**FULL TRANSCRIPT**

**Roots of Resilience: On the Frontlines of Climate Justice**

**Episode 2: Struggle and Hope**

**INTRODUCTION:** Welcome to Roots of Resilience on the frontlines of climate justice, a podcast by the Global Forest Coalition, a feminist coalition of organisations around the world supporting forest conservation with a focus on gender justice, human rights and social equity. In Roots of Resilience, we talk with coalition members and allies about what they are doing to advance real solutions to climate change and forest loss.

**CHITHIRA VIJAYAKUMAR:** Welcome to our new episode of Roots of Resilience. I'm Chithira Vijayakumar, and I'm talking to you from India. Climate change can be a very overwhelming topic to learn about. There's so much going on, and sometimes it can feel like all the news we're hearing is terrible. For instance, South America is living through one of the most extreme climate events the world has ever seen, with unbelievable temperatures up to 39 °C in mid-winter, June of this year, 2023, was also officially the hottest June ever recorded in human history.

The ice in the Arctic Sea hit a record low which is a very rare event. Sea ice is important because it helps to keep the earth's climate stable, which is critical to protect our forests and the indigenous peoples and communities that depend on them when sea ice melts, it causes further warming, which can cause more sea ice to melt. So it's a vicious cycle. Basically, it also means that sea levels could rise even more, displacing millions of people, which will impact the most marginalised amongst us, the most severely.

So, yeah, like I said, sometimes it feels like there is no good climate news, But our intention with this podcast is to change that we at the Global Forest Coalition aim to give you hope and to show you that not only is change possible, it is already happening in every episode, we will speak to environmental defenders all around the world who have been implementing real climate solutions in their regions through gender transformative ways.

So whether you're a seasoned climate change activist or you're just starting to learn more about the issue, this podcast is for you, join us as we explore the signs, the stories and the real solutions to climate change.

First, we're going to go to Rio de Janeiro Brazil to meet Maureen Santos. Maureen coordinates the National advisory unit of a Brazilian NGO committed to organising and developing local community and associative work. Maureen coordinates the National advisory unit to bring issues like climate justice and struggles against agribusiness and mining all of this to the forefront and connects the international agenda with the incredible work being done in the local territories of Brazil in the imagination of the world.

A lot of the time, Brazil is deeply, deeply tied with the Amazon is very interlinked with the rainforest. And I'd wager that in the majority of cases when people think of the rainforest, they're thinking of trees, they are thinking of rivers, they are thinking of animals, but very, very, rarely, are they associating the rainforest with humans, with Indigenous people who live there, who have lived there since time immemorial? So could you speak a little bit about that? Could you talk about why humans are an integral part of the forest ecosystem and how that has been playing out in Brazil?

**MAUREEN SANTOS:** Yeah, I just mentioned a little bit about this, and we have this, the Indigenous people bring this, we don't have a forest without peoples, you know. So in Brazil word, the sentence is very true because when you arrive in these areas, the majority, it's the areas that belong to the State or areas that belong to traditional communities and, and Indigenous people, for we talk about not only for right now, but we talk about since the colonisation.

Now, we have all the historic history in Brazil about the land that belongs to this land. And the same time during the our, the more or less constitutions get right about the demarcation areas for Indigenous people and also to create laws to title the land, also for the traditional communities. But when you go like for a conservation unity or other area that's already have a law for environmental protection, when you arrive there, you have or indigenous you need is all you have the traditional community there.

And it's important to say because also I think the indigenous people, especially in Brazil, is doing a very good job of the visibility around the world, you know, so people already connect more Amazon related to them. But at the same time, the traditional communities, I don't know the words in English about their names, but you have in Brazil, it's, it's so many, you know, it's so many different traditional communities who have their own future, have their own way to take care of the land, and ways of life that it's completely invisible, not only for Brazilians, but also for outside.

