




2025
Annual
Report



RIGHTS +
RESOURCES

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An Indigenous Maasai man
in traditional dress in Kenya.
Photo: Asha Stuart
RRI, 2025



A Message from Our President

Solange Bandiaky-Badji

2025 was a year of renewal and rethinking for our coalition. Despite widespread political upheaval and disruptions to global development funding, it provided us with new momentum and vigor to strengthen our position as a global solidarity network that delivers critical and strategic advancements for the rights and development of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and Afro-descendent Peoples across the world.

We began by celebrating the 20th anniversary of RRI's founding, which was a vital opportunity to take stock of our collective accomplishments and challenges over the last two decades and reflect on our place in the new global realities of the sector. We engaged in thoughtful conversations throughout the year with RRI's founders, earliest champions, Indigenous elders, women leaders, youth, and our global allies to map the coalition's journey over the last 20 years. We also commissioned an independent review of RRI's progress toward achieving its current five-year Strategic Program, which expires in 2027.

All this stocktaking confirmed RRI's singular positioning within its ecosystem as the only coalition that brings together a diverse and vibrant set of movements led by Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, and local communities—and their women and youth—to leverage the power of collective action to secure their rights and agency. They underscored our extensive experience advancing movement-building within rightsholder-led organizations and producing timely and strategic analysis to inform major policy and paradigm changes, as well as our thought leadership and ability to convene unlikely allies.

Most importantly, it laid the foundation for a radical restructuring of our coalition. This restructure, which took effect in early 2026, added many new national rightsholder organizations to our core group of partners, created an Advisory Council and a Council of Elders, clarified coalition governance and admission process, and added youth, Afro-descendant Peoples, and Indigenous representation from North America to our Board of Directors. All these changes further cemented our position as an Indigenous, Afro-descendent, and local community-led solidarity network with unique value-add in the sector.

Within this context, the RRI coalition worked throughout the year to catalyze new global funding commitments at COP30, channel direct funding to communities through our rightsholder-led funding mechanism, CLARIFI, and advance the legal recognition of rightsholders' land and resource rights. We facilitated the first-ever global network of Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community youth activists, elevated the voices and leadership of women leaders, strengthened community monitoring of land-based investments and supply chains, and promoted rights-based conservation initiatives to thwart biodiversity loss. This Annual Report shares a selection of these examples of impact led by our coalition members in 2025.

I remain grateful to our partners, donors, and allies for their continued support to fuel our success and keep us moving forward.

In solidarity,

Dr. Solange Bandiaky-Badji
Coordinator and President, RRI



How RRI Works

RRI supports the collective tenure and livelihood rights of Indigenous Peoples (IPs), Afro-descendant Peoples (ADPs), and local communities (LCs) by promoting greater global commitment and action towards policy, market, and legal reforms that secure their rights to own, control, and benefit from natural resources, especially land and forests. To advance this mission, RRI contributes to three global goals:

Substantially increase the land area under local ownership and administration, with secure rights to manage, conserve, use, and trade products and services.

Increase the adoption of progressive laws, regulations, and practices that promote the customary and statutory tenure rights of IPs, ADPs, and LCs, particularly women and youth.

Dramatically improve the socioeconomic status of IPs, ADPs, and LCs based on their self-determined priorities.

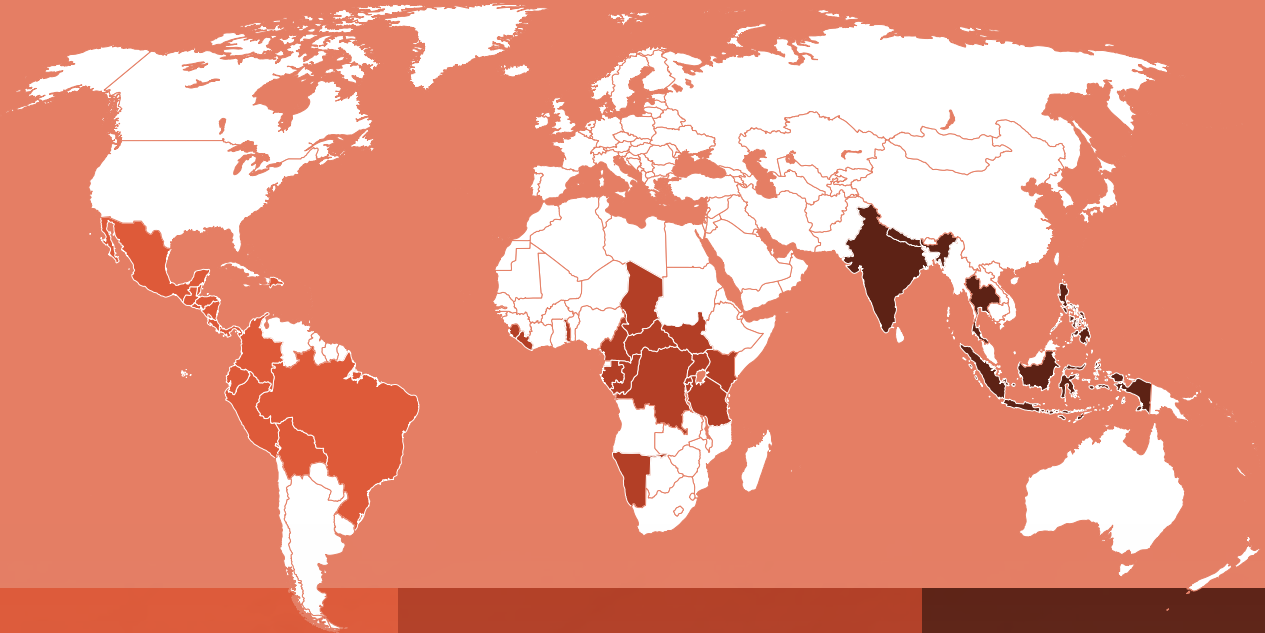
We deliver on this mission by:



Gayanimaya Tamang, a member of the Lag Lage Pacha Community Forest User Group near Kathmandu, fertilizes the soil.
 Photo: Asha Stuart
 RRI, 2025

Where We Deliver

Projects in 31 Countries



Latin America

Bolivia
Brazil
Colombia
Costa Rica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Guatemala
Honduras
Mexico
Panama
Peru



Africa

Burundi
Cameroon
Central African Republic
Chad
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Gabon
Kenya
Liberia
Namibia
Republic of Congo
Rwanda
Sierra Leone
Tanzania
Togo
Uganda



Asia

India
Indonesia
Nepal
Philippines
Thailand



Women gather to prepare food outside of Tebat Pulau, Sumatra, Indonesia. Photo: Jacob Maentz RRI, 2022

Outcomes at a Glance

RRI provides financial support, solidarity, technical and strategic analysis, and fiscal sponsorship to its partners and allies in the Global South.*



1,017,390

hectares of land titled to IPs, LCs, and ADPs



~200,000

hectares of land for which legal titles were requested, prepared by IPs, LCs, and ADPs, and submitted to government for approval



30,000,000 +

hectares of land mapped by IPs, LCs, and ADPs using inclusive community processes



209

land conflicts mediated or resolved on IP, LC, or ADP collective lands



100 +

policy analyses and recommendations developed by coalition members to inform national land governance and reform processes



