

A man wearing a red t-shirt, khaki shorts, and a white headwrap is standing on a boat, handling a large white sail. The sail is partially unfurled, and the man is looking towards the right. The background shows a blue sky with light clouds and a body of water in the distance.

Accountability Counsel

# RAISING VOICES, DEMANDING JUSTICE

“Leverage beyond compare, and at a global scale.”

- Steve Toben, President, Flora Family Foundation

# WHAT WE DO

## Accountability Counsel defends the rights of vulnerable communities around the world.

We are lawyers who don't use courts, but instead help communities use little-known complaint offices tied to the banks that finance projects, like dams, mines and oil pipelines. We bring the concerns of people harmed by those projects to those with power to make change. We hold banks, corporations and international institutions to their human rights and environmental responsibilities.



### Historic Victory: Oaxaca, Mexico

*A hydroelectric project threatened the livelihoods and culture of indigenous villagers who faced losing the natural spring on which they depend.*

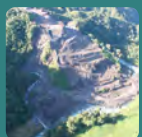
- With our support, the dialogue process resulted in an agreement to stop the project and its harmful impacts and the US agency that financed the project acknowledged lessons learned.



### Changing Global Policy: Washington, DC

*We pay attention to the details in the rules that determine whether or not accountability offices work.*

- We convened leaders of the world's accountability offices and advocates who support community complaints. The leaders requested that we make the groundbreaking meeting an annual event.
- We led a successful campaign to call for reform the accountability office of a U.S. federal agency that was joined by AFL-CIO, Amnesty International, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Sierra Club, Oxfam and others.
- The U.S. State Department's accountability office improved its transparency as a result of our advocacy.



### Saving a River: Panama

*A coalition of organizations are fighting to save the Chiriquí Viejo River from two dams, which will severely harm the River, surrounding biodiversity, and critical access to water. With our support:*

- The accountability office of a bank financing the project found that the dams violated many of the bank's key rules and the bank conditioned money for the project on creation of a plan to address the violations.



### Challenging Corporate Abuse: Buchanan, Liberia

*An agribusiness project funded by a U.S. agency caused loss of livelihoods for workers, charcoalers and small farmers, contamination of water, and sexual abuse.*

- We supported local people harmed by the project to document the harm and formulate a strategy to hold the corporations, banks and governments accountable.
- Our gender focus uncovered a layer of sexual abuse that is empowering women to challenge these abuses for the first time.

## Grassroots Lawyering

**Communities abused by powerful corporations and institutions need advocates** to level the playing field in their demands for justice. We are those advocates. We focus on raising the voices of community members, particularly women, who are often the most deeply harmed by abuses and the least heard.



### Defending Indigenous Rights: Sindhuli District, Nepal

*Indigenous villagers in Nepal are challenging a World Bank-supported transmission line that will displace already poverty stricken communities, and disrupting religious, historical, and cultural sites.*

- We documented and supported complaints of local communities resulting in the complaint moving forward toward a full investigation. The World Bank has committed to address and resolve concerns of communities.



### Ensuring Community Voice in Development Decisions: Kenya

*Communities across Kenya are facing livelihood threats, displacement and environmental destruction from a mass scale transit corridor project.*

- We assisted leaders from across Northern Kenya in developing a mission and objectives for working together to address the project's risks and provide ongoing support to track international investors in the project to bridge information barriers.

## Policy Advocacy

**The rules of the game matter.** We advocate for independent, fair, transparent, accessible, and effective complaint offices that hold corporations, financial institutions and governments to their social and environmental rules.



### Supporting Nomadic Herders: South Gobi, Mongolia

*Herders face threats to their traditional way of life due to impacts from Rio Tinto's massive copper and gold mine in the South Gobi desert.*

- Our advocacy resulted in the U.S. government's statement questioning the project's social and environmental planning.
- We empowered the herders to negotiate on fairer footing with Rio Tinto, resulting in an agreement to engage independent experts to study impacts on herders' pasture, access to water and water quality.



### Defending Tea Plantation Workers: Assam, India

*Workers on a tea plantation are demanding that the company end inhumane working and living conditions, coercion, and pressure of workers on the plantations.*

- Our support has empowered tea workers to navigate use of an accountability office and to make informed decisions about how to move their demands forward.

## WHY WE PARTNER WITH ACCOUNTABILITY COUNSEL



“The lawyers from Accountability Counsel supported us to defend the rights of our community. Every step of the way, they worked tirelessly and with patience to make sure our voices were heard. We stopped a project from destroying our freshwater creek, a treasured resource, and the people and environment in our region have Accountability Counsel to thank.”

— *Gabino Vicente, Santa Úrsula, Oaxaca, Mexico*

## WHY I SUPPORT ACCOUNTABILITY COUNSEL



“As a longtime supporter of human rights organizations, I am highly aware that long-term impact only happens through simultaneous advocacy at both the grassroots and the grasstops levels. I support Accountability Counsel because it is one of the few human rights organizations that uses a bifurcated strategy to effectively accomplish both of these goals at once, leveraging limited resources to take enormous strides in support of the global movement for human rights.”

— *Kathleen Kelly Janus, Supporter and Board Chair, Accountability Counsel*

## WHY WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT



“Every day, from Liberia to Mongolia to India, our dedicated team works above capacity and under challenging conditions to respond to calls for counsel from communities around the world. At the same time, the tools we rely on are under constant threat. Our focused dedication is required to keep the pressure on international institutions and governments to ensure that complaint offices are fair and effective. We have proven that our model delivers accountability, and now we look forward to your support to help us grow and continue to thrive.”

— *Natalie Bridgeman Fields, Executive Director, Accountability Counsel*