You really need to, to turn them visible because you only have biodiversity and forest protected still in Brazil because you have Indigenous people and traditional communities in their land. So it's very important when you talk about the guardians of the forest is not - or guardians of the biodiversity - it's very important to recognise their presence in their territories. And because of that, it's very, it's, it's a, there is a huge importance of the creation and the enforcement of laws that give them the right to the land.

You know, because the rights to the land, it’s fundamental, it’s like the main pillar for climate change, to face the climate change crisis, to face the ecological crisis. Because where, where there is this population that is keeping the land, you don't have the advance of mining companies, agribusiness, energy structures and other kinds of big corporate or estate investments that destroy and you lose the forests, and also all that's included in that, you know, so there is this big connection, that’s the word really need to understand and to support because still, there is a lot of romantic view about what nature is and about what is the forest and what is the Amazon.

**So Amazon without people is not really Amazon, and you need to put this visible with where you can.**

**CHITHIRA:** Absolutely, there is a romantic idea of forests and what they look like. And they are reinforced every day through our mainstream media in, in, in educational systems around the world where there is a constant erasure of the lived realities of indigenous peoples and their incredible, vast reserves of traditional ecological knowledge and their expertise, right?

So all around the world. So when we speak to different people around the world, for this podcast, we hear about how, you know, on top of the existing challenges that people are facing on the ground from climate change.

Now, people are also facing the additional burden of false climate change solutions. So people are local communities and indigenous communities, particularly women and all the diversities in these communities. They're all facing the brunt of, say, offsets or plantations or any number of false solutions that are being promoted by some of the most - by the UN and by other international parties, right? So what is the story in Brazil there when it comes to false solutions? What are some of the ones that are impacting you the most?

**MAUREEN:** Yeah, we have a lot of false solutions that are all in this group of these solutions made by corporations made specifically for agents that is destroying us, so they are recognised as the one that brings the solutions, to face their own problem that they create. We start here, we can start about the carbon market. That's is the main metric for all the architecture, this new architecture of the climate finance and the false solutions.

We have had this for decades already, but specifically in the last 15 years, we have, they are more connected to the forest approach.

So there is we, we, FACE, my organization. we, we are part of a group that's a collective of social movements, unions, NGOs, and specialists that there is like 12 or 13 years that's bringing up this issue of against the offset the false offsetting. No, because we, we really believe that this mechanism of carbon marketing in forests can bring much more pressure, not only to the, the people that live in this forest, but the same time, avoid the, the public policies arriving in these places and change a lot of the way of life of these traditional indigenous population. Because all these projects and private contracts, bring them adjustments and also control and a lot of new rules that they need to follow up, and these rules change the way they live, you know, the way they treat the soil, the way they plant, the way they use the fire, the way they to, to their, to make their agriculture, that's the traditional agriculture.

At the same time, they ignore a lot of the amazing traditional knowledge and practice as a agroecology and other others, you know, that can really be the real solutions as I we believe, you know. So I think the, the carbon market of forest is one of the main ones but you have now this, this lie of net zero.

That's in this, the Nature Based Solutions. That is the new trend inside the, the climate change regime at the same time, you can see like all the corporations around the world in a lot of different areas already have their net zero targets. But we really saw it, it's not really connected to the value chain of these corporation activities. It's more you see one of all the items related to energy and efficiency or something like that. But the main changes, it's not really changes. No, it's based on a project of carbon removal and, and this come back to the forest, this comes back to spread of new monocultures as the eucaplyptus and other kind of tree plantations in the same time and projects in geoengineering; that's a really, really a worry because you saw that you had a moratorium in the Convention of Biological Diversity against this experience of geoengineering.

**CHITHIRA:** Yeah, I think that was a really good snapshot of how complex these issues are and how it's playing out in Brazil. We also like to remind our listeners about the incredible work that grassroots land defenders and organisations like yours are doing on the ground. So, could you share with us one of your, one of the most impactful ways, one of your favourite ways in which your organization has been able to intervene in this situation and make a difference?

