

Banaban Human Rights
Defenders Network

Current advocacy & gaps

J e k e & R a e

25 - 27 J u n e 2024

P e n i n s u l a H o t e l , S u v a , F i j i



Key political timeframes

- 1804: Banaba was discovered
- 1892: Tuvalu and Tungaru declared a protectorate
- 1900: Banaba was annexed
- 1915: Colony established
- 1945: Forced-relocation to Rabi
- Nov 1977: Constitutional convention “10 Bairiki Resolutions”
- 1978: Independence talk



Banaba: Te buto “The naval of the world” – Katerina Teaiwa



66.3 km²



6 km²



Challenges across the Pacific:

From Kiribati to the highlands of PNG, Fiji to Tuvalu, Rabi to Kioa we all share the same challenges when it comes to Climate Change:

- Sand erosion
- Droughts
- Loss of biodiversity etc.
- Loss of culture in the future (link it to the Banaban displacement story)



About BHRDN

The Banaba Human Rights Defenders Network is a community-based network and consultancy of Banababan activists established in 2022, who are working to advance the protection of human rights and dignity of the Banababan people from:

- **Forced-relocation & trauma**
- **Exploitation**
- **Extractive industries**
- **Climate crisis**



About BHRDN cnt'd...

- Loss and Damage (Economic & Non-Economic)
- Reparations, and,
- Self-determination (10 Bairiki resolutions)



Where we work?

We currently have 10 volunteers serving 4 villages in Rabi with a population of over 5,000 people.

We have one volunteer stationed on Banaba in Kiribati.



How we work?

Unimane
(Elders)

Maungatabu

Village
Committee



How are we funded?

Since March 2024, we are funded by the Unitarian Universalistic Service Committee (UUSC) for our operation support costs and Non-Economic Loss & Damage projects.

The International Center Advocates Against Discrimination provides legal pro bono support.

Supported by 350 Pacific and we collaborate with many organizations CCF, PANG and others.



Current advocacy (ICAAD)

1. Climate Change
2. Justice for Rabi – The Story of Banaba (Reparations)
3. The displacement and dispossession of Banaba (Policy brief)
4. Right to Life with Dignity
 - Citizenship Handbook
 - 1. Reparation pro bono work
 - 2. Universal Periodic Review (UPR) September 2024 for Fiji



Current advocacy (UUSC)

1. Non-Economic Loss and Damage
 - Nature-based Solutions (NbS)
 - Revitalization of Banaban culture and heritage
 - Loss & Damage
 - Reparations



Current advocacy (BHRDN)

1. Water issues
2. Anti-mining campaign against Centrex
3. Reinstatement of the Rabi Council of Leaders
4. Review of the Banaban Settlement Act
5. Halting land leases on Banaba in Kiribati
6. Citizenship
7. Advocacy on customary laws & repatriation



Good practices/Strategies:

1. Partnering with academic institutions to fill in lack of organization expertise in areas of policy, legal, climate etc.
2. Pro bono support from well established NGOs like ICAAD
3. Working closely with village committees and elders



Challenges

1. Lack of organization capacity
2. Lack of financial resources
3. Legal protection of Human Rights Defenders
4. Legal fees
5. Jurisdiction issues
6. Remoteness
7. Poor connectivity



Future capacity strategies:

- 1. Training of Banaban Human Rights Defenders in all aspect of the work**
- 2. HRs training models in the communities in bilingual language**
- 3. Mobilization of resources for travel for example: UN engagement**
- 4. Pacific Legal clinic to support HRD in the Pacific**



Thank you

