

Democracy's Immune System

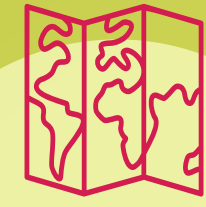
Grassroots Climate Justice Movements are Democratic Infrastructure

Globally, democracy is weakening while climate impacts accelerate. Civic space is closing. Dissent is criminalized. Climate philanthropy has invested heavily in technical and policy solutions. But these strategies cannot succeed where democratic systems are failing.

The question is no longer whether climate solutions exist, but whether societies have the democratic capacity to implement, defend, and sustain them.

Grassroots climate justice movements are essential democratic infrastructure for climate mitigation and adaptation. Like a healthy immune system, grassroots movements are decentralized, locally responsive, and capable of learning over time. They defend against attacks on climate solutions and the people who advance them, and build the long-term resilience needed for climate action to withstand political disruptions.

CLIMA FUND at a Glance



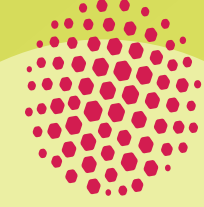
168
COUNTRIES

where CLIMA Fund partners work



25k+
GRANTS

made to grassroots groups



130+
YEARS

of collective experience



125+
STAFF

across five global public foundations

How grassroots climate justice movements function like an immune system

52%

REDUCTION IN DEFORESTATION

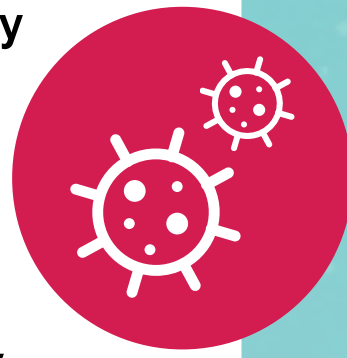
by 36 Indigenous communities in the Peruvian Amazon using satellites and community patrols.

DETECT THREATS

Immune cells scan the body for early signs of harm, enabling a rapid response.

ORGANIZE WITH IMMEDIACY

Movements work cross-sectorally monitor ecological, political, and corporate threats before crises escalate.



DEFEND

Immune cells mobilize to protect the body from attack and further damage.

DEFEND RIGHTS & CIVIC SPACE

Movements defend environmental defenders, resist repression, and protect dissent.



16

COUNTRIES RATIFIED THE ESCAZÚ AGREEMENT

to protect environmental defenders after years of organizing by movements

COORDINATE RESPONSE

Immune cells communicate across the body to activate a collective response.

TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZING AT SCALE

Movements build broad constituencies and transnational solidarity to respond to crises that cross borders and sectors.



1000s

of MOVEMENTS ACROSS 80 COUNTRIES

are convened in the Nyéléni process to coordinate global agendas for food sovereignty, climate justice, and democratic governance.

BUILD RESILIENCE

Immune systems develop memory, becoming stronger and better prepared for future threats.

SUSTAIN CLIMATE ACTION

Movements cultivate frontline leadership, strengthen democratic institutions, and invest in community-based systems that endure beyond individual campaigns.



23k

DEMOCRATICALLY GOVERNED COMMUNITY FOREST GROUPS ACROSS NEPAL

benefit 16 million people and have doubled forest cover thanks to the movement FECOFUN.

ADAPT

Immune systems learn from what they encounter, changing response and capacity over time.

TRANSFORM SYSTEMS

Movements reshape laws, enact democratic experiments, and restore rights for land and people.



2000

DEMOCRATIC SETTLEMENTS

across 17 million acres are now independently governed by Brazil's Landless Workers' Movement (MST) to regenerate food systems

MAINTAIN HOMEOSTASIS

Immune systems help the body maintain stability and function with constant change.

ENABLE DURABLE CLIMATE OUTCOMES

Movements strengthen democratic legitimacy, accountability, and participation so climate policies can be implemented and sustained.



2-3x

LOWER

deforestation rate in Indigenous-governed areas than in similar, non-tenured areas in the Amazon.

Democratic infrastructure for climate action remains dramatically underfunded

Invest in the Democracy's Immune System Initiative

By supporting grassroots climate justice movements, climate funders strengthen the democratic infrastructure that makes durable climate progress possible. The CLIMA Fund is raising \$10M over five years to invest in movements that protect democratic space, practice democratic governance, and transform democratic systems. **Without strong democracies, climate solutions cannot be sustained.**

Less than 30% of philanthropic climate funding is directed to global groups (outside U.S. and Europe) where key climate & democracy struggles are unfolding.

Only around 1% of climate finance reaches Indigenous Peoples and local communities directly.



CLIMA Fund members



Thousand Currents

Please join us: community@climasolutions.org