80 +

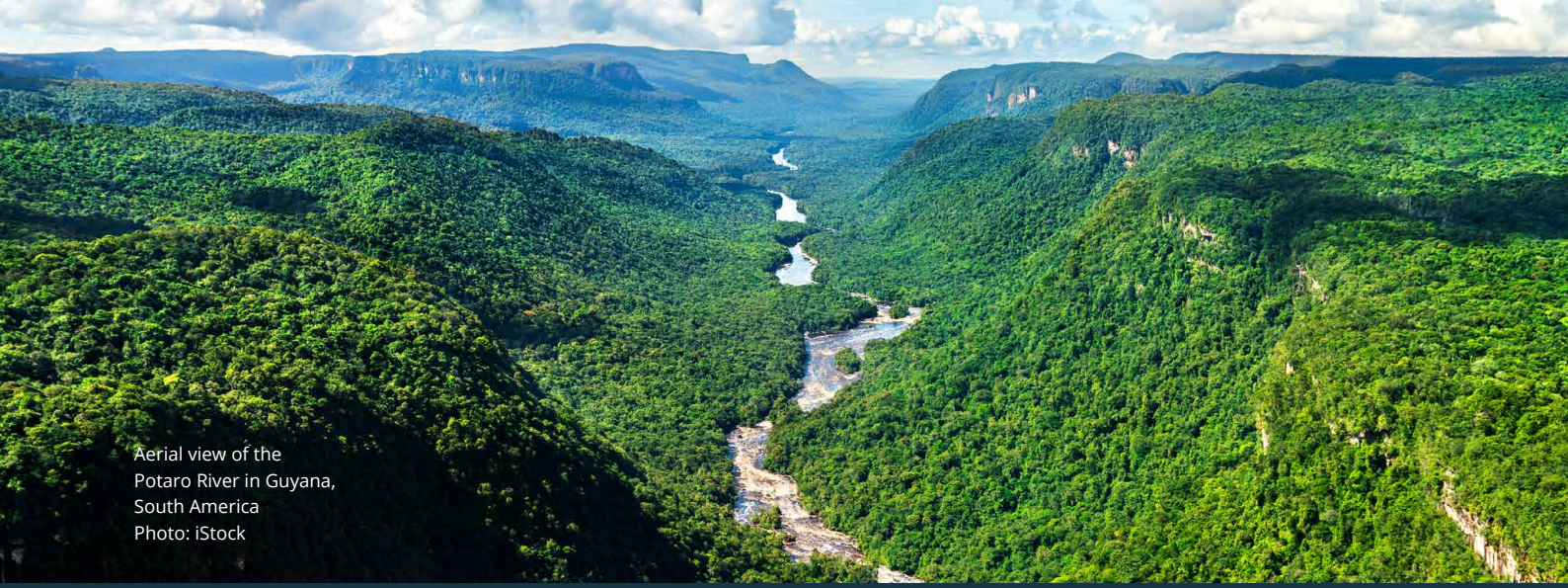
community monitoring mechanisms operationalized using participatory approaches



40,000 +

members of IPs, LCs and ADPs trained in tenure rights, land governance, advocacy, and community leadership

***Note:** The tenure data reported here covers the period 2022-2025. This is an impact indicator for RRI within the framework of our Strategic Program IV. As such, we collect data and report against the timeframe and anticipated contribution to impact of that framework.



Aerial view of the Potaro River in Guyana, South America
Photo: iStock

In 2025, RRI's rightsholder-led CLARIFI funding mechanism supported:



81 active projects supporting 71 partners in 20 countries, including 23 women-led organizations, mobilizing over \$10 million in direct support.



Over 50% of these projects advanced collective tenure rights, while others focused on improved conservation, gender justice, and support to local economies.



\$1.8 billion pledged at COP30 for forest and land tenure, influenced by collective and coordinated actions by the RRI coalition and its allies.

A Maasai man on the Maji Moto ranch, Kenya, shows his community's land title deed.
Photo: Tony Wild
RRI, 2023



2025 Results

María Community Indigenous
School in Indonesia.
Photo: Rachel Watson
Campaign for Nature, RRI,
and CLARIFI, 2024



Strengthening Inclusive Rightsholder Leadership and Collective Power

Global Youth Leadership

In July 2025, RRI convened its first **Global Youth Forum** in Bali, Indonesia, in collaboration with Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (AMAN) and Barisan Pemuda Adat Nusantara (BPAN). This historic gathering brought together 55 IP, ADP, and LC youth leaders from 22 countries across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Participants built cross-regional solidarity and co-created the **Global Youth Roadmap** for engagement and collective action. The roadmap established five shared priorities for youth participation and leadership development, positioning youth as decision-makers within the RRI coalition rather than beneficiaries.

Building on this momentum, the coalition's youth launched the **RRI Global Youth Network**, connecting regional youth movements to a unified global platform. A scoping study of 113 global youth organizations confirmed that **RRI's Global Youth Network fills a critical gap: There is no existing platform that meaningfully convenes IP, ADP, LC, and allied youth at the intersection of tenure security, climate justice, and biodiversity conservation.**



“The Global Youth Network is more than an alliance; it is active hope. It represents the collective strength of our roots and the determination to transform the climate crisis into justice, where Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local youth are protagonists and not just witnesses to change. It is our time to be heard.”

Alejandra Palacios

Afro-descendant Youth Leader, Ecuador

Given RRI's mandate to constantly add value and ensure complementarity within the sector, it then facilitated the Global Youth Forum's participants to develop a Youth Climate Justice Statement for COP30 in Brazil, marking their coordinated entry into international climate advocacy. RRI officially launched this Statement alongside the Global Youth Network and Roadmap at COP30 to maximize its global outreach.

Together, these initiatives lay the foundation for sustained youth leadership and participation in global environmental governance in 2026 and beyond.



Youth participants pose for a photo at RRI's first Global Youth Forum.
Photo: Matata RRI and AMAN, 2025

Strengthening Inclusive Rightsholder Leadership and Collective Power

Women's Collective Power

In 2025, the Women in Global South Alliance (WiGSA) strengthened its global positioning as a unique, cross-continental solidarity women's network advocating for IP, ADP, and LC women's tenure rights and direct access to finance. WiGSA received a record number of membership requests and expanded to 28 member organizations working across more than 60 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Members of the Women in Global South Alliance (WiGSA) speak on a panel at London Climate Action Week. Photo: RRI, 2025



Together, WiGSA members laid their philosophical foundation in 2025, guided by the principles of unity, inclusion, respect, equity, equal voice and representation, solidarity, transparency and accountability, and intercultural communication. These guiding principles define how members work together to systematically reduce gender-based inequalities and reflect a unique collective process built upon trust and the unification of women's diverse experiences into shared priorities.

In 2025, RRI and WiGSA produced critical new analyses to strengthen women's advocacy, including the report *Is Global Funding Reaching Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and Local Community Women?* This study addressed key donor questions on women's priorities and barriers to direct funding. Donors described the report as a "useful and timely resource" to inform future funding mechanisms, and it was featured in publications by the Forest Tenure Funders Group, FAO, Land Climate Review, and the *FTFG 2025* report.

The analysis also contributed to the Forest Tenure Funders Group recognizing and committing to addressing the gender gap in women’s funding in its new \$1.8 billion tenure pledge announced at COP30, and became a cornerstone of RRI’s [The Pledge We Want](#) campaign.

WiGSA also elevated women’s leadership at global convenings, including CSW69, London Climate Action Week, UN Climate Week in New York, COP30, UNEA-7 in Kenya, and the Women Land Rights Initiative’s policy workshops on democratizing global finance for women’s land rights within the three Rio Conventions. These engagements strengthened women’s visibility in climate, conservation, and funding debates.

Through CLARIFI, four WiGSA organizations received direct funding, and seven more were supported indirectly through regional programs in the Tropical Andes and Congo Basin. CLARIFI has since developed a pipeline of WiGSA projects for future funding cycles to expand direct access to finance for community women’s organizations.

