



Am I a climate activist?

Amanda Segnini (far left, photo on right), Atlantic Fellow for Social and Economic Equity and co-founder of the youth-led non-profit organisation Engajamundo, shares her story of becoming a climate justice and land rights campaigner.

Atlantic Fellows | FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUITY

“

Have you ever thought you could change the future?

Have you doubted yourself and thought change was impossible?

You are not alone.

At university in Brazil, I was curious about how change happens.

I learned about the UN, environmental struggles and social inequalities. However, it all seemed distant from my reality.

In 2012, the Rio+20 conference was held in Brazil, bringing together over 2,000 young people from across the world.

But the experience revealed a startling reality: the voices of the Global South were still largely misrepresented.

This was the catalyst.

It became clear that we needed to organise our own power.

What if there were a permanent youth mobilisation?

From that spark, we created the youth-led organisation Engajamundo

which empowers young people to be part of the solution to the world's pressing issues.

Since 2013, Engajamundo has impacted over 100,000 young people

including Indigenous youth as well as vulnerable and racialised communities, and is a hub of youth leadership in Brazil.

Shaping Engajamundo became the defining part of my journey.

It was when I first started calling myself a climate activist.

Being a climate activist is never static; it shifts with the collective needs, the political landscape and opportunities that we face.

For me, the work requires a love for the community, an understanding of the power structures that sustain the climate crisis, and – most importantly – care.

How are we holding each other to remain strong and alive?

”



Photos, clockwise from top left: The climate is changing and we are part of the solution, and you? (translation). Earth Day mobilisation at Av. Paulista, São Paulo, 2014. Engajamundo archive. Engajamundo activist during a retreat. Engajamundo archive. Amanda Segnini, Daniele Santos, and Débora Leão, Engajamundo co-founders, COP21 Paris 2015. Engajamundo archive. Wanderson Costa. Credit Siene Paulino (2022).

How can change inspire you?

Organising and movement-building begin with noticing change – in ourselves, in our communities, and in the living world we depend on – and choosing to meet that change by dreaming of, and building, a different future together.

Where do you find spaces of hope that sustain you?

“

How can we share the work with our community; how does activism end up being this door and key that we end up turning?

For me, Engajamundo was and still is my school, the place where I find myself in a collective struggle.”

Wanderson Costa
Co-director of Engajamundo

When you were young, what did you want to change?

What felt unfair, urgent, or worth protecting?

What is one thing you have noticed has changed in your community?