

# Support to Environment, Land, Indigenous Rights & Climate CSOs



Lifeline is a consortium of **7 international NGOs** that provides grants to **at-risk civil society organizations (CSOs)**. Since environmental, land, and indigenous rights organizations and defenders are among the most vulnerable to attacks due to their human rights work, Lifeline seeks to prioritize outreach and support to groups representing these communities. Lifeline can intervene at critical moments, providing emergency financial support and short-term advocacy and resiliency grants to help groups adapt to threats and return to their vital work. Lifeline can also support **unregistered groups, coalitions, community groups, and networks**.

## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANTS:

Lifeline provides emergency assistance to respond to immediate threats & can adapt to the particular needs of environmental groups or indigenous defenders operating in remote geographic locations.

Grants can provide for:

- **Secure transportation** suited to the local conditions, such as short-term costs associated with use of a reliable motorboat.
- **Legal support** to community leaders detained for breaking restrictive assembly laws, or wrongly accused of trespassing for organizing protests on community lands claimed by politically-connected business interests.
- **Prison visits** so that family or community members can visit land rights leaders who may be detained in jails that are long distances from their community
- **Temporary relocation** if CSO leaders or social leaders face acute threats and need to find safe haven for a period of time.

### EXAMPLE:

Lifeline supported an **indigenous rights group** that had suffered direct threats to implement an early warning system to warn of an imminent attack through security assistance, including motion sensor lights, security cameras, and two-way radios **with an independent power source to work in a rain forest**.

Right image: Press event against criminalization of indigenous leaders, San Marco Guatemala – (cc) Prensa Comunitaria

**300+**  
Environment, Land,  
Indigenous rights &  
Climate groups  
supported



## RESILIENCY GRANTS:

Resiliency grants enable at-risk environmental, land, and indigenous rights CSOs to proactively take steps to prevent or mitigate the threats they face.

This could include projects to:

- **Provide psychosocial, digital, and physical protection trainings** to respond to private companies that hire former intelligence officials to spy on detractors.
- **Provide legal training** and aid to respond to judicial harassment, including criminalization of non-violent protest actions.
- **Conduct risk assessments** to identify the risks to environmental and indigenous defenders and craft strategies to address them.
- **Develop collective protection networks** at a local level that would look at the safety of social leaders within the larger community.

### EXAMPLE:

Lifeline supported a convening of indigenous land rights defenders in **Para state in Brazil** to improve their safety and security. The supported group brought together defenders representing different communities to work on **strengthening community responses** to build resiliency and develop context-specific security protocols. The project included following-on training on the security protocols and the creation of a **legal advisory council** with national and international lawyers.

## ADVOCACY GRANTS:

Advocacy grants assist local CSOs to identify challenges to freedom of association and assembly and target key actors to push back against these threats.

Examples include:

- **Analyzing the impact of restrictive legislation** (including protest laws) and organizing a campaign to repeal or revise.
- **Building a broad-based coalition** of CSOs to engage decision-makers at a local or national level
- **Strategic litigation** that challenges restrictions to freedom of association and assembly, including critical infrastructure laws.
- **Community mobilization** or media campaigns to counter negative narratives about civil society

### EXAMPLE:

Lifeline supported a CSO in **Colombia** to conduct advocacy in front of local and national policy makers with the goal of creating a better enabling environment for environmental and indigenous rights CSOs in the country. The organization secured a commitment from the national government to provide **better protection mechanisms for environmental and indigenous defenders**.

*Note: Lifeline only supports activities to protect CSOs' ability to associate and assemble but not to tackle underlying land or environmental issues.*