

ESCR-NET

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



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BOARD LETTER



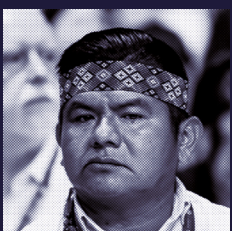
Ayushi Kalywan,
FIAN International | Germany



Bidya Shrestha Maharjan,
Human Rights Awareness
Center (HRAC) | Nepal



Christiana Saiti Louwa, World Forum
of Fisher People (WFFP) | Kenya



Daniel Santi Gualinga,
Pueblo Originario Kichwa
de Sarayaku | Ecuador

As ESCR-Net members – led by those on the frontlines of crises – we continued to connect our struggles across regions, utilizing our collective power to resist systemic challenges and advance transformative change. As highlighted in this Annual Report, this meant mobilizing in solidarity in response to threats and harm impacting human rights defenders and supporting their vital human rights work, often in contexts of growing authoritarianism and militarism. This also meant powerful community-led research documenting the fallout of climate change and informing members’ advocacy and campaigning in their local contexts, as well as in global spaces.

Collective submissions rooted in the experiences, analysis, and solutions of resisting communities led to landmark legal precedents on climate justice and care. Exposing and denouncing corporate capture was crucial to preventing the complete co-optation of key UN processes, enabling us to take strides forward in our substantive agenda. Collective advocacy both inside and outside the halls of financial power linked debt justice, climate justice, and care, ensuring a human rights-based and gender transformative approach was central, and strengthening movement building across issues. The collective priorities – our ‘guiding stars’ – that members articulated during our September 2024 Global Strategy Meeting felt even more prescient amid intensifying crises, which left few sectors or regions untouched. With ongoing member leadership, we are continuing to adapt to the volatility of the global political landscape, which has inevitably rippled into the funding ecosystem.

Amid both setbacks and achievements, 2025 was also a momentous year for ESCR-Net institutionally. As we anticipated in our Board Letter in the 2024 Annual Report, after more than a decade of tireless and selfless leadership, Chris Grove transitioned out of his role as Executive Director of ESCR-Net in December. Once again, we are profoundly grateful to Chris for his deep commitment to ESCR-Net’s member-led model of work and core principles as political understandings of how systemic change must happen.



Debbie Stothard, Alternative
ASEAN Network on Burma
(ALTSEAN-Burma) | Southeast Asia



Hala Murad, Dibeem Association for
Environmental Development | Jordan



Noam Sandweiss-Back, The Kairos
Center for Religions, Rights, and
Social Justice | United States



Misun Woo (ex officio),
ESCR-Net Executive Director

Given the political vision and clarity required for this difficult moment, the Board was very happy that Misun Woo accepted our invitation to become ESCR-Net’s next Executive Director. Misun has a long track record of advocating human rights, connecting diverse struggles in Asia-Pacific and beyond for gender, climate, and economic justice. In contexts of repression and authoritarianism, she has facilitated practical solidarity, centered movements, and effectively elevated community demands in regional and global spaces. With her coordination, Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development became a powerful regional network, which has been central to building the collective analysis and advocacy of ESCR-Net. With Misun as Executive Director and with the ongoing leadership of ESCR-Net’s over 360 members across 80 countries, we are encouraged that ESCR-Net is well-positioned to realize its mission “to build a global movement to make human rights and social justice a reality for all”.

Who We Are

ESCR-Net unites 360 members across 80 countries and territories — including social movements, Indigenous Peoples, trade unions, feminist organizations, and environmental defenders — working collectively for social, economic, and environmental justice



