

Cultural and documental collections on indigenous people in Mexico: A gate to the diversity and the strengthen of the Mexican indigenous cultural legacy

Xilonen Maria del Carmen Luna-Ruiz, Comision Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indigenas, Mexico City, Mexico

The Comision Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indigenas (National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples) holds one of the largest and most important collections in Latin America on indigenous issues. Focusing on the audiovisual collections, this paper describes some activities performed by the staff in order to preserve and organize the photographs, film and sound recordings (some of them dated from 1890) which were first produced by the institution and then collected from different sources throughout the 20th century. The main value of the audiovisual collections -besides the current bibliographic and art collections- comes from the fact that they are a source for the history of the development of the Mexican public policy in its effort to understand the indigenous population and to attain their social and economic development as well as the strengthen of their cultural expressions.