



**ANNUAL REPORT** **2025**  
 JANUARY-DECEMBER



**Indigenous Peoples Rights International**  
 Championing Indigenous Peoples Rights

KENYA TURKANA PEOPLE LDSF BENEFICIARY GEOFFRY ARIONG ||  
 TURKANA INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ACTION FOR DEVELOPMENT



## ANNUAL REPORT 2025

When Indigenous defenders are criminalized and subjected to violence, the objective is not justice.

The objective is silence, intimidation, collective punishment, and dispossession.

Criminalization and violence are designed to wear down Indigenous defenders and communities quietly until resistance becomes too costly to sustain.

The most worrying thing? This is getting worse.

**This report shows how**, in 2025, IPRI served as a shield and a bridge for Indigenous defenders and communities facing criminalization, violence, human rights violations with impunity, and systemic exclusion—connecting urgent on-the-ground protection with the long-term defense of Indigenous Peoples' rights in international and regional human rights systems.



**Indigenous Peoples Rights International (IPRI) exists to break that silence. This is not optional work. It is a protective infrastructure for a collective future.**



## THE DIMENSIONS OF VIOLENCE AND CRIMINALIZATION

In 2025, Indigenous Peoples across the world faced escalating criminalization and violence linked to the defense of lands and resources, conservation, extractive industries, infrastructure projects, and climate-related actions.

Arbitrary detention or criminal charges

Judicial harassment

Threats, surveillance, and forced displacement

Violence and attacks

Pressure not only on individuals, but on entire communities

In many cases, national protection mechanisms were absent, ineffective, or complicit in cases of violations.

**Criminalization wears Indigenous Peoples down, threatens lives, and instills fear.**

**That is its purpose.**



## PROTECTION AND SOLIDARITY IN HOTSPOTS

In moments of acute risk, **IPRI's Legal Defense and Sanctuary Fund (LDSF)** functions as an emergency response mechanism designed to move quickly, flexibly, and across borders.

### Immediate protection in 2025

Support covered 19 countries: Bangladesh, the Philippines, Thailand, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Kenya

Legal defense, enhanced security, temporary relocation, humanitarian assistance, psychosocial support

International visibility that reduced immediate risk

*Without the accompaniment and assistance of ANAPAC-RDC and IPRI, I would not be alive today. For my community, knowing that there are those who defend Indigenous Peoples' rights has given us the courage to denounce the violence we face. After two years in prison, I am now a free man with my family.*

PANDA BWIRA

YOUNG INDIGENOUS PYGMY FROM THE MASISI TERRITORY, DRC

**45 cases supported**

**7,280 people directly protected**

**Impact through Asia, the Pacific, Latin America, and Africa**



**This intervention often marked the difference between:**

prolonged detention and legal defense

silence and international scrutiny

isolation and collective support

## **ANALYSIS AND VISIBILITY, ESSENTIAL TOOLS**

Protection alone is not enough. Without documentation and research, cases remain invisible and repeatable.

**In 2025, IPRI strengthened its procedures and directly documented and verified:**

101 cases of criminalization of Indigenous Peoples

125 non-lethal and 29 lethal attacks

10 national case studies on incarceration

transforming on-the-ground experiences into structured evidence used for advocacy.

**IPRI also published:**

A Guide on the General Recommendation 39 on Indigenous Women and Girls of the Committee on the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW GR39)

A Jurisprudence compendium on Just Transition-related laws

Xanharu #6, compendium on legislation and jurisprudence

**These outputs enabled**

Identification of systemic patterns, not isolated incidents

Evidence-based advocacy before UN and regional mechanisms

Stronger understanding and engagement with international protection systems

Collective learning across regions and movements

**More than 250 cases of criminalization  
and attacks documented and verified**

**10 national case studies**

**2 compendiums and 1 guide on international  
standards for Indigenous Peoples' rights**



*We have moved from living in fear to standing in solidarity.  
With legal support for 24 victims, we no longer feel helpless—  
we have the strength to defend our rights and our ancestral  
land. We are no longer silent; we stand together.*

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS ACTIVE MEMBERS (IRAM)  
CAMBODIA

## **ADVOCACY, FROM THE GROUND TO INTERNATIONAL SPACES**

For many Indigenous defenders and communities, international and regional human rights systems are the last remaining line of protection once national systems fail. IPRI's sustained engagement with the United Nations and regional mechanisms is thereby strategic.