“These findings highlight persistent challenges to advancing women’s leadership and ensuring their meaningful inclusion in decision-making. These structural constraints force many women’s organizations to depend on volunteer labor, reinforcing patterns of unpaid work and weakening institutional sustainability. The inequities are especially stark for Afro-descendant women’s organizations, which operate with budgets less than half those of Indigenous peers, reflecting a donor ecosystem still blind to structural racism. Longer-term funding and intersectional approaches that prioritize women’s organizations’ needs are essential to addressing these ongoing inequalities.”

Forest Tenure Funders Group review of *Is Global Funding Reaching Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and Local Community Women?*

In 2020, Chepang Indigenous families were forcibly evicted from the Kusum Khola riverbanks in Chitwan, Nepal, and 60 households later resettled along Parabi Khola without secure land or basic services. In 2024, the National Indigenous Women’s Federation (NIWF), with financial support from the RRI in 2024–2025, worked with the community to advocate for their rights through data collection, training, community organizing, and dialogue with the government. A peaceful demonstration in Kathmandu with 220 participants also drew national attention. As a result, the government installed drinking water and electricity, surveyed land for 60 households, and began constructing permanent houses. The Bagmati Provincial Government has also begun planning a model settlement with professors and students at the Engineering College, while a Chepang Women’s Struggle Committee consisting of 15 women now strengthens community leadership and advocacy.

Strengthening Inclusive Rightsholder Leadership and Collective Power

Coalition Building

RRI's 20th anniversary convening in Kathmandu, Nepal, brought together more than 240 rightsholders, allies, founders, and decision-makers from over 40 countries. Organized in partnership with seven local partners (Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal; Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities; Green Foundation Nepal; Center for Indigenous Peoples' Research and Development; Nepal Indigenous Women's Federation; Indigenous Women Legal Awareness Group; Women Rights and Resource Network), the four-day program combined high-level panels, thematic discussions, and coalition strategy sessions.



A performer is captured on camera during the opening ceremony of RRI's 20th anniversary celebration in Kathmandu, Nepal.
Photo: Sandesh Chaudbury
RRI, 2025

The convening celebrated past achievements while co-creating a shared vision for the future of territorial rights. Participants called for stronger localization, greater focus on communities' livelihoods and economies, locally led research, and community-based conservation while promoting North-South-South collaboration. The coalition reaffirmed its commitment to youth and women's leadership and agreed to expand its membership by welcoming new partners and elders, particularly addressing the lack of youth, pastoralist organizations, and Afro-descendent representatives in its governance.

This mandate to expand membership was a key outcome of the event, realized in the historic changes introduced to the coalition's structure and governance that added Afro-descendant and youth representation to RRI's Board of Directors for the first time, as well as members of Tribal and First Nations from North America.

“RRI’s Collective Action Award shows us that when communities work together, incredible things can happen.”

Nelson Ole Reiyia

CEO and Co-Founder of Nashulai Maasai Conservancy, Kenya

During the celebration in Kathmandu, RRI honored three communities with its inaugural Collective Action Award, selected from over 190 nominations and a long-list of 18 finalists.

Click on each community’s name to watch a short video about its work.

- [Kenya: The Nashulai Maasai Conservancy](#)
- [Indonesia: The Aru Islands Movement](#)
- [Brazil: The Jupago Kreka Collective](#)

RRI recognized these communities for their achievements in territorial rights and cultural revival. This award underscores that lasting change is driven by collective action, sustained mobilization, and intergenerational leadership.

RRI’s 20th anniversary also elevated grassroots visibility through international media coverage and acted as the world premiere of a [documentary](#) celebrating 20 years of collective action, reinforcing RRI’s identity as a global solidarity network grounded in community leadership.

In 2025, RRI also continued its longstanding support for the Afro-descendant Peoples’ coalition in Latin America and the Caribbean. The coalition formally adopted a new name: the International Coalition of Territories and Afro-descendant Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean (CITAFRO).

CITAFRO’s launch follows years of regional integration, the strategic positioning of ADPs’ priorities, and evidence-based advocacy with RRI’s support to increase ADPs’ representation in key international decision-making spaces. In April, CITAFRO and RRI launched the [Brasília Declaration](#), highlighting the economic, political, and socio-environmental contributions of ADP communities while also addressing the severe impacts of the climate crisis on their territories.

At COP30, CITAFRO and RRI launched the [Afro-descendant Atlas of Maritorios of the Greater Caribbean](#) to demonstrate the interaction of ADPs with maritime and coastal ecosystems that are vital to the global conservation agenda and which are at risk from climate change. Also at COP30, **CITAFRO’s strategic advocacy contributed to the adoption of language referring to People of African Descent in the UNFCCC’s official documents, a historic first in 30 years. This language recognizes ADPs as a group disproportionately affected by climate change and as key contributors to its mitigation.**

Advancing Legal and Policy Change

National Policy Reform in the DRC

Home to 60 percent of the Congo Basin—the world’s largest carbon sink—the DRC has long faced conflicts and deforestation linked to the absence of a clear land-use framework. In July 2025, the President of the DRC **signed into law** the country’s first-ever Land Use Planning Law, marking a historic step toward inclusive, rights-based land governance.



Indigenous Pygmy women collect water, DRC.
Photo: EnviroNews RDC
RRI, 2024

First adopted by Parliament in 2023, this legislation was shaped by sustained long-term advocacy from a broad civil society coalition with RRI’s financial and technical support, including the Center for Innovative Technologies and Sustainable Development (CTIDD); the Coalition of Women Leaders for the Environment and Sustainable Development (CFLEDD); Congolese Resources Institute (CRI); the Center for Support for Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests (CAGDFT); Congo-Watch; and Dynamique des groupes des peuples autochtones (DGPA).

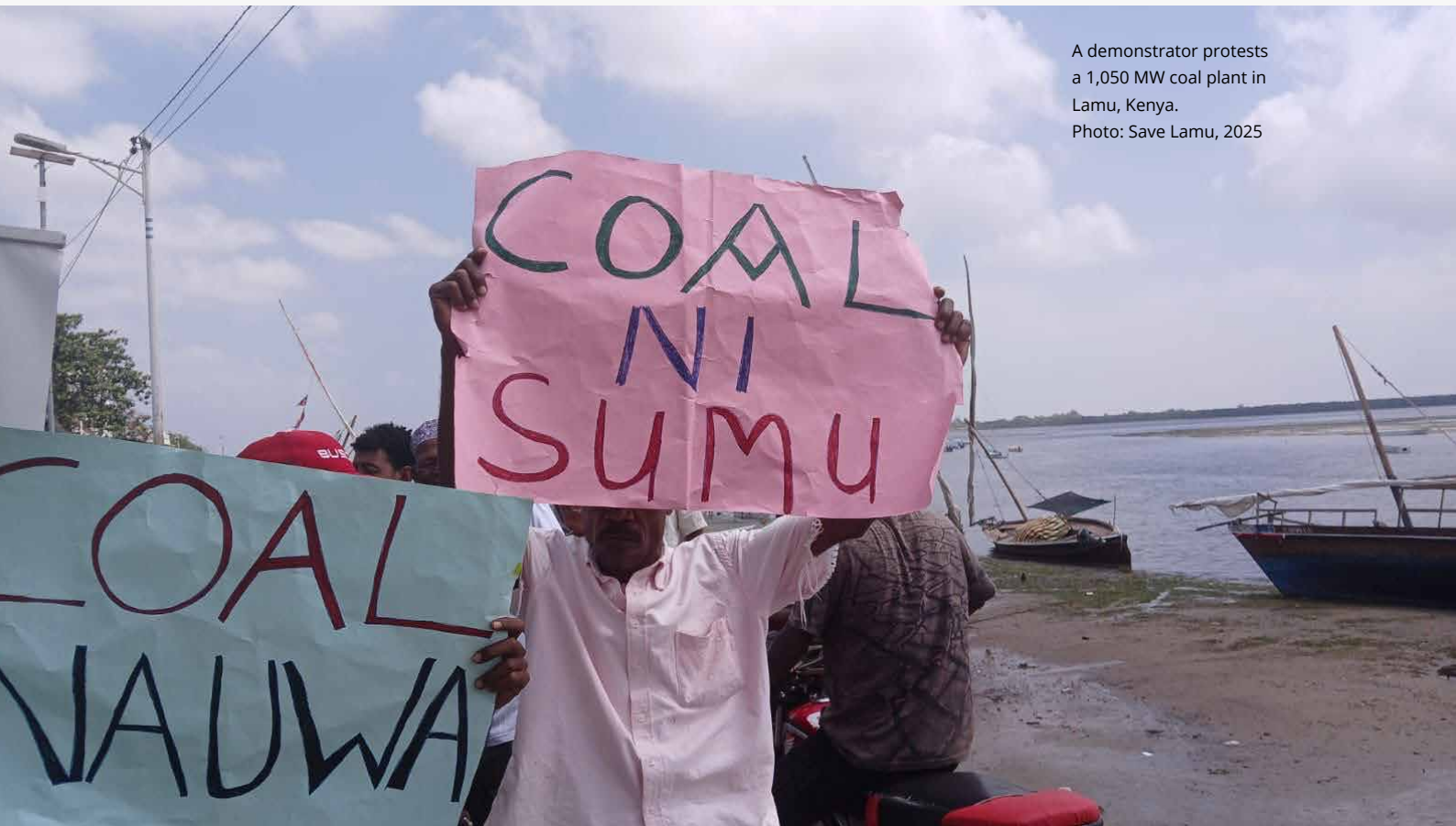
Key provisions in the law include explicit recognition of community customary land rights; the requirement of local peoples’ free, prior, and informed consent for land-use projects; conflict resolution mechanisms; and environmental protections for wetlands, peatlands, and other sensitive ecosystems. Importantly, it aligns land governance with climate and development goals while strengthening communities’ tenure security.