360 TOTAL MEMBERS



296

INCLUDING

45

ORGANIZATIONAL
MEMBERS

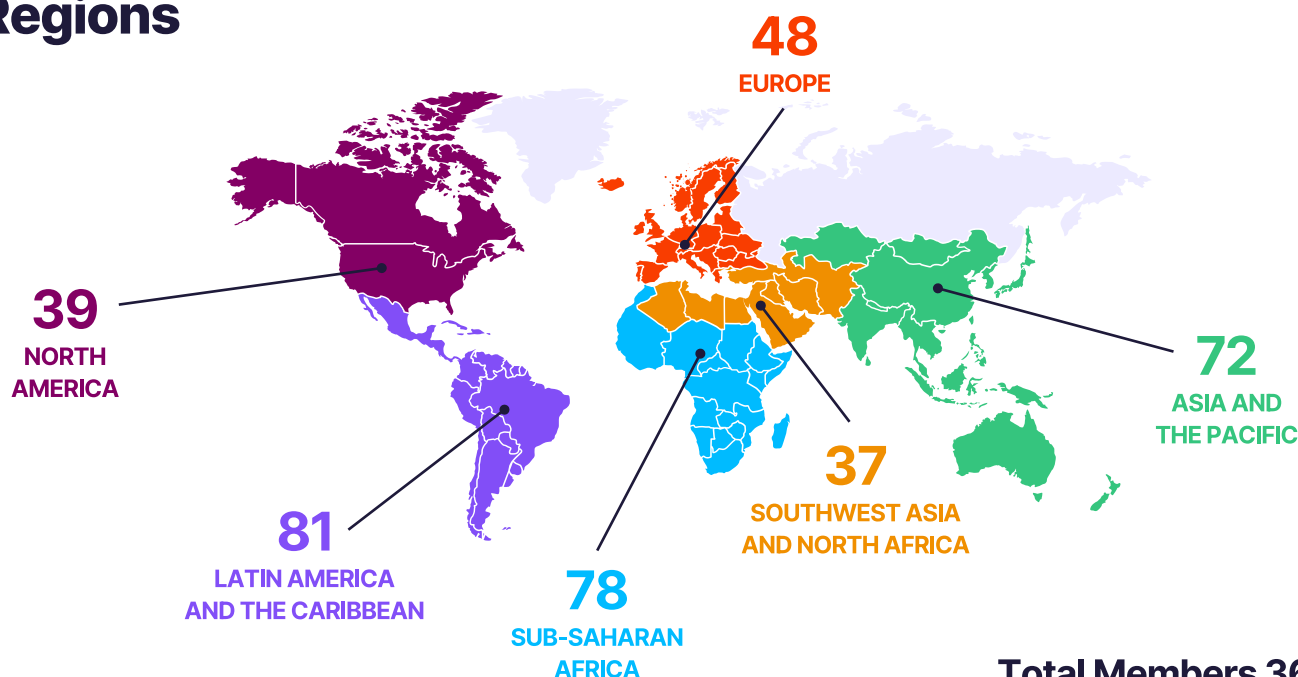
SOCIAL MOVEMENT
MEMBERS



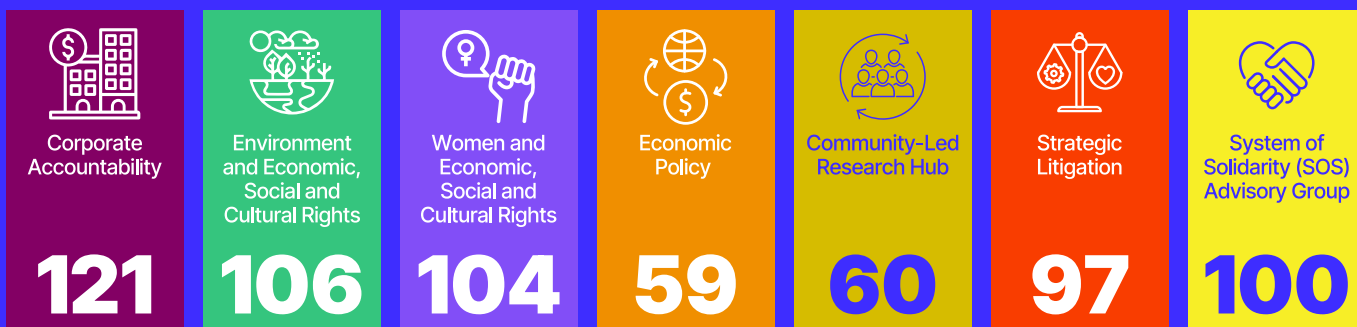
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INDIVIDUAL
MEMBERS

Regions



Our Areas of Work and Members' Engagement



How We Work



ESCR-Net Global Strategy Meeting / Chiang Mai, Thailand, September 2024.

ESCR-Net is its members. Our member-led model of work is grounded in three core principles:

- The centrality of social movements embodying the resistance of affected communities.
- An intersectional approach foregrounding feminist analysis.
- Regional and gender balance in leadership.

These principles inform the four interconnected pillars central to ESCR-Net's **theory of change**:

Solidarity = Mobilizing the collective power of the Network to defend members under threat through our System of Solidarity, advancing defenders' wider demands for human rights and environmental justice, countering repression and the broader political economy of violence.

Mutual Learning = Sharing strategies and experiences via grassroots women leaders exchanges, feminist participatory action research, strategic litigation workshops and our Caselaw Database, protection trainings, and multilingual webinars.

Shared Analysis = Deepening common understandings of systemic challenges and building inclusive demands for transformative alternatives, as reflected in our Common Charter for Collective Struggle, social pact on care, and popular education comics on corporate capture.

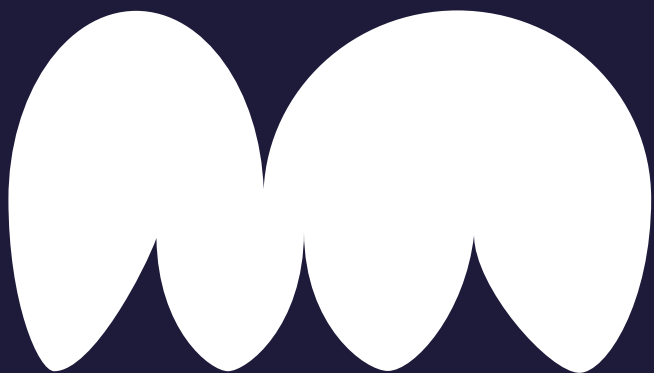
Collective Action = Centering the knowledge and demands of resisting communities to advance climate, debt, and gender justice; corporate accountability via effective regulation and remedy; and precedent-setting legal cases, including for land and territory rights.

Our Structure

Our seven-person Board is elected every three years from and by members, based on our core principles. ESCR-Net working groups, a primary vehicle through which members coordinate collective efforts, currently include:

- **Corporate Accountability**
- **Economic Policy**
- **Environment and ESCR**
- **Community-Led Research Hub**
- **Social Movements and Grassroots**
- **Strategic Litigation**
- **Women and ESCR**
- **System of Solidarity**

Increasingly, strategic priorities bring these working groups together to address intersecting crises, such as debt, climate, and care. The newly formed Community-Led Research Hub (previously the 'Monitoring Working Group') will facilitate participatory and community-led research across the Network, guided by an expanded advisory group of members as prioritized by members at the Global Strategy Meeting (GSM) in September 2024.



ESCR-NET'S 2025–2029 STRATEGIC VISION

Towards the World We Want



ESCR-Net Global Strategy Meeting / Chiang Mai, Thailand, September 2024.

