal Constitution. Her efforts are helping to address the racial, linguistic, cultural, economic, and political discrimination that Indigenous women and girls face in Nepal.

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### **Janene Yazzie, Co-Founder and CEO, Sixth World Solutions**



Janene Yazzie is the sustainable Development Program Coordinator for International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) and serves as co-convenor of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG) for Sustainable Development which is engaged with the U.N. High-level Political Forum on the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She is also co-founder of Sixth World Solutions LLP and the Navajo Nation Little Colorado River Watershed Chapters Association (LCRWCA). She has spent the last 11 years working as a community organizer, research associate, policy analyst and human rights advocate. She has built expertise in infrastructure policy, integrated land and water management, and restoration and protection of traditional ecological knowledge systems and works with Indigenous communities and Indigenous-led organizations at the local, national and international level.

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**Yifat Susskind, Executive Director, MADRE**



Yifat Susskind is the Executive Director of MADRE, and she leads MADRE's work with community-based, women-led organizations on the frontlines of war and climate breakdown. For more than 20 years, she has partnered with women's human rights activists across the globe, combining partnerships and international women's rights advocacy to meet urgent needs and create lasting solutions. With her extensive expertise on US foreign policy and international issues, Yifat's writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, *Harvard International Review*, *The NYU Law Journal* and others. Yifat has also contributed to the compilation *Violence and Gender in the Globalized World* (Feminist Press), *The W Effect: Bush's War on Women* (Feminist Press), and most recently *Believe Me: How Trusting Women Can Change the World* (Seal Press). She has been a featured commentator on CNN, National Public Radio, and BBC Radio. In 2017, Yifat was awarded Working Mother magazine's Legacy Award for her work.

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**Diana Duarte, Director of Policy and Strategic Engagement, MADRE**



Diana Duarte is the Director of Policy and Strategic Engagement at MADRE, leading the organization's policy, public education and communications work, and designing and implementing campaigns to advance women's human rights. She directs MADRE's Feminist Foreign Policy Jumpstart initiative, bringing grassroots women's perspectives and analysis into US policymaking. For more than 14 years, she has worked in policy analysis and communications to advocate for human rights, gender justice, and progressive change. She has served as a board member of Women, Action and the Media: NYC and currently is the board chair of ActionAid USA.

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