**MAUREEN:** Yeah, we have a different actions. Now we have more than a global negotiations, that you do pressure and to our negotiators, not, not to, to not open up this kind of matter inside of the climate negotiations. And that same time, there is a, a bigger issue related to the, the areas that we work with in the territories because their, their populations are facing a lot of pressure of these corporations. So you are demanded all the time by the communities to do courses of capacity building to talk about this kind of mechanism so that the communities can not only have the information about what is it, because when you bring the the proejects of forest offsets, carbon market offsets, they sell it as, as a, as a great opportunity of receiving income and a lot of issues. And of course, you have a lot of communities that's facing a big a huge situation of needs, different kinds of needs because, the we you have to remember that you have one of the worst government you had in our history, a recent story that turn their back to the the countryside of Brazil and especially to the traditional and indigenous peoples.

So of course, when you come to projects that bring a lot of money and say that, ok, you don't need to do anything, you only need to keep whatever you are doing in the land, you receive all this money to take care and also to capture carbon and bring this idea of a commodity that you can see, you can taste, you can smell; it's completely abstract and it's very complicated to the communities, to understand what's going on, you know.

So all these demands of the communities to do, to talk about these issues, bring the perspectives and how it it it's been in the national governance, International government is very important to today. First understand this this context at the same time, deal with that and also deal with how to face these kinds of proposals and pressures.

And at the same time, they be more strong enough to dialogue with these proposals if they wish to that because you always believe that the communities have to, they have autonomy about what their strategy is, what their, their the way they are defending their lands, you know, but you really need to focus in the information, the best information you can give to them and show all these traps that this false solution projects bring to the communities.

There are thousands of traps related to the private contracts, the time of concession because sometimes it take that 30 years, 50 years of the concession that they give in this contract. At the same time, all these, all these things that the contract created like a you play it like like EMEF you have thousands of, I forget the word now. But when the EMF give money to the, to the countries, they give a lot of AAA it's, I really forget the word.

The countries need to, to, to mold their act to, to mold their policies, to adjust in the contract, you know, and the is the same for private contracts in the community. So, and like, so we are doing too many of these. Now you do the international work to do the, this pressure to create a national law that really can have a system that can protect against this kind of distractions. But at same time, support the communities to get strong enough to debate and have information to, to debate these kind of projects. At the same time, they have their own autonomy to say no, if they wish to say no, you know.

And for this, one of the very important too that we're believing now. So for this debate is the, the I take con the International Labor Organization Convention 169 that there is the protocol that the community can write down about the free consulting a previous consulting. When they have any kind of projects that have an impact in the territory, in the communities, the communities can write down the protocol how they wish to be a free and early consulting before the project starts, you know, and these too is getting very important also for, to, to strengthen, to get more, more possibilities for the communities to defend them itself.

**CHITHIRA:** Right, Yes, so what I'm hearing is that there's the response needs to be from many directions and needs to more than anything supports the autonomy of the communities and works with the decisions made by the communities themselves.

But if you could request from the international community from the world that is listening to this podcast, one thing, if you could ask them for one thing, which would to create support for concrete climate actions, for a regenerative and for real climate solution in Brazil. What would you ask of us? How can we support?

**MAUREEN:** I think it first to give visibility for their own solutions that the communities bring, you know, and consider the traditional knowledge as the main knowledge you have. You know, because generally you wanna talk about climate change, you only talk about the formal and official science, but there is this millionaire sciences in the communities no that the it's very important to say that and give them all the space and all the visibility they need to spread the word that they have the real solutions. At the same time, or consumers, it's important to understand when they are carbon neutral for any activity - they are thinking they are carbon neutral - they really need to understand which place in this world that is neutrality is getting made.

You know, because sometimes you buy some product or use an app, an app of transportation on an app of deliver food or you, you go to stay in a hotel or you pay for neutral, carbon, neutral, your ticket to your air ticket. At the same time, you even care about. Where is this place this corporation is doing projects to remove my carbon that I'm spending here? You really don't care about that and sometimes, not some times, the majority of the case, is when you look they are buying credits in regions that there is impact in the communities in the ground, in the communities, in the, in the biomes, in the territories that is being pushed to to enter in these horrible private contracts that been pushing for their land and go to other places so they can the companies can build the monoculture of any tree plantations to remove their carbon.