In 2025, IPRI engaged with:

### **UN Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures:**

- CEDAW – Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
- CERD – Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- CESCR – Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- CCPR – Human Rights Committee (Committee on Civil and Political Rights)
- CRPD – Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- CAT – Committee against Torture
- WGAD – Working Group on Arbitrary Detention
- WGBHR – Working Group on Business and Human Rights

### **UN global processes on Climate and environmental governance:**

- IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature
- UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- CBD – Convention on Biological Diversity

### IPRI contributed to:

A UN Human Rights Committee resolution recognizing the existence of ongoing and intergenerational harm due to forced displacement in Guatemala

The establishment of an Indigenous Peoples Focal Point Person within the Treaty Bodies in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

### IPRI provided inputs to:

OHCHR- on human rights and biodiversity

CESCR – General Comment 27 on the environmental dimension of rights

IPRI developed consultations among Indigenous organizations on Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) with the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights.

### Supported Indigenous leaders' participation in:

UNPFII- UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

EMRIP - Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Human Rights Council

UN Forum on Business and Human Rights

Additionally, seven (7) Indigenous defenders participated in a pilot study tour engaging with UN human rights mechanisms in Geneva, Switzerland.

*“Before partnering with IPRI, the community felt they were facing their problems alone. With IPRI’s presence, the community feels greatly assisted in addressing legal challenges.”*

MARTHEN SALU

ASSOCIATION OF DEFENDERS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE ARCHIPELAGO - PPMAN, INDONESIA

### Why this work is essential

Supports access to global accountability mechanisms

Defends hard-won Indigenous rights and advocacy spaces

Generates legal tools for use in national contexts

Deepens international standards through Indigenous perspectives

Keeps global spaces connected and responsive to lived realities on the ground

**IPRI is firmly established as a trusted Indigenous Peoples’ organization supporting access to global accountability and justice mechanisms.**



## ENVIRONMENT AND THE ADDED FRONTLINES OF CRIMINALIZATION

A growing number of criminalization cases are linked to projects framed as environmental protection, conservation, or climate action.

### Key actions

- On GBF- Global Biodiversity Framework:

One criminalization report      5 short documentaries      3 regional studies

- 5 Global and regional capacity-buildings

### On international engagement:

CBD processes and Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice- SBSTTA 27      Conference of the Parties- COP30      IUCN World Conservation Congress      UN Environment Assembly

*With IPRI's support, we moved from a general understanding of what was happening in our territories regarding the Just Transition to a deeper political and economic mapping. That gave us real tools to act.*

CECILIO SOLÍS LIBRADO  
CIELO, MEXICO

**Environmental protection cannot come at the cost of Indigenous Peoples' rights.**



## MAKING IMPACT VISIBLE: STORIES AND GLOBAL REACH

Protection and advocacy are strengthened when they are visible.

In 2025, IPRI's communications work amplified Indigenous voices and reframed criminalization as a global human rights issue.

### Communications achievements

19 stories published      30+ statements and urgent alerts issued      Multilingual content      23 global and regional events covered live

**From isolation to global visibility**



## WHEN PROTECTION IS TESTED

## Criminalization is evolving and amplifying its scope.



### The Pressure Points of 2025

As IPRI expanded its response, the environments in which it operates grew more complex and restrictive.

#### Shrinking civic space:

Expanding misuse of criminal law, weakened or complicit protection systems, and heightened security risks.

#### Escalating urgency:

A rising number of high-risk cases demanding rapid intervention.

#### International constraints:

UN and regional mechanisms require sustained Indigenous presence to prevent regression on rights.

#### Green frontlines:

Increasing criminalization linked to conservation, climate finance, and “just transition” initiatives.

## WHAT 2025 CONFIRMED

## Protection must be Indigenous-led, integrated, and international.



### Core Lessons

**Integrated protection works:** Legal defense is strongest when connected to documentation, communications, and international advocacy.

**Speed saves lives:** Flexible, rapid decisions are decisive in moments of acute risk.

**International engagement is essential:** Sustained presence in global systems protects hard-won rights and shapes evolving standards.

**Indigenous leadership is non-negotiable:** Effective protection depends on Indigenous-led strategy and analysis.

*Fighting for Indigenous rights often comes at a high personal cost. IPRI's support makes it possible for communities to stand up for themselves. Supporting IPRI means supporting Indigenous communities in defending their rights, their dignity and their future.*

FRED SIMIREN KARIANKEI  
MAASAI INDIGENOUS DEFENDER, KENYA



## WHY THIS WORK CANNOT STOP



**This is not optional work. It is the protective infrastructure that enables Indigenous Peoples to access justice, accountability, and collective security.**

IPRI's experience confirms a structural reality:



Without rapid legal defense, defenders are silenced.



Without documentation, patterns remain invisible.



Without international advocacy, hard-won rights erode.



