

An appeal for solidarity from the Water Defenders in Honduras.

“We are in this fight to defend water, which means defending life. Our land and our rivers are not for sale, because that would be putting our Mother up for sale.”

Reinaldo, Water Defender in the Bajo Aguan

Dear Friends,

Despite the hopeful changes in the Honduran political context, the accumulation and concentration of wealth in the hands of a few families continues unabated. Land, energy, the main natural assets and state assets have gradually become the assets of small handful of elite family groups, who, in turn, define Honduras’s economic policies.



This concentration of wealth and power preferences a development model based on the extraction of natural goods from the land through mining and the control of water. These policies prioritize corporate profits irrespective of the catastrophic impact on local communities.

A direct consequence of these policies is an increase in inequality and the exclusion of marginal rural, youth and urban populations. Human rights violations, violence and instability in the country, as well as forced migration

are on the rise.

But the communities continue the lifetime struggle to protect mother earth, water, and human rights.

Citizen awareness about the stakes – the survival of their families and communities – is growing. Civic participation and organizing work is building. The work of the *Agrarian Platform* – a coalition led by the peasant movement, the Catholic Church, and social movements committed to defending water and the environment, especially vis a vis illegal mining – remains strong.

These communities have renewed the plea for support from the SHARE foundation for their critical legal, educational and organizing work.

Specifically, they are seeking \$20,500 to support their ongoing work, including:

1. The legal battle to eliminate illegal mining in the Montaña Botaderos-Carlos Escaleras National Park
2. National educational campaigns & organizing for human rights, water and land in Aguán.
3. Support for families of water defenders who have been assassinated, been threatened and who require additional protection
4. A coordinated social media strategy
5. National and international solidarity, including supporting visits to the US and delegations of accompaniment to Honduras.

We pray you can find a way to support this appeal as we continue to accompany these brave sisters and brothers in struggle. Please take it to your religious order, church, synagogue, community and friends. Make a check to SHARE Foundation 2425 College Ave. Berkeley CA 94704 memo: Water Defenders, or online at share-elsalvador.org/water-defenders.

PS. Water defenders, Aly Dominguez and Jairo Bonilla, were assassinated January 7th 2023.

José Artiga
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