So you have to, to make sure that all this debate state of neutrality. Where does this come from? Where do these removals come from and where is it going?. Because if you don't have any kind of accountability, you're keeping a masquerade, keeping creating fake solutions for middle class and people in the cities, but at same time destroying the livelihoods in the forest and in the territories, you know, so I think there is a huge responsibility for people in the cities, for people in the north countries that is bringing this, pushing this kind of policies.

That's believe that's really believe that the, the climate crisis only, it's a synonym of carbon reduction emissions, but it's not carbon crisis, it's part of an ecological crisis. It's much more than that, you know, you have to, to think about this much and more abroad that you can really have a social environment, integrity about this kind of policies and measures.

**CHITHIRA:** That was a really vital point, Maureen because I think a lot of the times when like you said, people choose the carbon neutral hotel or the tickets, they feel like they're making a good decision, an ecologically sound decision. But the linkages between that and what it actually in reality transpires to on the ground is often deliberately hidden from us. It's hidden from people and you are asked to stop thinking at that point. You're asked to stop thinking at the point that you click the button that says add the card or buy this particular ticket or this book, this room, you are requested to stop thinking and just feel good and take that good feeling and leave.

But you raised a critical point. Thank you so much. Thank you so much Maureen for speaking with us today and telling us the realities and the complexities of what it means to do work of this nature in Brazil today and also for reminding us why it is important to keep persisting to never give up even in the face of what looks like insurmountable difficulties.

And for showing us how when we keep going, when we keep fighting, the results will be there. So, thank you so much again.

**SEGUE:** You're listening to Roots of Resilience on the front lines of Climate Justice, a podcast by the Global Forest Coalition.

**CHITHIRA:** Now we're gonna travel all the way to Uganda to meet Kureeba David. Kureeba is a senior researcher and an environmental climate and human rights activist who has led many campaigns against mining activities, agrofuels, monoculture plantations and more.

He also tracks and analyses the United Nations program on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developed countries, otherwise known as REDD projects, in Uganda.

Thank you so much David Kureeba for joining us today in the middle of what has been, I think a hectic year for you in terms of field visits and research and work. Thank you so much. We're so grateful that you made the time for us to join us on the podcast today.

So when we talk about Uganda, it's one of those places in the world where I think most stories about Uganda that we hear today come to us through Western media outlets or through media outlets owned and operated by the global North, right? So the stories often, you know, are become one dimensional in a sense and might not actually capture a lot of the reality of life there. So how would you describe the country to somebody who has never been there?

**KUREEBA:** Uganda is a country that is only in East Africa. Uganda is a, a very, very green country. Uganda used to be a part of Africa before environmental degradation came into play. Uganda is the current country that is turning into Nigeria because we have oil and gas mining.

Uganda is one of those few countries that do rain-fed agriculture and the nature in Uganda is very lovely. We have lots of wildlife, we had very, you know, very vast forests. But now the challenge comes in with the current corporate capture, which brings in companies that do agribusiness that do oil and gas mining.

But generally Uganda is a country, it wouldn't be that bad. But then the nature of activities that have been carried out are the ones that are really trying to kill the power of Africa. But Uganda is a country which everyone would have loved to actually visit, including all of you, you should come pass by and you see what we are talking about it. It's actually still the power though with some kind of poor governance style that is killing the beauty.

**CHITHIRA:** Yeah, definitely. Yeah, this is I hope to visit you all someday. As I'm sure most of our listeners as well. So you mentioned that Uganda is a very green country. And, but that also that there are a lot of environmental struggles, environmental degradation that is ongoing.

Could you speak to us a little bit about that and whether climate change has, how climate change has impacted these existing issues?