Effective implementation of the revised national land law will require coordinated government action, resource mobilization, monitoring, and sustained community engagement—but its adoption is a critical step forward in fully securing customary land rights. RRI and its partners in the region remain committed to supporting the implementation of this hard-won legal victory and continued policy reform.

Advancing Legal and Policy Change

Halting a Controversial Coal Plant in Kenya

In Kenya, RRI supported a successful community-led resistance campaign by the deCOALonize movement to stop a proposed coal plant in Lamu and new coal prospecting in Kitui. **RRI enabled over 225 community members, including women and youth, to access the support and tools needed to speak out against harmful coal developments, contributing to a historic court victory upholding the National Environmental Tribunal's decision to stop the coal plant.** RRI worked with the Centre for Human Rights and Civic Education (CHRCE) and the Save Lamu initiative to promote the campaign through environmental forums, film screenings, media outreach, and the popular **#NowOrNever** social media campaign.



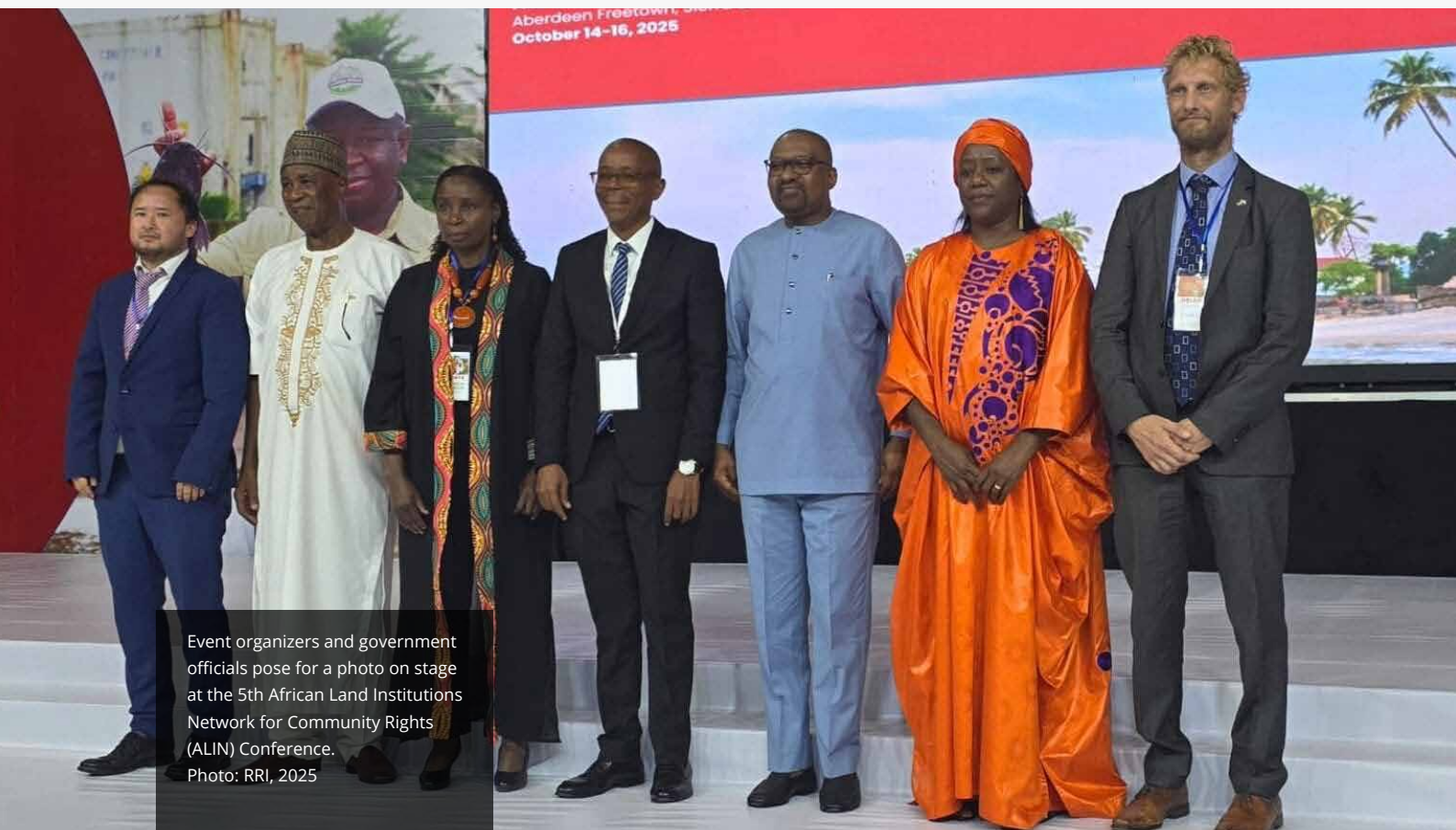
A demonstrator protests a 1,050 MW coal plant in Lamu, Kenya.
Photo: Save Lamu, 2025



Advancing Legal and Policy Change

Advancing Land Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa

At the 5th African Land Institutions Network for Community Rights (ALIN) Conference in October 2025, RRI partnered with the Sierra Leone Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Country Planning and the Sierra Leone Land Alliance to convene government representatives from over 16 African countries, along with partners and allies. RRI and its partners **played a central role** in engaging participants to share experiences on land reform, responsible land governance, and securing community land rights. The conference strengthened efforts to monitor Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and advance the global call to action for Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' land rights. It concluded with the signing of the **Freetown Declaration** promoting inclusive, decentralized, and well-funded land governance reforms.