Emerging from ESCR-Net's Global Strategy Meeting, Building Collective Power to Shape Our Futures (Chiang Mai, Thailand, 2024), members identified a shared horizon for the next five years: a set of “**guiding stars**” that reflect the systemic transformations needed to build a more just, feminist, and sustainable future. As outlined in ESCR-Net's Strategic and Institutional Development Plan for 2025 to 2029, these are the following:

1. Peoples and movements strengthen their power and lead **decision-making processes, eliminating corporate capture and claiming their right to self-determination** and their sovereignty from governments, corporations, and economic elites for the well-being of people, in harmony with the planet, and **abiding by human rights and feminist visions**.
2. People-led movements will use divestment and sanctions to **hold corporations, States, private actors, and financial institutions accountable** and ensure full **reparations** for direct and indirect harms to the people and the planet.
3. Communities strengthen collective action to exercise their **sovereignty, self-determination, and care over territories** and lead decolonial evidence, knowledge, and **solutions to the climate crisis**.
4. Communities and peoples' movements **hold states, private and financial actors accountable** using **enforceable legal frameworks** that ensure prevention, integral reparation, and the fulfillment of rights of peoples, nature, and territories.
5. Generate **just, feminist, and equitable care economies** as alternatives to systems of oppression, based on *el buen vivir*, dignity, and collective care and security for everyone in all their diversity.

6. End the sexual and gender division of labor and inequalities, **recognise care as decent and dignified work**, and fulfill the **right to care as a public and collective responsibility** for a world of work free of all forms of violence and harassment.
7. A strengthened global people's movement to champion **cancellation of unjust/illegitimate debts and the right to default**, towards a self-determined and sustainable socio-economic future, and to achieve decolonized care systems.
8. A **transformed global financial architecture** where impacted communities can actively and fully participate in development financing processes and challenge neo-colonial paradigms through popular political analysis.

Members also identified the strategies needed to move from visions to actions:

- **Strengthen member-to-member solidarity** to build inclusive, connected movements that prioritize collectivism over individualism.
- **Advance access to justice through movement-aligned legal strategies** that drive structural change.
- **Build narratives from communities' knowledge** using community-led research and strategic communications.
- **Expand popular political education across all areas of work**, deepening understanding of systemic injustice through feminist, anti-imperialist, and political-economic analysis.
- **Use these strategies to create coherent and impactful global campaigns** aligned with our collective vision and amplifying member-led efforts at all levels.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025

Confronting Violence and Repression



International delegation visits Garifuna communities in Honduras in solidarity with their struggle for land, justice and self-determination. August 2025.
Photo: Red de Defensoras de Honduras.

ESCR-Net's System of Solidarity (SOS) mobilizes members across regions to take action when fellow human rights defenders and communities face immediate threats and harm, as well as supporting defenders' broader human rights work, and confronting the political economy of violence driving repression

“The meeting we had with the Attorney General did have a positive impact... our compañeros were set free. Here no one pays attention to us, but when they see international people, then they act differently.”

Francis López, Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras

Collective Presence as Protection for Garífuna Land Defenders

Five Afro-Indigenous Garífuna land defenders won their freedom just days after the international solidarity visit led by a delegation of 10 ESCR-Net members representing social movements and protection organizations from Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, and Europe.

Garífuna communities in Honduras continued to defend their people and territories despite the systemic non-implementation of Inter-American Court rulings affirming their land rights and a political economy of violence driven by extractive industries, tourism, and drug trafficking.

The solidarity visit in August 2025 was an opportunity to deepen member-to-member solidarity and raise the visibility and collective demands of members under threat. Hosted by the Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras (OFRANEH), Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH), and National Network of Women Human Rights Defenders in Honduras, the delegation visited

three communities to hear testimonies of escalating criminalization, racism, and violence.

In Tegucigalpa, members accompanied OFRANEH during the court hearing for the five leaders facing severe criminal charges related to their legitimate land defense. Through a peaceful sit-in, press engagement, and a meeting with the Attorney General, the delegation denounced irregularities in the proceedings and amplified demands for the return of ancestral land, protection for defenders, and Garífuna self-determination. An agile communications strategy helped transform the case into a human rights concern, countered stigmatizing narratives and generated extensive media coverage in regional and international outlets, as well as statements from the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders. This international pressure contributed to the Court dismissing all charges against the five defenders.



Press conference during ESCR-Net's solidarity delegation to Honduras. August 2025.
Photo: Francis Cáliz.

Strengthening Collective Protection Across Borders

Strengthening Collective Protection Across Borders Through ESCR-Net's System of Solidarity (SOS), members mobilized to defend communities under threat in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Libya, Nepal, Palestine, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe. This included diverse strategies tailored to particular risks.

- **El Salvador** – Supported the relocation of two environmental defenders from experiencing escalating persecution for their opposition to mining projects, enabling them to safely continue their advocacy.
- **Brazil** – Issued a **public statement** standing with **Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST)** in condemning violent attacks against land and water defenders.
- **Zimbabwe** – Facilitated an **emergency legal defense grant** for a movement leader facing criminalization.
- **Nepal** – Coordinated an **urgent international appeal** to the Government of Nepal denouncing a cable car project on sacred Indigenous land.

Building on years of sustained solidarity, members also rallied in support of Colombian movement Comité Ambiental en Defensa de la Vida as they confronted powerful mining interests and corresponding threats against environmental defenders. Collective demands compelled local authorities to review the risks to defenders in key territories and helped Comité to strengthen community-led protection mechanisms.

Comité's participation in ESCR-Net's community-led research on climate loss and damage helped bring the analysis of frontline communities into local advocacy, global climate debates, and international spaces such as negotiations toward the UN Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights in Geneva and COP30 in Brazil.

"The MST are our very close comrades in the struggle to build a global movement of movements, and we offer them our full solidarity. The struggle is always global, and an injury to one is always an injury to all."

Abahlali baseMjondolo, South Africa



Confronting Dispossession



Ogiek and Endorois communities demand restitution for their ancestral lands in Nairobi, Kenya, February 2024. Photo: ESCR-Hakijamii.

ESCR-Net members expose and resist dispossession in its myriad forms – from land grabs and forcible evictions to forced repayment of illegitimate debt. Rooted in shared analysis of systemic root causes, we deepen solidarity and build collective power to advance alternative socio-economic models

“We again celebrate a major milestone in the long journey toward justice, recognition, and the protection of Indigenous rights. This victory belongs to the Ogiek community, whose resilience and unity have carried this struggle for decades. It is also a reminder of the transformative power of collective advocacy, strategic litigation, and unwavering commitment to justice.”

