

Dear Coalition members and partners,

As 2021 draws to an end, we would like to take a moment to recognize the incredible work that members and partners of the Coalition have been doing to advance community-led struggles around the world.

As the pandemic, growing inequality, and climate and ecological crises continue to harm communities in already vulnerable situations, it would be easy to lose hope. Yet, we are seeing more and more people fighting to turn the tide and joining forces to demand dignity, justice, equality, and respect for human rights and the planet.

We feel privileged to work with grassroots communities who are driving this collective movement, to learn from them, and to be inspired by their daily, revolutionary actions. In this newsletter, we present a snapshot of our collective achievements and struggles.

As we reflect on the continued pandemic uncertainty, we draw hope from the trust we have in the strength of our collective movement.

**We are strong, thanks to the expertise of Indigenous Peoples, local communities and human rights defenders who know how to resist and how to keep the struggle going.**

**We are strong, thanks to the web of connections and the powerful linkages we are weaving, with old and new allies.**

**We are strong, thanks to each seed we are planting together.**

**And we are looking forward to seeing these seeds grow into a beautiful forest in the coming months and years.**

The Coalition for Human Rights  
in Development Secretariat



# SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES, HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND MOVEMENTS

## The Community Resource Exchange

In July, we launched the [Community Resource Exchange](#). It's an ambitious and exciting pilot project, created to **co-develop strategies** with and among **communities defending their rights** in the context of international investments and development projects.

Following our first calls for proposals, we are now connected with over **90 communities** resisting harmful activities and we will be offering them linkages with allies and capacity-building. Additionally, 3 regional grant working groups of activists and CSO representatives selected **16 communities in 13 countries** that will receive small grants.



## Defenders in Development

This year, the Defenders in Development campaign has reviewed its **strategic objectives** through a collective process. You can find out more in this [infographic](#). Through the campaign, we have continued to push the banks to **address and prevent reprisals**, supporting human rights defenders demanding accountability and speaking out against violations linked to development projects.



For example, in [Uganda](#) we are working closely with the local organization *Twerwaneho Listeners' Club*, to support the indigenous communities living in the Tooro Semuliki Wildlife Reserve. In this area, the **World Bank** is giving funds to the Uganda Wildlife Authority, even if its game rangers - with the pretext of protecting nature - have been threatening, unlawfully evicting, and even killing local **indigenous people**.

## Finance in Common



In October, over 500 public development banks gathered at the 2nd edition of the [Finance in Common Summit](#), dedicated to the theme of transformation of **food systems**. We mobilized our members and partners, and we built solidarity with groups and movements working to defend the rights of **small-scale farmers, herders, fisherfolks and Indigenous Peoples**. In a joint [letter](#), signed by over 280 groups from 70 countries, we called on the banks to stop funding industrial agriculture and other projects related to food production that end up harming people and the planet.

# STRENGTHENING OUR REGIONAL WORK

In June, over 30 of our members and partners in **Latin America** met for a virtual strategic conversation. Despite the physical distance, it was a cherished moment to reconnect and to discuss collective **priorities**, foster **collaborations**, and explore new **synergies**. Find out more in this [infographic](#).



In **Africa**, some of our members are joining forces to develop a campaign targeting the African Development Bank. As the bank is currently reviewing its safeguards and access to information policies, dozens of groups across the continent and their international allies are sending a clear message: during these review processes and beyond, the bank should ensure more **transparency, inclusivity, accountability**, and meaningful **consultations** with impacted communities and civil society.

## POLICY WINS

### IDB Invest & IFC

The private sector arm of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB Invest) and International Finance Corporation (IFC) released a new **guidance** which lays out 10 steps companies should take to screen, **prevent and respond to reprisals**. This is a welcome and important step, although **much more is needed**.

### AIIB

In its **reviewed Environmental and Social Safeguards**, the Chinese-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank committed to work with its clients to **prevent and address risks of retaliation** against people impacted by its projects and human rights defenders who protect their rights.

### ADB

Thanks to the tireless advocacy of our members (including NGO Forum on ADB, Recourse and Urgewald), in May the Asian Development Bank announced it will **stop funding coal**. However, as you can read [here](#), there are still other critical issues that need to be addressed, like gas, geothermal and waste-to-energy.