Event organizers and government officials pose for a photo on stage at the 5th African Land Institutions Network for Community Rights (ALIN) Conference. Photo: RRI, 2025

Advancing Legal and Policy Change

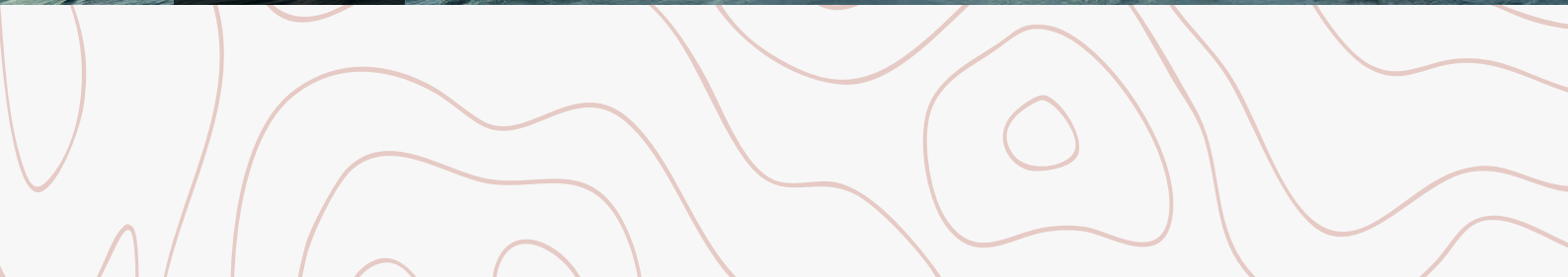
Setting a Precedent in Bolivia and Across Latin America

The Bolivian Agrarian and Environmental Court admitted the lawsuit and issued a set of precautionary measures in favor of the Madre de Dios River and the communities of Multiethnic Territory II (TIM II). This decision responded to a Preventive Environmental Action filed before the Court against the Mining Administrative Jurisdictional Authority (AJAM) and the mining cooperative Gold Comparativists Association (ASOBAL).

The action sought the suspension of illegal mining activities, the prohibition of new mining licenses, and the recognition of the Madre de Dios River as a collective subject of rights. These precautionary measures set an important precedent in Bolivia and across Latin America, recognizing not only the rights of IPs living in TIM II, but also the rights of nature.



Sunset over Madre de Dios River.
Photo: Shutterstock



Advancing Legal and Policy Change

Including Communities in Managing Ecuador's Protected Areas

In Ecuador, advocacy support and funding from RRI's **Strategic Response Mechanism** enabled the **A'i Kofan Indigenous Nationality**, through the **NOA'IKE** organization, to secure rights to conserve, manage, and administer 20,000 hectares of ancestral territory inside the **Cuyabeno Wildlife Production Reserve**.

A cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Ecological Transition established this recognition and set a national precedent for rights-based conservation within protected areas.

The agreement helped establish a new community, the **Thesi T'sampi** ("The Land of Jaguar"), that provides a safer living environment while strengthening Indigenous governance inside the reserve. This project shows how conservation frameworks can recognize and uphold Indigenous territorial rights while protecting both communities' freedoms and the environment.



Demonstration against the company Rainforest Ecuador by the communities of Selva Alegre, Ecuador. In 2020, the company acquired a fraudulent title covering 9,190 hectares in Ecuador's Andes Chocó biogeographic corridor. ALDEA Foundation has been backing the struggle for justice with RRI support.
Photo: ALDEA, 2023

Advancing Legal and Policy Change

Community Forestry Governance in Nepal

The Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN) secured government approval for six Community Forest Operational Plans (CFOPs) in Gandaki Province, integrating Sustainable Forest Management guidelines for the first time. Many Community Forest User Groups had previously been unable to renew outdated plans, leaving forests unmanaged and limiting women's and youth participation.



Gayanimaya Tamang, a member of the Lag Lage Pacha Community Forest User Group near Kathmandu, fertilizes the soil.
Photo: Asha Stuart
RRI, 2025

The renewed CFOPs covered 378.67 hectares, expanded forest coverage, improved forest stock, and introduced livelihood innovations, including eco-tourism, non-timber forest product cultivation, and carbon trade potential.

To institutionalize progress, FECOFUN convened policy dialogues at the provincial and federal levels in 2025. Provincial authorities committed to allocating forestry development funds for additional renewals, while federal authorities pledged to simplify operational plan formats, strengthen coordination across government levels, and ensure budget allocation for renewals nationwide. These reforms strengthen community forestry governance while expanding participation and livelihood opportunities in the province.

Advancing Legal and Policy Change

Recognizing Indigenous Peoples' Territories in Indonesia

On December 17, 2025, a major victory for Indigenous Peoples' rights was achieved in Indonesia's North Lombok Regency: The official recognition of 12 Indigenous territories across the regency's five districts.

Signed by Regent Najmul Akhyar, the decree acknowledges 51,158 hectares of Indigenous lands, formally documenting them in government records and affirming state protection of communities' customary laws and governance systems. Funded by RRI's Strategic Response Mechanism (SRM), the recognition followed the acceptance of a new participatory map led by AMAN Paer Daya with community members and civil society support. For Indigenous communities, the decree brings legal certainty and legitimacy; for policymakers, it establishes a formal foundation and precedent for future decisions related to Indigenous Peoples in Indonesia.



Rumeneq, Indigenous women representative from the Salut community, holds a decree document. Photo: Kris Ayu RRI, 2025

Advancing Direct and Flexible Finance for Communities

CLARIFI at Scale

Since launching in 2022, RRI's Indigenous-led funding mechanism, CLARIFI, has funded 186 locally led projects across 29 countries. Working closely with its regional coalition members and the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities (GATC), CLARIFI has mobilized more than \$40 million in direct financing for IPs, ADPs, and LCs.



Two farmers have a conversation during the cocoa pod harvest in Cameroon.
Photo: Shutterstock

In Latin America in 2025, it supported 31 projects and 29 partners, eight of them women-led. A key regional partner is the Mesoamerican Territorial Fund (FTM), which provides accompaniment and technical support to Indigenous and women-led organizations. Through this partnership with FTM, 16 projects across six countries are receiving CLARIFI funding, including four led by women's organizations. Together, these partners are strengthening their strategic planning, territorial visioning, and administrative systems to become more effective.

In 2025, CLARIFI convened two regional learning exchanges in Mesoamerica and the Tropical Andes for 85 IP and ADP participants from 30 countries. Using participatory methodologies, these exchanges documented critical [lessons learned](#) from CLARIFI projects, identified effective practices, and developed recommendations for long-term sustainability—bridging organizational strategies with communities' grounded realities.

“This is unprecedented: 35 women are going to have at least 100 hectares. It is a revolution!”

Local community leader and member

REFACOF (The African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests)

Examples of CLARIFI's impact through grantmaking in 2025:

- **In Colombia's Pacific region**, [ACADESAN](#) has built a [community-led protection model](#) linking safety to dignity, rights, and collective well-being through humanitarian infrastructure and strengthened local governance. Leaders stress that defending human rights through the model of collective protection is inseparable from defending land and culture. Despite funding and institutional barriers, partnerships like CLARIFI's support for ACADESAN demonstrate how scaling collective defense can reduce vulnerability and protect communities.
- **In Cameroon**, RRI partner REFACOF—a regional network to promote women's land and forest tenure rights—strengthened its processes and governance structure to improve decision-making and organizational effectiveness. Members from 16 countries worked together to draft a five-year strategic plan and elected a new regional board. On the ground, REFACOF's [gender-transformative initiative](#), the LILAGLÈ Protocol, helped secure 35 Customary Land Ownership Certificates for women across five villages in Ngweï, totaling more than 100 hectares. It also inspired 12 additional villages to request replication in their communities.
- **In Nepal**, CLARIFI supported the [Center for Indigenous Peoples' Research and Development \(CIPRED\)](#) to advance Indigenous self-governance within conservation areas. A Community-Based Monitoring and Information System baseline covering 1,995 households generated the first quantified evidence of Indigenous tenure and livelihoods in these areas. More than 200 leaders—women, youth, and officials—were trained on rights-based conservation and customary law. Two landmark customary governance acts were passed or tabled in Manang and Mustang, demonstrating that local governments can formally recognize Indigenous institutions. The project also supported women-led livelihood initiatives and secured pilot community access permits for non-timber forest products, marking a historic shift from fortress conservation toward rights-based partnership.