By operating simultaneously at the community level and within international systems, IPRI ensures that protection today becomes justice—and that Indigenous Peoples are not left to face criminalization alone.

*To those who support Indigenous struggles from afar, I urge you to continue doing so through IPRI. It is an effective and trusted pathway that ensures support arrives at the right moment and enables timely action.*

MAYOR JESUS CHAVEZ  
NASA PEOPLE, COLOMBIA.

## STRENGTHENING THE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR GROWTH

As the programme expanded in 2025, IPRI's team grew from 13 staff to 24 staff.

However, growth outpaced internal systems. Strengthening coordination, supervision, workflow, and risk management has therefore become a strategic priority for 2026.

**Growth requires stronger internal foundations.**





# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2026

Protective infrastructure must be strengthened to meet evolving threats.



To consolidate gains and ensure sustainable impact, IPRI will focus on four interconnected priorities:

## 1. Institutional Strengthening

- ◆ Improve internal systems.
- ◆ Invest in staff development, role clarity, and performance frameworks.
- ◆ Strengthen operational security and risk management.
- ◆ Deepen collaboration with Indigenous organizations and allies.

## 2. Fully Operational Data & Documentation System

- ◆ Ensure the IPRI database is functional, updated, and strategically used.
- ◆ Produce consistent, data-driven advocacy and communications outputs.
- ◆ Strengthen evidence-based engagement.

## 3. Expansion of the Legal Defense & Sanctuary Fund (LDSF)

- ◆ Scale up legal and emergency support.
- ◆ Strengthen regional and pro bono legal partnerships.
- ◆ Improve case tracking, impact monitoring, and strategic litigation pathways.

## 4. Intensified Evidence-Based Policy Advocacy

- ◆ Deepen engagement with private sector actors and financial institutions.
- ◆ Address criminalization linked to climate action, biodiversity policies, renewable energy.
- ◆ Advance accountability through global human rights and responsible business conduct mechanisms.



**Criminalization seeks to weaken  
Indigenous Peoples' collective life.  
Protection sustains it.  
For justice.  
For diversity.  
For a living planet.**



PARTICIPATION IN COP30, BRAZIL || NATALIA RAMÍREZ, IPRI

The Indigenous Peoples Rights International (IPRI) is a global Indigenous Peoples' organization established in 2019 in response to the grave situation of Indigenous Peoples who are increasingly being criminalized, killed, disappeared, and subjected to the worst forms of violence.

We are leading the Global Initiative to Address and Prevent Criminalization, Violence, and Impunity Against Indigenous Peoples—an Indigenous-led global effort to strengthen coordination, solidarity, and actions to prevent, respond to, and reduce acts of criminalization, violence, and impunity against Indigenous Peoples; and to provide better protection and access to justice for victims not only as individuals but as collectives or communities.

### **Global Board of Directors**

- **Sandra Creamer** (Waanyi/Kalkadoon, Australia), Chairperson
- **Lars-Anders Baers** (Saami, Sweden), Vice-Chairperson
- **Naomi Kipuri** (Maasai, Kenya), Secretary
- **Leonor Zalabata Torres** (Arhuaco, Colombia), Treasurer
- **Victoria Tauli-Corpuz** (Kankanaey, Philippines)
- **Rukka Sombolinggi** (Toraja, Indonesia)
- **Wilfredo Alanguí** (Kankanaey, Philippines)
- **Pavel Vasilievich Sulyandziga** (Udege, Russia)
- **Beverly Jacobs** (Iroquois, Canada)
- **Natali Segovia** (Quechua, USA)
- **Joan Carling** (Kankanaey, Philippines), *ex officio*/ Executive Director

### **Affiliates**

Indigenous organizations and networks supporting IPRI in addressing the serious challenges of Indigenous Peoples against criminalization and impunity through solidarity, cooperation and collaboration.

### **Networks IPRI belongs to:**

- Zero Tolerance Initiative- ZTI
- International Land Coalition/Land Rights Now
- Leaders Network for Environmental Activists and Defenders- LEAD
- International Union for Conservation of Nature – IUCN
- Indigenous Caucus of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity -IIFB
- Indigenous Caucus of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change- IIPFCC
- Indigenous Peoples Caucus of the Forum on Business and Human Rights
- International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights- ESCR-Net

### **Contact us**



**Indigenous Peoples Rights International**  
Championing Indigenous Peoples Rights



[ipri@iprights.org](mailto:ipri@iprights.org)



<https://www.iprights.org>

### **Find us on social media**



[Indigenous Peoples Rights International](#)



[@iprightsintl](#)



[Indigenous Peoples Rights International](#)



[The Indigenous Peoples Rights International](#)