**KUREEBA:** Yeah. Thank you very much. When I talk about environmental degradation, you'll talk about oil palm development in areas that used to be very grim. We have oil palm establishment in Kalangala and in Buvuma; these are islands in the middle of Lake Victoria.

Lake Victoria is one of the biggest freshwater bodies that serves about 10 countries that ends up in Egypt. Oil palm development is one key challenge that we have in this country.

Then we have issues of flower farming by Rose Bud in those internationally important areas, the so-called Ramsar sites of international importance and we see them happening and of course flowers are not food, but they are grown in wetlands when wetlands certainly these are areas that wouldn't be destroyed.

We are talking about carbon trading. For carbon trading, we have companies like green resources which is actually in Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda and it is to carbon trading. We have Plan Vivo. One of the activities that we have done on the ground that actually uses community gardens, agrarian land and they plant trees in the radius of 10 m and eventually the ca can covers the agrarian area and people end up being food insecure.

So there is an activity also several activities on oil and gas, oil and gas mining. And we are constructing one of the longest pipelines from Uganda to Kanga in Tanzania, which is around 1,430 kilometres. So you can imagine it will be heated. So if you look at the area that it is going to cover around 120 that is around 30 m from Uganda up to Tanzania, it is running through wetlands, it's running through forest. You're talking about indigenous communities depending on forest, you're talking about communities depending on those wetlands where they are going to be. You are talking about even people's farmlands and the pipeline will be running through all those.

And then also the the the activities of, for example, sugar plantations. Sugar cane plantations are actually encroaching on forest or not of forests. And to us that is also a problem of some sort in this country.

If in this area, we are talking about conservation, reducing emissions from degradation deforestation, forest degradation. And the country allows, for example, 21 miles of Bugoma forest, there is a Bugoma forest which is in the area in the oil region, being the first being designated for sugarcane growing, I think to us, that is a very big setback in the country.

And if you look at oil and gas mining in protected areas, in Murchasan Falls, you realise that even animals are being migrated to other areas, but others will certainly have challenges to survive because of the nature of the establishment of oil and gas mining.

So, I had talked about the pipeline which is going to be 1430 kilometres from Uganda to Tanzania. It will go through wetlands, it will go through forests. So if you're talking about indigenous communities, certainly they will have to be displaced. Agrqgrian land will certainly be taken. And this is a heated pipeline and it's the longest. Because our oil is waxy, you are talking about the establishment of electricity lines, road network for servicing the heating points.

So all these, when you bring them together, they are a challenge. But also carbon trading business for small agricultural activities, small peasants, because you are, you are convincing communities on the ground to grow trees, and you pay them for the number of trees grown. Of course, the amount of carbon is invested. Certainly that is not something that is easily understood at the local level, but people cover the acreage of your area.

So now you find you are planting at the distance of 7m. But when these trees grow, they canopy on top does not allow sunshine to go through. And eventually, communities become food insecure because now you find the communities can no longer grow food crops. These are especially annual crops grown, the cannot grow under canopy cover. So like activities like Plan Vivo, which is promoted by EcoTrust in many districts of Western Uganda. So it becomes a very big challenge for communities because that is the first solution. Emission reduction is not done from this point of at the recipient level, it is done from source of production.

So carbon trading promoted by Plan Vivo and the EcoTrusts but also promoted by green resources, companies that have, that have establishments in Mozambique in Tanzania and in Uganda and largely they own culture and forest reserves. So those are some of the few examples that I could give. There are very many if I could give them, but those ones are the major ones that are leading, that are causing environmental degradation.

**CHITHIRA:** It sounds like there are not only are there challenges from the existing from climate change for instance, and ongoing ecological challenges from that, but that they are being worsened and deepened by, a) corporate capture of the non-renewable energy sector and enormous infrastructural non-renewable energy projects like this oil pipeline, which are obviously going to be devastating to the environment as well as the so-called, you know, solutions to climate change that are being introduced, like plantations and carbon capture and an like you rightly pointed out, the real work of cutting emissions is being sidelined, is being completely ignored and all of the, all of the rest is being, the energy is being diverted to these false solutions which are in fact making things worse.