Advancing Direct and Flexible Finance for Communities

Projects in the Tropical Andes

In Bolivia, CLARIFI's sustained support to RRI coalition members advanced territorial rights and amplified Indigenous voices. Years-long Indigenous leadership led to the designation of 283,179 hectares of the Tacana II Indigenous territory as original community land (*Tierras Comunitarias de Origen*, in Spanish). This significant victory for Indigenous rightsholders was achieved under Fundación TIERRA's leadership.

Participants of a training workshop on Early Warning and Action System in Bajo Quimiriki, Peru.
Photo: AIDESEP-Peru



In Ecuador, the Shuar Mutual Center became the second community to receive a land title within a Protected Forest in the country, with 3,580 hectares of land titled. The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE) led the process in a significant political and administrative victory for traditional communities located within government-designated protected areas. It employed an innovative collaborative model that combined community-based engagement with technical and legal strategies to overcome bureaucratic barriers. CLARIFI's support helped the community submit a legal dossier to the state authority, including detailed planimetric maps, boundary reports, management plans, socio-historical studies, and census data to inform its decision-making.

In Peru, Indigenous communities strengthened a dynamic monitoring and reporting system to protect against external threats to their territorial rights. The leading national Indigenous organization consolidated a digital platform called SAAT, which incorporates real-time monitoring and early warning systems for communities. Connected to a central server that links Native communities in the Peruvian Amazon to decision-makers in the capital, SAAT enables AIDESEP to quickly activate its national protection mechanism when threats arise. AIDESEP also provides communities, especially youth, with training in using technological tools.

Advancing Direct and Flexible Finance for Communities

Projects in the Congo Basin

In the DRC, the Congo Resources Institute (CRI) supported the establishment of community forest management across 15,807.53 hectares, helping the communities of Kishiongo and Kasambanza map their lands and apply for community concession titles following participatory mapping. The project strengthened local ownership and collaboration between customary authorities and state services. It trained 240 local community members in community forestry and governance, and an additional 100 women and youth in agroforestry and cultivation techniques. Communities planted 18,000 seedlings in nurseries, 5,000 Indigenous trees, and improved agricultural productivity for local crops such as cassava, eggplant, cowpea, tomatoes, and okra.



Women farmers share their experiences from agricultural projects, Ngo District, Republic of the Congo.

Photo: Action Communautaires des Femmes Autochtones du Congo (ACFAC), 2024

In Gabon, CLARIFI supported local partners to improve Indigenous communities' climate resilience and food security by strengthening their technical capacities in sustainable agricultural production. This project focused on documenting traditional knowledge and adapting agroecological practices to local contexts in the villages of Bitougat and Doumassi. A participatory diagnosis of the communities' current situation identified their existing agricultural practices, challenges, and priority needs. Based on these findings, RRI trained 31 community members, including 14 women, on agroecological techniques, sustainable subsistence farming, and community organization, with a focus on strengthening cooperatives and associations.

In the Republic of the Congo, one project strengthened the social and economic empowerment of Indigenous and local community women in the NGO District, Plateaux Department. CLARIFI's local partner, ACFAC, established two women-led agricultural producer groups in Djaka village and allocated two hectares of land for each group. It trained them in the cultivation of cassava, cocoa, chili, and maize. The groups received training in agroecology and climate change, environmental protection, gender-based violence, land tenure, and savings and microcredit. The project also provided the women with direct funding to acquire basic agricultural tools for land development and cultivation.

Advancing Direct and Flexible Finance for Communities

Women-Led Climate Finance

At the [First Global Congress of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities from the Forest Basins](#) in Brazzaville, CLARIFI awarded \$240,000—\$30,000 each to eight grassroots women-led initiatives across Africa.

Participant speaks into the microphone at the First Global Congress of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities from the Forest Basins in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo.
Photo: REPALEAC and RRI, 2025



These initiatives are advancing soil regeneration, biodiversity restoration, land and tenure advocacy, and sustainable livelihoods. UNIPROBA is expanding land access and training programs for Batwa women in Burundi. Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development (IPSD) is promoting entrepreneurship and cultural preservation among Mbororo communities in Cameroon. Action Communautaire des Femmes Autochtones (ACFAC) is strengthening agroecology and microcredit support for forest women in the Republic of the Congo.

CLARIFI also directly funded four WiGSA organizations and indirectly supported seven others through its regional programs and community-led mechanisms in the Tropical Andes and Congo Basin. RRI's Gender Justice program and CLARIFI envision expanding future support to more grassroots women's organizations and have created a pipeline of WiGSA projects for consideration in future funding cycles, enabling greater direct access to funding for IP, ADP, and LC women.

Together, these initiatives are demonstrating the transformative role of women in advancing rights-based, climate-resilient development across their communities.

Advancing Direct and Flexible Finance for Communities

Influencing Global Funding Pledges and Commitments

As with legal reforms, changes to the global funding ecosystem don't happen overnight. They are backed by long-term, sustained advocacy that often takes place along the sidelines of major platforms well before change becomes visible.



Youth pose for a photo after a successful youth-led side event at UNFCCC COP30 in Belem, Brazil. Photo: RRI, 2025

RRI and its allied organizations played a pivotal advocacy role in shaping the **\$1.8 billion** Forest and Land Tenure Pledge as well as the landmark Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment (ILTC) announced at the COP30 World Leaders Summit in November 2025, where 15 countries and numerous philanthropies pledged to secure tenure rights over **160 million hectares** of land held by IPs, ADPs, and LCs by 2030, accompanied by an increase in public financing.

Learn about how RRI contributed to these historic wins in 2025:

●	April	Advocacy and formal discussions with COP30 Presidency and FCLP at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
●	May	The Brazzaville Declaration from the First Global Congress of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities of the Forest Basins
●	July	Engagements at London Climate Action Week
●	August	RRI and WiGSA launch first-ever analysis of global funding reaching Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women.
●	September	Path to Scale Dashboard is published
●	September	New York Climate Week
●	November	UNFCCC COP30

Full year contributions are:

- Coordination of the Path to Scale network of donors and intermediaries
- The Pledge We Want campaign with Tenure Facility and If Not Us Then Who?
- Sharing impacts of CLARIFI's direct funding to communities in the Tropical Andes and Congo Basin




Advancing Direct and Flexible Finance for Communities

Building Momentum with Advocacy and Analysis

In May 2025, RRI joined REPALEAC and the GATC to co-organize the First Global Congress of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities from the Forest Basins, convening 156 representatives from Africa, Asia, Mesoamerica, and South America in Brazzaville. Participants published the [Brazzaville Declaration](#) and used the document to advocate for their rights in the lead-up to COP30, contributing to the mobilization of significant donor funding pledged by the Forest Tenure Funders Group and other global donors. Importantly, during the Leaders' Summit ahead of COP30 in November 2025, the President of the Republic of Congo cited the Declaration in his speech and urged other heads of State to recognize Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' rights to their lands and resources.

In collaboration with the Global Land Alliance, RRI further coordinated several national commitments toward the ILTC under the Forest and Climate Leaders' Partnership. Through sustained dialogue with donors and other key stakeholders, [The Pledge We Want](#) campaign, and strategic analysis, RRI's efforts helped expand the pledge to new ecosystems and donors and ensured its language centered on direct funding for rightsholders.

