

Project Snapshot:

AGRI-FOREST AGENTS

Location: Acre, Brazil

Website: www.ashoka.org/fellow/benki

Partner: Ashoka

Partner Website: www.ashoka.org

Summary of project:

Benki Piyãko, respected member of the Ashaninka tribe in the Amazonian state of Acre, is increasing the capacity of indigenous peoples to defend their land against outside exploitation. In the process, he teaches these communities improved land management techniques to both benefit from their natural resources and preserve a rich and unique ecosystem. Benki is implementing a new model of land management and environmental protection in the Brazilian state of Acre. Acre, occupied mainly by indigenous people, contains some of Brazil's most valuable natural resources. Lack of state-enforced regulation on extractive industries like mining and logging is threatening the land and the people that live on it. Benki has created a new role, the Agri-Forest Agent, to educate indigenous peoples about the long-term damage being done, and represent and defend them against outside interests. In addition, Agri-Forest Agents teach indigenous communities forest management practices that allow them to benefit from the sustainable use of their natural resources. Because they work with communities on an individual basis, Agents promote bottom-up, tailored strategies that are culturally and ecologically appropriate to each community.

Funds for the project:

100% of funds support the Agri-Forest Agents in promoting the environmental and economic sustainability of the Ashaninka tribe.

"Do your little bit of good where you are; its those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world." *Desmond Tutu*



Brazil Info:

Population: 198,739,269
(compared to USA's 307M)

26% of the population live below the poverty line (2008—CIA World Factbook)

86% of the population live in urban settings (2008—CIA World Factbook)

Environmental Hazards:

Deforestation, lucrative illegal wildlife trade, land degradation and water pollution caused by improper mining

(CIA World Factbook)