So in this, I mean, in this scenario, I mean, you could, I mean, there are so many challenges it sounds like. So how are people, including you and you know, including experts and land defenders like you and your organisation, how are, how are you responding to this massive crisis in what way is your organisation able to intervene in this Very I'm sure complex scenario?

**KUREEBA**: I think you have used the right word. Complex. Complex is the word; complex because the corporations in rural countries, rural African countries, I must tell you that these, some of these companies are even more powerful than our government because they decide what to be done, what could be followed, the way development will be taken and what ecological setup needs to be destroyed.

So, as you said, complex, it is true. But of course, we need to fight. This is the only country, the only, we have one, we have only one Uganda in at the moment, we don't show that we have an interest or we can say something or defend once we lose it, it goes once and for all. So what exactly do we do?

First of all, it is to do community awareness. I think that is primarily the best thing to do, because all this development happens in communities, and it is communities that feel some of these pressures more because they are the ones who lose land. They are the ones who actually lose some educational schools because they are even shifted or they make communities shift, and they have to move very long distances. So awareness on the dangers related to traditional agricutlure, that is one thing that we do.

I think community awareness, community consciousness, free, prior and informed consent; we strongly advise and work with committees to ensure that for any development, for any project to take root, they must be consulted that they must consent, but they also appreciate that there is climate change and most of these projects will finish but communities might still be there.

If we are talking about oil palm, Oil palms lasts for only 25 years years. And these companies are given tax wavers of close to 20 years. So they have five like five years of probably working with them. But what will happen?

So we strongly work with communities. First of all, to one, appreciate that they need to always understand the kind of contracts that these companies sign. They need to understand the nature of employment that these companies give them. They also need to understand that they have one earth, they have one country that the moment it gets challenges, the moment it starts to die, the moment biodiversity is lost, the moment the forest cover is lost, and climate change has hit them hard and hit everything around them. They are the ones who suffer the most. So that is on the point of creating awareness.

But we also need to understand that government also gives out land that is held in trust for the people. So in that way, we engage the government to ensure that something that is held in trust for the people must be respected. And where they don't listen to our advice, you take them to court. We have taken to taken the government to court several times on flower farming, You know, Ramsar sites, we tookt the government to court because we feel the wetlands will be destroyed. Or the Bugoma destruction.

Bugoma is one of those palatine forests in western Uganda and we took the government to court because we felt that that forest was so important that if it went, it would have challenges with emissions because this is the forest that is in the area where oil and gas is being mined, and oil related automobiles and infrastructure would be emitting a lot of emissions which certainly require trees and forests to be absorbed. So we took them to court to better understand and guide and follow environmental and social impact assessment before such destruction happens. So taking the government to court is one of them.

Creating awareness amongst communities is another. We work with communities to ensure that where these trees are being cut, they also need to do boundary planting on the small plots of land that they remain with. But also we tell communities to resist issues of carbon trading where they are establishing plantations, alienating the area, planting the alien species in in their environment. We're knowing that eventually the some of the tree species, including wildlife, will be lost. So that now they don't trees and the small pay that is given in terms of carbon trading does not compromise their, their, their food because food production, food, food sovereignty is the basically the primary factor of security. The moment communities have food; they're able to store their own food, grow their own food, know how to grow it, where to sell it, what to eat and the kind of food that they eat in terms of quality and quantity to us, that is key.

CHITHIRA: That was, I think what you said about the social impacts the social and economic impacts of these projects is key to understanding really what the real-life impacts of these projects are. And as you very well know, the promotional campaigns around these projects, right? Is that, oh it's bringing prosperity to these regions, it's bringing jobs to these regions. And so all of these myths are promoted a lot by governments. It's promoted in UN spaces, in UNFCCC spaces, that these so-called false solutions are you know, are actually good for the community.

So it's very important to hear from people like you who are on the ground who are able to see firsthand the devastation it brings, not just ecologically or environmentally, but politically and socially, economically. It's really vital to hear about what it has done to the social fabric, you know, of the, of the places where these projects are being implemented.

