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## **The Social Impact of the Bi-Oceanic Road Corridor on Indigenous People from the Perspective of Local Leaders in Paraguay**

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The Bi-Oceanic Road Corridor, which crosses Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, and Chile, will connect the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans by land, is under construction, with the goal of opening the entire corridor during 2024. The completion of the Corridor is expected not only to strengthen trade and economic ties among the four countries it passes through and more broadly among North American, Asia, and Europe but also to bring about significant changes in the movement of people. Therefore, this study conducted semi-structured interviews with local leaders relevant to Indigenous communities in the Chaco region of Paraguay, located right in the middle of the Bi-Oceanic Road Corridor, to determine how these local leaders perceive the social impact of the Corridor on Indigenous communities.

The interviewed local leaders expressed concern that preparations are being made for local economic development, including the purchase of land along the corridor and the construction of factories, without preparing youth and other residents of their communities for development. In addition, leaders pointed out the destruction of the natural environment along the Corridor in the Paraguayan Chaco area, which they pointed out was due to its construction and to the increase in the number of large ranches aiming to take advantage of the improved transportation network to expand sales abroad.

Further, large-scale development projects have had both positive and negative impacts on people living in the Chaco area, including Indigenous peoples. Thus, the leaders recognized that Indigenous people may see an increase in income from the Bi-Oceanic Road Corridor, and also asserted that their way of being Indigenous will remain unchanged despite the opening of the Corridor and the expected new economic activity—because, they said, the Indigenous people of Paraguay still live and will still live in strong coexistence within their communities. However, the leaders found it important to realize them, which would require discussions among the Indigenous peoples and, at the same time, efforts to strengthen their awareness and culture as Indigenous peoples.

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## **Indigenous Identities and Movements: Exploring the Movement towards Socialism in Bolivia**

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