

## **PBI: Protecting the people who protect our planet**

Environmental defenders are on the frontlines of the fight for our planet. They are challenging the corporations and governments that prioritise profits over people and the environment. They are taking on the mining companies, agribusinesses, and oil conglomerates who are pumping out pollutants, destroying rainforests and poisoning water sources.

Deforestation, mining, and unbridled industrial development threaten critical ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, and oceans, which regulate global climate systems. Environmental defenders resist these destructive activities, advocating for the conservation and reforestation that is urgently needed to avoid a climate catastrophe. They hold to account the companies, politicians and criminal gangs that conspire to illegally plunder our natural resources - continuously pushing for justice and deterring others from following the same path.

But as well as their resistance, we also need Indigenous Peoples' knowledge of how to live in harmony with our natural environment. Their collective understanding and practices play an essential role in addressing climate change; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recognises that the voices of Indigenous communities and environmentalists must be heard if we're to stem the crisis of global warming.

And yet, instead of being supported for the brave stance they are taking, environmental defenders are criminalized, threatened, abused and even murdered. Instead of listening to their proposals and solutions, they are being ignored and sidelined. **More than four land and environmental defenders are killed every week, and 43% of these are Indigenous Peoples.** This number is only set to rise as companies, states and criminal organisations battle to control depleting resources, and race to mine the minerals needed for renewable energies. Mining was the biggest corporate killer of defenders in 2023.

***“Extractivism is a policy of death aimed at destroying the lungs of the world. As we know, the most important forests are located on Indigenous territories. Hence the offensive against Indigenous people.”** [Liliana Velázquez](#), an environmental defender in Mexico*

### **We keep environmental defenders safe, and heard.**

Through our pioneering model of Holistic Protective Accompaniment, Peace Brigades International supports environmental defenders so *their* climate solutions are heard and *their* work makes the change that their communities, and our planet, need.

Holistic Protective Accompaniment is a multi-layered approach, grounded in the unique needs of each environmental defender or community, and an analysis of what drives the actions of the corporations, armed groups or governments they stand against.

## **Keeping defenders safe**

Highly-trained volunteers from around the world physically accompany threatened defenders as they undertake their work - be that blocking logging routes, or fighting oil companies in the courtroom. This international presence is rooted in a sophisticated analysis of what drives the actions of those who seek to silence defenders and how we can dissuade them. It also provides the emotional support and solidarity that is so vital for those working in high pressure, and often extremely isolated, situations. Through tailored training and knowledge sharing, we ensure communities are equipped with the tools to remain safe and resilient for years to come.

**We're a global organisation firmly rooted in the communities we work alongside, and the only organisation to provide this on-the-ground protective support across a range of countries and continents - no matter how remote.**

**“Thanks to PBI, the threats against me have been greatly reduced. When people see you with PBI volunteers they think, he’s not alone, he’s accompanied, he’s strong.”**

Domingo Vázquez, Pelillo Negro Community (CCCND), Guatemala

## **Keeping defenders heard**

Environmental defenders should not have to fight to protect our planet alone. We use the access we have to international governments, coalitions and lawyers to connect those on the frontline defending our forests and rivers, with the people and organisations who can both help them, and learn from their deep knowledge of the planet's most important ecosystems.

And as a global organisation, we connect defenders across communities, countries and continents to share their experience and tactics for challenging destructive environmental projects and protecting their lands, whilst keeping themselves safe. We campaign for governments and other stakeholders, to create and implement laws and policies to protect defenders and support them in tackling the issues at stake.

**“Having the international community acknowledge our work makes me feel that I am not alone in the struggle, I feel supported and encouraged to keep soldiering on.”**

Faith Kasinaa, Kayole Social Justice Centre, Kenya

## **Our Impact**

With our support to keep them safe and heard, environmental defenders have taken on the giants of destructive industries, and won.

Together, we've closed polluting landfills in Mexico, stopped power plants in Kenya, claimed historic land rights agreements in Guatemala, protected rivers in Honduras and climate-critical forests in Indonesia. We are rooted in the communities we support - we share their challenges and successes - and our bonds of mutual understanding, trust and respect mean we'll continue to stand up for our planet together.

Find out more at [peacebrigades.org.uk](https://peacebrigades.org.uk) or contact [benleather@peacebrigades.org.uk](mailto:benleather@peacebrigades.org.uk).