Ogiek Peoples' Development Program, Kenya

African Court enforces the enforceability of the Ogiek Peoples' land rights

The Indigenous Endorois and Ogiek Peoples of Kenya continue to mobilize for their rights to their ancestral lands and livelihoods, resisting dispossession and displacement spanning generations in the interests of tourism and “conservation”. Despite landmark decisions recognizing their historical connection and, thus, collective title to the land by the African regional system, the State of Kenya has failed to implement the majority of recommendations under these judgements.

Led by the Endorois Indigenous Women Empowerment Network (EIWEN), Endorois Welfare Council (EWC), and Ogiek Peoples' Development Program (OPDP) and rooted in a strong foundation of cross-regional exchange and movement building, ESCR-Net members have taken action in solidarity with the Endorois and Ogiek communities whenever they have sounded the alarm.

Over the past couple years, this has included standing with OPDP in denouncing the violent eviction of 700 community members (2023) and delivering collective

letters to the Attorney General to urge compliance with the rulings (2024).

In 2025, representatives of both communities worked closely with the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, Albert K. Barume, through direct meetings, as well as a formal submission in response to a call for inputs. At the UNSR's suggestion, a cross-regional group of 15 members sent collective letters both to him and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), outlining demands for implementation to be communicated to the Government of Kenya (June 2025). The Special Rapporteur highlighted the Ogiek case in a joint letter with the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons to the Kenyan

president (May 2028), a press release (June 2025), and his report to the eightieth session of the UN General Assembly (October 2025).

This sustained attention helped reinforce pressure ahead of the non-compliance hearing on the Ogiek case before the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (June 2025).

Setting an important precedent regarding enforceability, the African Court ordered the Government of Kenya to reconstitute Ogiek ancestral lands, enforce all previous judgments, and end any actions that undermine their dignity, security, and survival as stewards of the Mau Forest (December 2025).



Members of the Ogiek community on their ancestral lands in Kenya. Photo: Minority Rights Group.



Detail of the children's picture book *The River That Looked After Sonora (El río que cuidaba a Sonora)*, developed by Comités del Río Sonora.

ESCR-Net's Community-Led Research Hub supports social movements and impacted communities in producing data relevant to their struggles and ensures that their lived experience, knowledge, and visions for justice are the point of departure across all areas of ESCR-Net's collective work. Through these efforts, members challenge epistemic injustices and inform advocacy and campaign strategies at local and global levels.

From caterpillar to butterfly: community-led climate research seeds transformative climate action

Six social movements and Indigenous Peoples' groups across regions concluded their investigations of frontline communities' lived experiences of climate-related loss and damage as part of ESCR-Net's Community-Led Research (CLR) Initiative. However, this ending was just the beginning!

Over 18 months, the groups cultivated mutual learning, movement building, and a shared vision of climate solutions rooted in the struggles of those most affected. With the completion of the **research** component of their **participatory action research**, their focus moved to **action!**

For example, the CLR of the **Endorois Indigenous Women Empowerment Network** in Kenya supported the creation of an Indigenous early warning system to anticipate floods, droughts, and other climate events, integrating traditional weather knowledge with existing forecasting tools. Community advocacy led a local government to initiate a process to improve benefit-sharing

from the natural resources of Lake Bogoria. Overall, research outcomes helped to strengthen dialogue with authorities, public awareness, and education initiatives that promote resilience, equity, and Indigenous leadership in climate action.

In **Mongolia**, the findings of the **Centre for Human Rights and Development** regarding the impacts of climate-related disasters on the lands and livelihoods of herders and small-scale farmers supported engagement with key human rights bodies and in decision-making spaces with local officials. These were important opportunities to urge that their knowledge, human rights, and leadership be prioritized in climate action.

“Our communities now have the evidence we need to demand transparency and accountability from all levels of government on climate policies and budgets.”

Centre for Human Rights and Development, Mongolia

In **Colombia**, **Comité Ambiental en Defensa de la Vida** collaborated with communities to understand the compounding impacts of the climate crisis and extractive industries on livelihoods, culture, and the environment. This led to a new ‘loss and damage’ curriculum which was integrated into a local government’s environmental training and shared with rural communities. Additionally, research findings have led to women-led reforestation and agroecology initiatives in territories. More broadly, women leaders from different grassroots organizations and communities are joining forces in local and national advocacy groups.

“What surpassed our expectations was the depth and power of community stories—especially from women, youth, and elders. The process became an exercise in memory, healing, and territorial affirmation.”

Comité Ambiental en Defensa de la Vida, Colombia



Community members in Ibagué, Colombia, engage in a CLR project on loss and damage. Photo Comité Ambiental en Defensa de la Vida.

Reclaiming Our Stories, Shaping Our Futures

The workshop **Reclaiming Our Stories, Shaping Our Futures in Bangkok** (June 2025) was a space for CLR participants to share findings, learnings, and impacts; strengthen solidarity; and shape collective demands and strategies. The resulting Peoples' Declaration on Loss and Damage was an important foundation for advocacy at COP30, amplifying the analysis and visions of frontline communities.

The workshop also marked the beginning of a new 18-month initiative – feminist participatory action

research (FPAR) on regenerative economies centering care for people and planet, led by five groups across diverse geographies and struggles and grounded in ESCR-Net's Social Pact on Care. Through the FPAR journey, members will explore how their communities practice care in the face of crisis – including climate/environmental harm, an unjust debt burden, and/or a lack of public policies that uphold care rights. The lessons emerging from the CLR on loss and damage became valuable points of departure for the FPAR, which is ongoing.



Participants during the workshop Reclaiming Our Stories, Shaping Our Futures (June 2025).