RRI's [Path to Scale Funding Dashboard](#) and update to the [State of Funding report](#) tracked global donor flows to IPs, ADPs, and LCs, expanding their scope beyond forests to other ecosystems. Research conducted by RRI and WiGSA also tracked [funding reaching IP, ADP, and LC women](#) specifically, further influencing donors' commitments to more concretely address gender in their funding commitments. Released ahead of COP30, these analytical tools strengthened advocacy and will continue to guide accountability toward 2030 climate and biodiversity goals.




“Our collaboration in this Congress across continents, traditions, and generations is a powerful reminder that strength lies in collective action. We are ready to continue using the depth of our knowledge and our spirit of cooperation to set a common path toward a just, livable, and equitable future.”

The Brazzaville Declaration

Evidence, Accountability, and Thought Leadership

Tenure Tracking and Gender Data

RRI's flagship gender analysis, *Resilience and Resistance*, provided an updated assessment of women's legally recognized rights to community forests across 35 countries as of 2024. The report examined legal reforms since 2016 and provided concrete evidence for IP, ADP, and LC women leaders to challenge discriminatory laws and advocate for stronger protections.



Sara Omi, a member of the Indigenous Ipeti Embera community in Panama, plants seedlings.
Photo: Asha Stuart
RRI, 2025

Launched at the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), the analysis identified actionable policy steps governments can take to advance the global women's rights agenda. Also at CSW69, WiGSA members and Indigenous women leaders from Africa, Asia, and Latin America joined discussions linking legal evidence to lived experience, strengthening grassroots capacity to influence policy reforms. Data from *Resilience and Resistance* also informed cross-regional peer learning, including exchanges between women leaders from Peru and Nepal to compare national legal frameworks and build transnational solidarity.

Evidence, Accountability, and Thought Leadership

Evidence on Community-Led Conservation

In 2025, RRI published a study on *Enabling Pathways for Rights-based Community-led Conservation*, assessing legal frameworks and biodiversity strategies in 30 countries. Developed with the ICCA Consortium and Forest Peoples Programme, the analysis found that while legal pathways for recognized community conservation exist, they remain underused and insufficient.

Presented at the IUCN World Conservation Congress, the findings broadened debate around structural barriers to achieving a rights-based approach to the 30×30 target, strengthening the case for community governance in global biodiversity strategies. Going forward, RRI will use the findings to support IUCN's International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity.




Members of the Talang Mamak community in Riau province collect forest products, Indonesia.
Photo: Jacob Maentz
RRI, 2022

Evidence, Accountability, and Thought Leadership

Commitment to Learning, Adaptation, and Accountability

In 2025, RRI marked its 20th anniversary by reflecting on two decades of coalition impact and lessons learned. After convening founding members and current partners in Nepal at its 20th anniversary celebration, RRI published a [landmark achievements report](#) and produced a [documentary](#) tracing the coalition's evolution from early targets to precedent-setting victories.



Shree Bindeshwari Community Forest, Nepal. The Community Forest is 54 hectares and managed by 254 households. It is mostly Indigenous and local community women who manage the forest and have been doing so for more than 30 years. Photo: Asha Stuart RRI, 2025

The process included more than 100 interviews with founders, coalition leaders, women, youth, and IP, ADP, and LC leaders across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The report was translated into French, Spanish, Portuguese, Bahasa Indonesia, and Nepali, and the documentary—launched in October—is being subtitled in the coalition's languages.

Throughout 2025, RRI also published, translated, and disseminated 12 additional analyses and policy briefs in six languages, accompanied by advocacy-ready graphics for coalition members. In addition, it launched a vibrant new website for the [Land Rights Standard](#), providing a dynamic and accessible resource to help public and private entities decode and implement the rightsholder-led principles for recognizing and respecting IP, LC, and ADP rights in their climate, conservation, and sustainable development projects.

Together, these RRI analyses and products strengthened transparency, learning, and evidence-based advocacy across our global network.

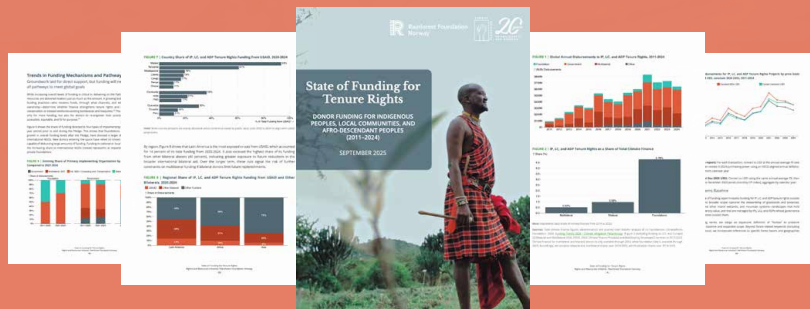
Highlighted Publications



Rooted and Rising: 20 Years of Collective Impact and the Road Ahead

Capturing two decades of RRI's work across continents, cultures, and movements to build a more just and sustainable planet.

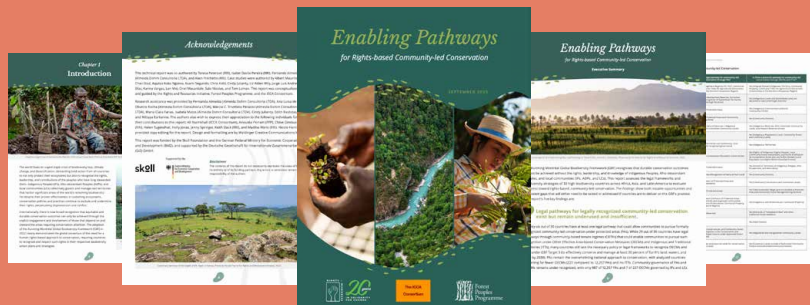
[Download publication >](#)



State of Funding for Tenure Rights

Yearly update on the state of donor funding for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and Afro-descendant Peoples in tropical countries, including an expanded scope of funding for ecosystems beyond forests.

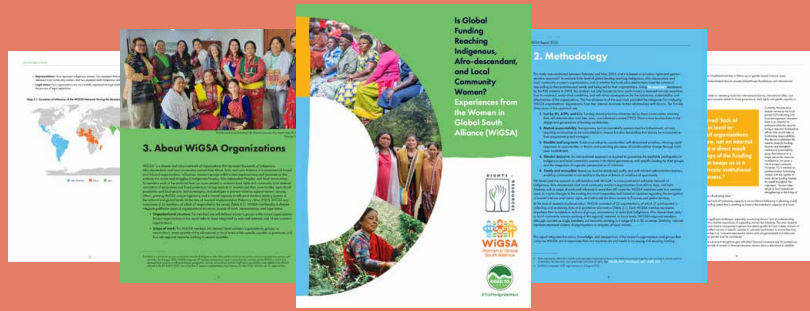
[Download publication >](#)



Enabling Pathways

Assesses the legal frameworks and biodiversity strategies of 30 countries to evaluate progress toward rights-based, community-led conservation.

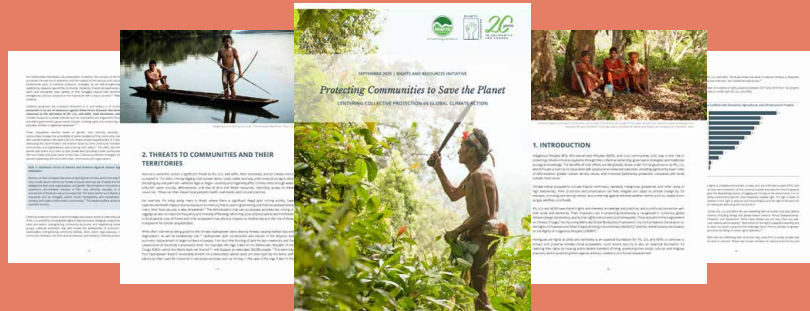
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Is Global Funding Reaching Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and Local Community Women?