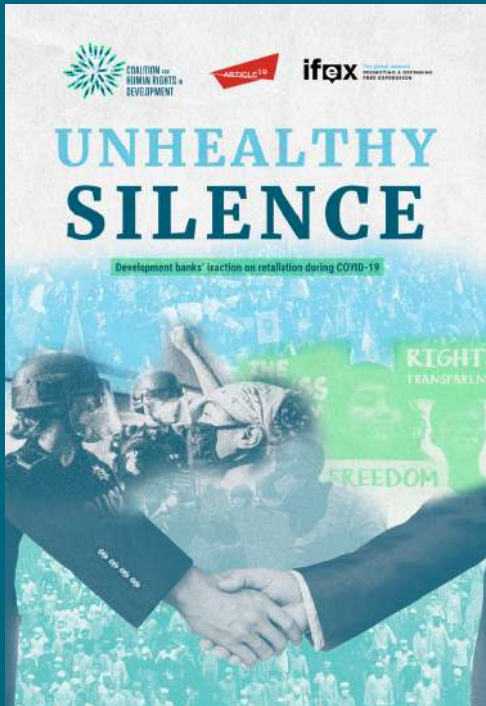
### AfDB

The AfDB finalized the review of its **accountability mechanism**. Thanks to the collective advocacy - led by some of our members such as Lumière Synergie pour le Développement, Accountability Counsel, and Inclusive Development International - the new procedures ensure a "**greater commitment to accessibility** for project-affected communities and should result in a **more effective complaints process**".





# DEVELOPMENT FINANCE AND COVID-19



Around the world, hundreds of people have been threatened, attacked or jailed for having provided **crucial information** about the spread of the virus or criticized the shortcomings of the COVID-19 response. Development banks have poured billions of dollars to support that response. However, as we expose in "**Unhealthy silence**", a report co-published with ARTICLE19 and IFEX, development banks have failed to take actions to ensure that journalists, doctors, defenders and others could **freely and safely** speak about their pandemic response.

Civil society organizations have also raised concerns regarding the **lack of transparency** and meaningful consultations, the fast-tracking of projects which meant environmental and social **safeguards** were often disregarded, and the fact that many projects - rather than helping those most impacted by the pandemic - ended up exacerbating structural issues around **poverty, inequality and debt**.

Are you interested in these issues?

Take a sneak peak at this **collection of case studies** developed by our members and partners, which we will launch in January 2022.

We invite you to also **submit your own reports here!**

Also, stay tuned for a **global overview** of various country-level analysis: "**Missing receipts**", which will also be released in 2022.



## A GROWING COALITION AND SECRETARIAT

This year we celebrated an important milestone: with the African Coalition for Corporate Accountability (ACCA), Civicus, Namati and Protection International Mesoamerica joining the Coalition, we have crossed the **100-members mark**.

We also welcomed six new colleagues in the secretariat to support the work of our members:

- **Tity Agbahey** (Africa Regional Coordinator)
- **Hisham Al Thamer** (Administrative Coordinator)
- **Dalile Antunez** (Collaborative Researcher)
- **Anne Bordatto** (CRE Regional Facilitator for Latin America)
- **Medea Turashvili** (CRE Regional Facilitator for Asia)
- **Carmina Obanil** transitioned from her role as Asia Regional Coordinator to CRE International Coordinator.



# COMMUNITY STRUGGLES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

## Brazil



In March, the KOWIT Association, in partnership with Instituto Maíra, launched the campaign "**Guardians of Iriri**". The campaign calls for the respect of the life and the land rights of the **Arara indigenous people**. To learn more, please see the [online petition](#) and this [video](#), also available in [Portuguese](#) and [Spanish](#). The **Arara women** leaders also took part in a powerful march of Indigenous Women, attended by over 4000 people, under the theme of "original women: reforesting minds to cure the land".

## India

in the state of Odisha, the Posco Pratirodh Sangram Samiti (PPSS) movement has been **resisting for 12 years** against attempts to evict them and install harmful projects in their territory. Their resistance is legendary, writes our member Environics Trust. Find out more in their blog [here](#).



## Malawi



In June, the Center for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR), with the support of the International Accountability Project (IAP), presented to the World Bank and IFC the results and key recommendations drawn from an in-depth **community-led research process** with the communities who are going to be affected by the Mpatamanga Hydropower Project. This participatory research methodology, rooted in the recognition of **communities' expertise** to lead their vision of development, sheds light on concerns that previously had not been shared with the banks investing in the project.

## Uzbekistan

The IFC and the EBRD are supporting Indorama Agro to develop the **cotton farming sector** in Uzbekistan, despite reports from the company's employees, farmers and the local communities on labour, environmental and **human rights violations**, including retaliation. Intensive [advocacy](#) by CEE Bankwatch Network and the Uzbek Forum for Human Rights has resulted in a pause to reprisals against the people protesting against the project, the establishing of a regular dialogue with the company, and the initiation of an immediate review of the project grievance redress mechanism. Moreover, Indorama employees registered the **first independent trade union** in the country, which is successfully working to prevent job cuts, improve labour conditions and negotiate labor contracts.