Aerial shot showing flood-affected village in Kijal, Malaysia, surrounded by water and greenery. / Pok Rie.

Responsive to the struggles of resisting communities, members of the Strategic Litigation Working Group (SLWG) advance access to justice for economic, social, cultural and environmental rights (ESCR) within domestic, regional, and international systems. Combined with advocacy and campaigning, we seek to turn legal victories into lived justice

This ruling sets a minimum threshold for climate action. States are now required not only to act but to do so with ambition, justice, and accountability. This is a powerful tool for communities to demand justice, participation, and reparations."

Adrián Martínez, La Ruta del Clima, Costa Rica

No more denial and obstruction: States and corporations are legally obligated to take climate action

Affirming what ESCR-Net members living the realities of climate change have long known, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) ruled that the climate crisis is a human rights emergency. Accordingly, States and corporations have urgent obligations under international law to take action, be held accountable, and provide reparations.

Members welcomed Advisory Opinion O-32/25 – requested by Colombia and Chile – as a pivotal step in the struggle for climate justice (July 2025). Two collective submissions by strong groups of members contributed to an unprecedented level of civil society participation, with the leadership of Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant communities, social movements, and youth (November and December 2025).

The Court was responsive to this popular mobilization, issuing an ambitious legal framework aligned with members' priorities. The duty to prevent irreversible climate harm is recognized as *jus cogens* – a peremptory

norm of international law from which no derogation is permitted. The IACtHR also takes an important step forward in recognizing gender as a key determinant of climate vulnerability and in identifying gender-responsive obligations on States. Additionally, an intersectional approach is central, simultaneously recognizing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on historically marginalized communities and the crucial role many play in advancing peoples-led climate solutions. For example, there is a focus on Indigenous Peoples as historic guardians of ecosystems with vast knowledge and, in particular, Indigenous women's role in preserving and transmitting this knowledge. This recognition is the foundation for calls to adopt measures to support and safeguard this ancestral knowledge and take all measures to respect and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly their land, their identity. Environmental defenders are lauded as leaders in advancing climate action, with protection of their right to defend rights paramount.

The Court invoked solidarity, international cooperation, and equity as overarching principles, including intergenerational equity and the rights of future generations, emphasizing the need for a just transition geopolitically and within countries. The Advisory Opinion ruling also named the duty of States to cooperate in addressing loss and damage and to ensure access to justice and reparations. As a final example, in line with one of members' key positions, the Court explicitly affirmed States' duty to prevent "undue corporate influence" over climate policy and to regulate corporate conduct. Members are motivated to use the AO as a powerful springboard for transformative action – both inside courtrooms and beyond – guided by the reality that without human rights, there can be no climate justice, and without climate justice, there can be no human rights.



Environmental defense is a right in itself and a pillar of democracy. Protecting environmental defenders is no longer optional – it is a binding legal obligation."

Luisa Gómez Betancur, Center for International Environmental Law, USA and Switzerland



An open-pit coal mine illustrates the extractive practices at the heart of the climate crisis. / Xiang Qi.



Feminism and Gender Justice



Domestic workers in Plaza de Bolívar in Bogotá, Colombia, on March 29, 2023. Photo: Diego Cuevas.

Members of the Women and ESCR Working Group lead efforts to advance Network-wide feminist alternative futures informed by the lived realities of women in all their diversity. The Social Pact on Care is a political foundation for building regenerative socio-economic models rooted in human rights, substantive equality, and care for people and the planet



The Court has agreed with us and recognized care as an autonomous right. The Court gives us yet another tool to demand, in our countries, a fair and equitable care system that places people and the care of the planet at its center."

Claudia Lazzaro, Sindicato de Obreros Curtidores de Cuero de la República Argentina

Celebrating a landmark legal decision: the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) recognizes care as an autonomous human right

Advisory Opinion OC-31/25 on the content and scope of the right to care and its relationship with other rights established the right to receive quality, sufficient, and adequate care; provide care under dignified conditions, whether paid or unpaid; and to exercise self-care to ensure well-being (August 2025).

Drawing on the collective vision articulated in ESCR-Net's Social Pact on Care, a cross-regional group of 11 members – feminist organizations, a sex workers union, and a leather workers union – had submitted an intervention.

The Concurring Opinion of one of the judges explicitly references members' submission as meriting "special recognition" for "...highlighting the indivisible connection between the care of individuals, their communities, and their ecosystems" and foregrounding the relevance of care to addressing the climate emergency. Overall, members were encouraged that many of their priorities reflected. For example, aligned with an emphasis on the need for a

feminist, intersectional, and substantive equality lens, the AO calls for a ‘human rights, gender, intersectional and intercultural perspective’ and addresses structural and intersectional discrimination associated with poverty, migratory status, ethnicity, age, and gender. The AO also affirms many elements of the “6R” framework outlined in the Social Pact on Care – recognition, redistribution, reduction, representation, rights, and reframing the economy as a caring economy. The call for provisions to strengthen community care networks was another important dimension.

Bringing the social pact on care to life

Centering the analysis and demands of women leaders from Indigenous communities and social movements, members not only amplified the social pact on care, but also, in the process, strengthened connections and deepened a shared understanding of the plural approaches to care being practiced in diverse contexts.

On International Women’s Day (March 8, 2025), a group of powerful leaders from every region issued a call to action for care, reaffirming our collective commitment to substantive equality, dignity, and self-determination. This rallying call served as a foundation for more than 20 members’ engagement at the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), dedicated to reviewing and evaluating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Later in the year, one day before the International Day of Care and Support, a cross-regional group of over 40 members and allies came together for mutual learning and exchange via the webinar “Weaving Ecologies of Care”. Members shared the multiple ways their communities are imagining and cultivating regenerative economies centering care of people and the planet.



This responsibility of care...is caring for land and territory, it is a more spiritual kind of care, it is even caring for ourselves. It is a matter of reciprocity with our neighbors, and it is a matter of redistribution within the community.”