An analysis showcasing the lack of funding for Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women and the need for including a gender-responsive perspective in funding commitments.

[Download publication >](#)



Protecting Communities to Save the Planet

Best practices from communities defending their territories and cultures, from the Maya Biosphere Reserve in Guatemala and the Enggano island in Indonesia to India's Bastar region, the Ecuadorian Amazon, and Colombia.

[Download publication >](#)



Resilience and Resistance

The latest assessment of the status of Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women's forest tenure rights across 35 key forest countries in the Global South.

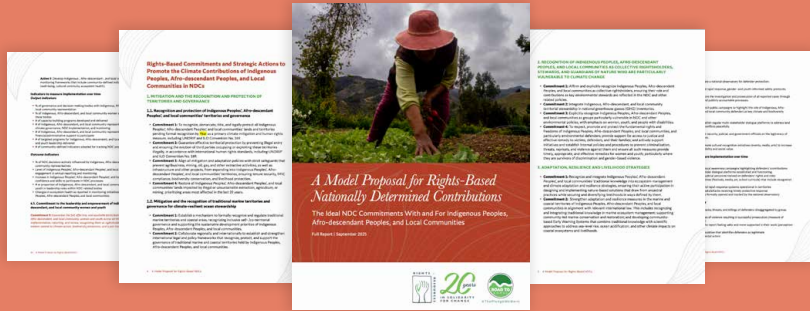
[Download publication >](#)



The Carbon Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, and Local Communities in Tropical and Subtropical Lands and Forests

A systematic analysis of the current state of play on the recognition of the carbon rights held by communities in 33 countries in context of the Paris Agreement.

[Download publication >](#)



Rights-Based NDC Model: From Recognition to Implementation

A practical framework outlining ideal Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) commitments developed under the Paris Agreement, identifying concrete entry points to translate rights-based principles into measurable climate action.

[Download publication >](#)



Atlas: Afro-descendant Maritorios of the Greater Caribbean

This study combines census, geospatial, and climate data from 26 countries with communities' stories to identify the impacts of climate change on the marine and coastal territories used by Afro-descendant Peoples.

[Download publication >](#)

Lessons from Our Work

Our collective efforts in 2025 reinforced the following lessons that we are continuously reflecting on and increasingly integrating into our programming.

Improving direct finance

Improved direct finance to IP, ADP, and LC organizations requires simplified grant eligibility requirements, as well as streamlined and more flexible grant management procedures, if the aim is to reduce the administrative burden on grantees and reach smaller, less experienced organizations. By combining capacity strengthening as part of our grant management support, we take grantee organizations where they are and aim to support them along pathways toward improved viability, visibility, and increased funding diversification. In addition to direct grants, building the capacity of territorial funds for grant-making—as vehicles for increased ownership and improved financial support for territorial agendas—is a crucial component for improved and more accessible finance for IPs, ADPs, and LCs.

Bundling rights

Human rights are indivisible; therefore, the promotion and defense of rights must necessarily be holistic and multi-faceted. Advancing collective tenure rights must go hand-in-hand with advancing the well-being of IPs, ADPs, and LCs by supporting sustainable local economies and inclusive and robust governance structures while favoring the equitable participation of women, men, and youth. Increasingly, RRI's support involves a more comprehensive and complex response to IPs', ADPs', and LCs' overall well-being.

Advancing collective action

Joint advocacy and collective action require ongoing and sustained support to enable IP, ADP, and LC coalitions and networks to exchange, coordinate, and convene between and beyond the framework of established national, regional, and global forums. Strengthening IP, ADP, and LC coalitions, particularly those led by women and youth, requires dedicated and sustained coaching, convening, and technical and organizational strengthening support to foster their emerging visibility and influence.

Safeguarding land defenders

Defending land rights often puts activists on the frontlines of conflict. The collective protection of land rights defenders needs increasingly to be seen as a key component of effective land governance. The safety of women and youth land defenders is particularly at risk given their multi-faceted social vulnerability. RRI is increasing its support for community vigilance networks, alliances with protection organizations, legal defense for defenders, and advocacy for increased local safeguards as threats to these actors continue to increase.

Governance, Accountability, and Stewardship

Board Members	Makes strategic decisions for the coalition regarding governance, finances, administration, expansion or review of programs, funding mechanisms, legal matters, and risk management.
Advisory Council	Oversees coalition management, approves new partners, and votes on partner representatives to the Board. Advises on ad hoc issues such as sign-on requests, crisis management, and programmatic guidance.
Partners	Organizations that engage with RRI's programs, such as co-authoring strategic analyses; co-hosting workshops, webinars, and events; joining funding mechanisms, strategic planning processes, and other RRI activities.
Fellows	Provides expert support to the RRI coalition in their areas of expertise. Shares thought leadership and guidance to the coalition via workshops, webinars, articles, and reports.
Council of Elders	Provides ad hoc advice to the RRI Coordinator and President and RRI's leadership. They are prominent voices in the land rights and environmental sector, including founders, senior leaders/elders from Indigenous, Afro-descendent, and local communities, former Board Chairs, and prominent individuals.
Secretariat	RRI staff responsible for program coordination and implementation.

In 2025, the RRI coalition reviewed its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that establishes the roles and responsibilities of the different coalition bodies. The MOU renewal happens every five years and is an opportunity to reflect on the composition of the coalition. For this cycle, through extensive consultations with RRI's partners, Board of Directors, fellows, coalition members and the Secretariat, we agreed to dramatically expand the coalition from 20 to more than 80 partners. The coalition also agreed to create an Advisory Council and a Council of Elders to manage and guide the coalition's growth.

The Secretariat, led by the RRI President and Coordinator, serves as the coalition's coordinating mechanism and is supported by senior and junior professionals, country and regional experts, and field leaders. It builds evidence to advance rights recognition, conducts research and advocacy, and promotes findings globally. It convenes diverse stakeholders, fosters collaboration, and supports tenure reform through country-level engagement. The Secretariat incubates initiatives that fill gaps in community land rights efforts and provides rapid response funding through the SRM. It also leads monitoring, evaluation, and learning, maintains donor relationships, diversifies revenue, and operates under the oversight of the RRI Board of Directors.

RRI is known for incubating and supporting alliances and initiatives to elevate the voices of women and youth and to engage with specific stakeholders to advance land and tenure rights. These include: the Women in Global South Alliance ([WiGSA](#)), a network of public forest agency leaders called [MegaFlorestais](#), the [Interlaken Group](#) of private sector actors, the Path to Scale, which seeks to hold donors accountable to global funding pledges, and a Global Youth Network that is advancing a [roadmap](#) developed at a Global Youth Congress hosted by RRI in 2025.

In addition to regional and thematic programs, RRI has created direct funding mechanisms to support IP, ADP, and LC communities and organizations. The Community Land Rights and Conservation Finance Initiative ([CLARIFI](#)) is a direct financing mechanism that supports the self-determined priorities of rightsholder communities by acting as a trusted bridge between communities and funders. The [Strategic Response Mechanism \(SRM\)](#) is intentionally designed to provide timely, flexible responses to emerging and urgent opportunities and threats. It complements the annual program planning process by enabling rapid funding for unexpected opportunities.

Financials 2025



\$11,041,223

in secured funding

\$3,846,838

in unsecured funding



\$15,213,343

in secured funding

\$9,363,655

in unsecured funding

81

projects

20

countries



\$605,553

in approved funding

14

projects

10

countries

*All totals are in USD



A woman bends over a fire outside a shelter, Honduras.
Photo: If Not Us Then Who?

2025
Annual
Report



**RIGHTS +
RESOURCES**