**KUREEBA:** So, for example, if you are talking about crude oil pipeline by now, it would have started a long time ago. But now because of the several campaigns that we have on compensation, understanding by diversity laws looking at the route where the oil pipeline is going to go. It, it should avoid some sensitive areas of sacred nitro sites, places of indigenous communities, because some sites are so important sites that should be respected though because of the Christianity and all that. They look at some of these areas as, as as satanic areas. But these are important sites that Africans used to respect so much.

So if you are talking about some of these, they should respect some of these sacred nature sites because they have a very big role they play in constituting and, smooth running of nature. So those are the two and also include some places, but also some projects that have already established, but because of the campaigns where they would be proposing to expand them more, certainly there is some kind of, they cut a bit, they reduce on the speed of expansion.

And of course, to us, it would be even more. But because they, they are those checks, they are those checks, Somehow we just have some small successes, you know, advocacy, you cannot register something big, but over time, some successes are registered.

**CHITHIRA:** If you could tell us, you know, if, if those of us who are the, everybody who's listening if the international community, if there was a way that we could support the work that you do, what would be the most helpful? How could we support these incredible projects that you are doing on the ground? Yeah, thank you very much already.

**KUREEBA:** Now you are, you are you, you, you're helping out by having this meeting that is globally being listened to, I think this, this is a plus.

And secondly, we need to do like more research. We can do more research on some of the department issues to trace progress. For example, we have talked about oil palm, what is the progress of oil palm? What is the expansion area? Because some of these projects they start and end. But also understanding the magnitude but also work with trying to understand the feelings of communities. How do they feel now? How is it from the time it was established midway and where they are now or what is what is happening? So research, information sharing is very important.

And when such a thing happens, for example, we are planning to go to Doha, Qatar for for UNFCC / COP38. So these are some of the research areas that we will take. If I talk about social climate change activities that are happening, we do research, and during this United Nations conference, during thoise COPS, we present those research.

We'll be having the Uganda delegation, you have East African delegation, you have the African delegation, you present some of these issues and is implemented in the meeting. It helps to save nature.

So what we are doing now, the discussion we're having now, of course, there are other policymakers, you have people that are listening in. Certainly they are picking something you have people including even those people that are into degradation, including companies themselves, they are listening in if they're not listening in, they are allies, the environmental people link to them, they listen in, and this way it can happen, it can also help in curtailing.

But we all we always want to do research. When we do research, we can have some a bit of exchanges, people to learn from what is happening. If there are some good cases that people can learn from, it could be an opportunity for them to learn from either our leaders who are decision makers or our communities who are opinion leaders to see how conservation really takes through. That's could be super helpful.

And certainly would have, you know, like this meeting which we are having now, we could open it to, for example, leaders, we can, we can engage leaders, but at some point, we also give them topics to discuss or in a panel like this, you have some leaders also contributing and also being some are being asked these questions and they respond to them and that way it will be satisfactory and we will be working together and we will be working towards saving the nation saving nature.

Yeah, I I think that that that's how it could be, it could be working together, conducting research, engaging leaders, participating in each trip in UNFCCC meetings and presenting some of these very clear studies that we have on the ground. And that way we will be saving nature.

**CHITHIRA:** Beautifully put, beautifully put, makes me so proud to be part of you know, to be part of a coalition that works with you and is yes, trying to protect and preserve nature as well as everybody who defends it.

Thank you so much Kureeba, for that incredibly powerful interview. And I think one of the reasons why it was so powerful is because every story that you shared at its core is about the incredible power that lies at the heart of local communities.

And this power, you know, in many instances, it gets divided and conquered by multinational corporations and governments and you know, but when that power is actually coordinated, when that power is channelised into the good of the people, into the good of the land, then you have this, and you have these stories of success, these stories of hope, these stories of resilience, you know, which is really what our podcast is about. So, thank you so much again.

**OUTRO:** Thank you for listening.

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