Rosa Mamani, Red Chimpu Warmi, Bolivia



Here care is more of survival and its defiance. Every act of care – feeding a family, helping a neighbor, keeping kids learning – is a way of saying we’re still here, we’re still connected, and we won’t be erased.”

Aseel Tork, Bisan Center for Research and Development, Palestine

Economic Justice



Civil Society March in Sevilla (Spain), 29 June 2025 . Photo: Eurodad.

Grounded in shared analysis of the dominant economic system, members of the Economic Policy Working Group (EPWG) facilitate collective advocacy to challenge unjust economic policies and structures and advance alternative economic and development models that center human rights, people's well-being and the environment

The challenge before us is not to repair a broken system, but to move beyond one that is working exactly as intended. It concentrates wealth, entrenches hierarchy, and treats care, communities, and ecosystems as costs to be minimized. That is why incremental fixes are not enough. What is needed is a new ecosystem built on solidarity, equity, and the value of life itself. "

Dan Owala, People's Health Movement, Kenya

Chipping away at global financial goliaths

ESCR-Net members stood firm against dominant global financial institutions in strategic spaces, disrupting finance as usual by mobilizing for a gender-transformative, human rights-based agenda for debt and tax justice, public/climate finance and reparations, and democratic global governance. Successfully changing the terms of debate was key to securing advances and seeding the long-term systemic change we need. Regional consultations and an iterative series of online Network-wide strategy discussions throughout the year were a foundation for advocacy, as was strengthened collaboration with allies such as the "dads" – Eurodad, Afrodad, and Latindadd. At the fifth Finance in Common Summit (FiCS), members co-organized a workshop on just energy transitions with the Coalition for Human Rights in Development (CHRD), calling on public development banks (PDBs) to redirect fossil fuel finance, including to investments in care economies (February 2025). Another key demand included the creation of coalitions between PDBs and civil society organizations.

Members ensured collective demands were reflected in the joint CSO Declaration. In their final communique, the banks recognized the role of civil society in making finance work for human rights, as well as committing to just transition principles and the creation of CSO-PDB coalitions.

Members carried this momentum into preparation for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) in Sevilla (July 2025) – including the ECOSOC Forum on F4D Follow-Up and Fourth Preparatory Committee Session (April 2025). While FfD4 did not deliver transformative outcomes, members took note of the integration of collective demands in the final outcome document, the Sevilla Commitment. For example, important commitments include ambitious climate action, a gender perspective and gender equality – including gender-responsive taxation and budgeting, a platform for borrower countries, and support for negotiations on the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation. Regional follow-up processes with the leadership role of civil society will be critical to ensuring these commitments go beyond tokenism and turn into action. Members' leadership in tackling debt, tax, climate, and care as intersecting fronts helped to eliminate silos. Drawing on their analysis of FfD4 outcomes, members joined the collective cry to 'Stop the harm! Cancel the debt! Reparations and Just Transition Now!' for the Global Week of Action for Debt Justice parallel to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Annual Meetings (October 2025). Via an online event and a joint statement, members and allies from across regions and movements fortified a united front against debt, amplifying our collective vision for community-led, feminist alternatives for a just and sustainable global financial system.



Detail of the advocacy brief "Financing our right to the future".

I got an opportunity to join colleagues in Seville at FfD4. This was an exciting moment. We may not be able to see the cancellation of debt tomorrow, but we must continue to celebrate our efforts. I came back with the energy and spirit to continue in the struggle."

Annet Nerima, Kenya Human Rights Commission

As part of a 1,000-strong civil society coalition at FfD4, the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) invited ESCR-Net to contribute to On Debt Row: The Impact of Debt on Lives in the Global South. ESCR-Net participated with an exhibition featuring The Power of the 99% to Stop Corporate Capture and Debt, part of its comic series developed as a political education tool to expose the connections between debt, colonial legacies, and corporate capture. The broader exhibition brought together art and resistance, featuring the feminist art collective The O Home (Philippines), former UN Independent Expert on Debt and Human Rights Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky, and Argentine artist Jairo Alvarez

ESCR-Net members also co-organized an event on demilitarizing finance alongside the Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD)



Photos: Artwork by Jairo Alvarez; ESCR-Net's comic exhibition; exhibition and performance by APWLD.



Stopping Corporate Capture and Impunity



ESCR-Net members participate in a demonstration in Geneva during the UN Treaty negotiation.

Members of the Corporate Accountability Working Group (CAWG) lead the charge in defending human rights impacted by corporate activities by pushing for stronger regulation and remedy, confronting corporate capture of democratic decision-making and institutions, and working to advance collective demands for accountability and justice



The treaty cannot be limited in jurisdiction or liability, as this would contradict the very purpose of why we are here today. We repeat our recommendation that the participation of corporate actors be prohibited in this process, similar to the well-established and agreed upon Framework Convention on Tobacco Control process."

Alreem Kamal, Syrian Legal Development Programme, United Kingdom

A binding treaty on business and human rights within reach

Members who have been at the forefront of collective advocacy for a legally binding instrument on business and human rights for over a decade emerged from negotiations confident that we can secure a strong treaty within the next couple years.

A small delegation including movements Comité Ambiental en Defensa de la Vida (Colombia) and Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) participated in the eleventh session of the UN open-ended working group (IGWG), making oral interventions and organizing a side event on civil-society, State, and parliamentary initiatives to stop corporate impunity and complicity in acts amounting to genocide.

Members' leadership was key in multiple ways. They amplified collective positions delineated in our Red Lines Brief; engaged in movement building and strategizing with other resisting communities and allies, such as Feminists for a Binding Treaty (F4BT), the Global Campaign to Dismantle Corporate Power, and Treaty Alliance partners; and resisted the attempts of corporate actors and obstructionist governments to derail the process.

This engagement had tangible results. Increased civil society participation led by resisting communities was critical to preventing the weakening or deletion of core provisions focused on jurisdiction and consistency with international law. The legal brief that members prepared and shared in advance was vital to agilely countering the arguments of the corporate lobby from the floor. The Gambia and Malaysia were among the progressive States that took up ESCR-Net members' positions. Beyond the negotiation room, members published an article in *Third World Resurgence* (April 2025) and an op-ed appealing to Asian States in *The Diplomat* (June 2025) demanding that public interest prevails over corporate agendas.

After eleven sessions, the horizon is clear: a treaty capable of ending corporate impunity, stopping corporate capture, and guaranteeing justice and remedy.

“The treaty offers Asian states a rare opportunity to dismantle this corporate colonialism and champion a new global order – one led by the global majority and rooted in justice, where people and the planet come before profit.”

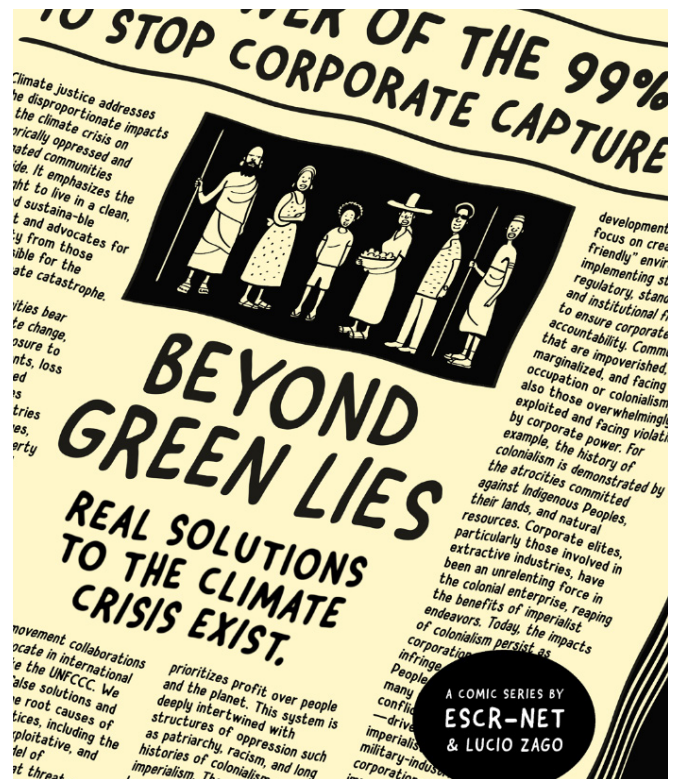
Debbie Stothard, ALTSEAN Burma; **Emilie Palamy Pradichit**, Manushya Foundation; **Shohel Hajong**, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact. Thailand/Regional

New Comic as a Key Political Education Tool for Climate Justice

Hot off the presses – the fourth edition of our popular political education comic series “The Power of the 99% to Stop Corporate Capture”! Members of the Environment and ESCR and Corporate Accountability Working Groups joined forces with artist Lucio Zago to create “Beyond Green Lies: Real Solutions to the Climate Crisis Exist” and an accompanying background note (July 2025).

The comic exposes how corporate capture both drives the climate crisis and undermines climate action, outlining some of the false solutions peddled by the fossil fuel industry. The spotlight then turns to the real, community-led alternatives already being practiced – from agroecology farms to Indigenous-managed forests.

With translations from English into Arabic, French, Portuguese, and Spanish, the comic was widely disseminated and utilized by members and allies, helping to strengthen collective messaging against corporate greenwashing and amplifying real solutions in key climate advocacy spaces, including COP30.





Alongside allies and members, ESCR-Net participated in collective actions at COP30. Photo: Tânia Rêgo/Agência Brasil.

Members of the Environment & ESCR Working Group are at the forefront of efforts to advance climate justice rooted in human rights, using an intersectional approach and feminist analysis to challenge the structural drivers of the climate crisis and promote systemic solutions centering the interests of peoples and the planet

Amid predictable resistance from global North countries, movements still secured a victory with the Just Transition mechanism. But now we must compel the North to deliver finance and commit to a rapid, equitable fossil fuel phaseout, while fighting false corporate ‘solutions.’

Jax Bongon, IBON International, Philippines/Global

Movement building as key to meaningful advances at the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Over the course of 2025, members deepened a shared feminist analysis of the structural intersections between climate, corporate accountability, and debt as the foundation for cross-regional advocacy and movement-building in key spaces. Mutual learning exchanges on peoples-led solutions (May 2025), and reparations and rights-based finance (August 2025) were opportunities to articulate “what we resist” and “what we affirm”.

Members were encouraged by advances on reparations and just transitions emerging from the sixty-second sessions of Subsidiary Bodies of the UNFCCC (SB62) in Bonn, where a small delegation participated, including in a side event on false solutions (June 2025). During UN Climate Week, a couple members joined a panel on utilizing the landmark IACtHR AO and International Court of Justice legal decision (September 2025).

Drawing on learnings and outcomes from these spaces, as well as the CLR project on loss and damage and Financing for Development, members consolidated collective demands into Six Pillars to Decolonize Climate Action. These pillars were a blueprint for advocacy and organizing at COP30 in Brazil, including a press conference, an official rally, a workshop at the People's Summit, and an exhibition showcasing our new comic.

Despite the 'Kick Big Polluters Out' open letter, which ESCR-Net endorsed and amplified with 225 organizations, fossil fuel lobbyists outnumbered every country delegation except for Brazil's.

Thus, the adoption of the Belem Action Mechanism for a Global Just Transition was a testament to building cross-regional, cross-movement power.

The mechanism exists because movements forced it into being, not because states offered justice. We didn't win finance; we won the space to fight for it."

Haneen Shaheen, MENAFem, Morocco



ESCR-Net members participating in a COP30 action.



ESCR-Net members during a press conference.

Engagement with UN Special Rapporteurs to Amplify Collective Analysis and Demands

Following a January 2025 collective submission to the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (UN CESCR), **General Comment No. 27 on ESCR and the Environmental Dimension of Sustainable Development** integrated many of members' specific textual suggestions (November 2025). This includes the addition of a substantial section on the right to self-determination, as well as the right of Indigenous Peoples to free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC). Drawing on our corporate capture comic on false solutions, over 15 members, including several social movements, submitted an intervention to the UN Special Rapporteur on climate change (April 2025) to inform her thematic report, "A human rights-based approach to the energy transition"

(August 2025). Aligned with members' overarching framing, she recognizes the responsibility of business enterprises and development finance institutions to support a just, human rights-based energy transition, including via grant-based finance, as well as debt relief and cooperation. Extractive industries are a focus, and members' specific demand for a moratorium on deep seabed mining is integrated.

The energy transition, therefore, should be pursued without replicating the same economic models and assumptions that underpin the fossil fuel-based economy and its role in bringing about the current planetary crises."

Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, "A human rights-based approach to the energy transition", pg. 3.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/a80188-human-rights-based-approach-energy-transition>

Strengthening Collective Voice and Visibility



Members and allies coordinated communications to amplify the 2024 solidarity visit in support of Garifuna communities. Photo: Red de Defensoras.

Members of the Corporate Accountability Working Group (CAWG) lead the charge in defending human rights impacted by corporate activities by pushing for stronger regulation and remedy, confronting corporate capture of democratic decision-making and institutions, and working to advance collective demands for accountability and justice

A key milestone was the consolidation of the Communications Advisory Group (Comms AG), bringing together 28 communicators from member organizations across Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America. Through a series of exchanges, members reflected on common challenges, including shrinking civic space, algorithmic barriers, limited resources, and the need to reach beyond traditional human rights audiences. The group also became a space to share approaches to narrative work, from community video podcasts and feminist media fellowships to art exhibitions, zines, and comics as tools for movement-building.

The Comms AG also explored how creative storytelling can expand participation in multilateral spaces. Drawing lessons from *On Debt Row*, the multi-format art exhibition organized alongside FfD4, members reflected on the importance of creating alternative spaces to

amplify Global South voices, strengthen solidarity, and communicate complex issues through visual storytelling. These conversations informed collective communications planning around the Treaty process, the Global Energy Embargo for Palestine campaign, and COP30, including the use of ESCR-Net's comic *Beyond Green Lies* as a shared narrative tool.

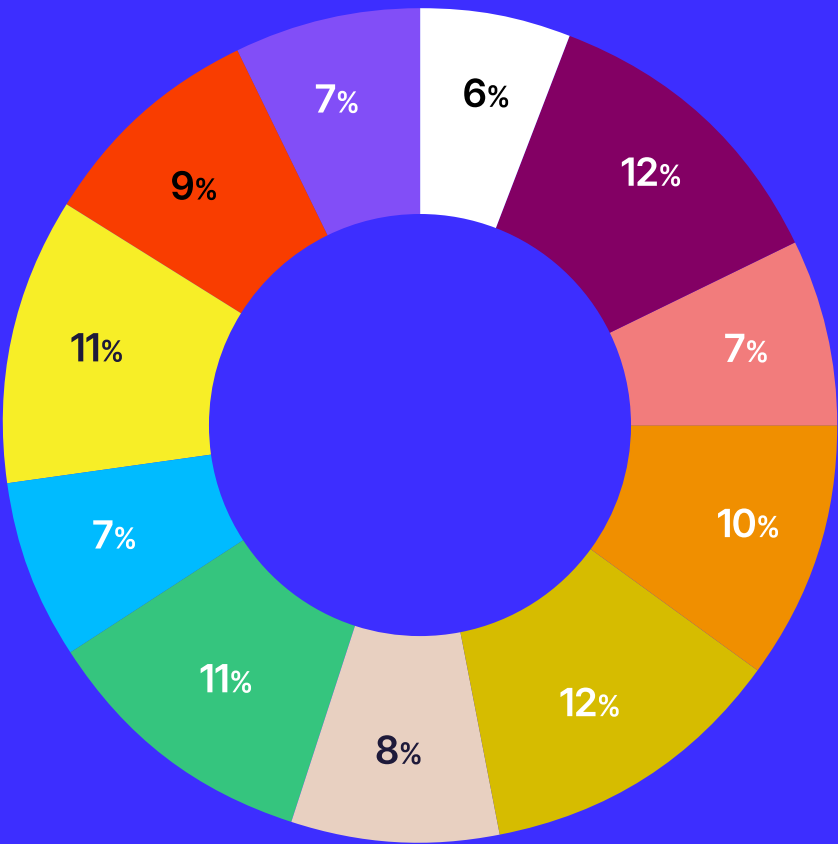
Popular education resources, explainers on corporate capture and false climate solutions, strategic litigation communications, and public interventions challenging dominant economic narratives helped strengthen shared analysis across the Network.

These efforts formed part of broader member-led work to connect struggles across regions and advance alternative visions rooted in human rights, self-determination, and care for people and the planet.

ESCR-Net

Financial Information

Fiscal Year 2025



Total Income: \$144,306 / Total Expense: \$1,739,633

Our Supporters

By mobilizing in solidarity actions, engaging in mutual learning, deepening shared analysis and common demands, and ultimately advancing collective action, ESCR-Net members have made important strides towards a reality of human rights and social justice for all. ESCR-Net thanks the many members and allies who dedicated immense time and effort to collective work in 2024, as well as those who shared financial resources to help advance ESCR-Net's work, including:



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ESCR-Net - International Network for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, is a member-led network uniting over 350 social movements, human rights organizations, and advocates across 80 countries and territories, collaborating toward the world we need: a world where care for people and the planet, solidarity, and equality inform decisions and shape structures to guarantee human rights.

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