Groundswell International was founded on September 1, 2009 at a gathering of 12 founders from eight countries. Since then we have launched program partnerships in Haiti, Ecuador, Burkina Faso and Mali — and are planning more.

In Haiti, Groundswell and Partnership for Local Development (PLD) are strengthening the capacity of nine peasant organizations, representing 148,000 people, to sustainably improve their lives. With our support these marginalized rural communities are increasing food production, establishing savings and credit cooperatives and organizing seed banks and health committees. When the earthquake struck on January 12, 2010, we quickly responded by supporting rural communities to host 10,000 displaced people, obtain seeds for the planting season, and provide short term work and income so people could meet basic needs. They conserved soil, improved roads, and built water filters. We are seeking resources to expand to a total of 20 peasant organizations representing over 340,000 people.

In Burkina Faso, under the leadership of Fatou Batta, Groundswell is launching a three-year program to strengthen a young network of community-based organizations and local NGOs to spread the adoption of agroecological practices. The effort focuses on Eastern Burkina Faso, where food production is declining and environmental degradation increasing. Isolated examples exist of successful agroecological approaches that reverse these trends, but they are not spreading due to lack of coordination among and support for local initiatives. Groundswell is supporting this coordination in order to spread alternatives among 29,500 families—50% of involved farmers are women.

In Ecuador, Groundswell partners with the local NGO EkoRural to support 10,000 farmers in the Andean highlands to strengthen market linkages to urban consumers; to improve local seed production; to build resilience to climate change by spreading innovations in water management; and to improve community health. EkoRural has made key contributions to national networks shaping food sovereignty policies and banning dangerous pesticides.

In Mali, Groundswell is working in partnership and with financial support from Oxfam America to support a national movement of rural women’s savings and credit groups to reverse the collapse of their soil fertility and food agricultural production. The program, which is being coordinated by Roland Bunch, a respected global expert on sustainable agriculture, is promoting the...
Groundswell was formed by a group of highly committed and experienced development practitioners from around the world who share a common ethos and approach to social justice and change. What appeals to me about their values and methods is that they believe in the inherent dignity of all people, and the capacities that people have to define and carry out their own visions of development.”

- Jethro Pettit, Research Fellow, Institute of Development Studies

Global conference in Ecuador

In July 2010, Groundswell held our second global conference in Ecuador. Participants gathered from Haiti, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Ecuador, Guatemala and the U.S. — and our board joined our meeting. We celebrated our progress, identified how to strengthen our work, and laid out a three year strategic plan.

We also visited the farm of Pacho Gangotena, an influential leader in the agroecology movement in Latin America. Pacho led our dialogue with Ecuadorian community activists working to promote food sovereignty and local food systems. Their experiences will inform our strategies in other countries. We also learned about community efforts to spread practices for responding to climate change by capturing rain water. América Guamansara and her neighbors in the communities around the extinct Ilalo volcano have organized to capturing water from their roofs and fields to start vegetable gardens and improve family nutrition. The women have earned income by selling vegetables, started savings and credit groups, and are extending loans to other farmers to allow them to repeat the process. EkoRural continues to spread this approach to a wider circle of communities in Ecuador.

Widening circle of supporters

In addition to hundreds of individuals, many respected organizations are supporting Groundswell and our partners. These include: American Jewish World Service, Boston Foundation, Columbus Foundation, Embassy of the Netherlands in Ecuador, Lutheran World Relief, Misereor Germany, McKnight Foundation, New Field Foundation, Oxfam America, Paul and Ann Milburn, Pan American Health Organization, Seattle Foundation, Swift Family Foundation, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Vista Hermosa Foundation.

We are deeply grateful for the support of all!

Over 19,000 farmers have visited Pacho’s farm in the past 20 years.

Women leading change

The majority of the world’s small-scale farmers are women. In all our programs, Groundswell supports women to gain voice, skills and power to improve the lives of their families and communities.

Beyond Borders generously acted as our fiscal sponsor until the IRS granted us 501(c)(3) tax exempt status on August 5, 2010. We would not be where we are today without their support. Thank you David, Jonathan and the entire Beyond Borders organization!
$400,000 campaign: growing Groundswell in 2011

We have exciting plans to consolidate and continue to grow Groundswell’s core program in 2011. In order to achieve this, we must raise $400,000 in unrestricted funding. This will allow us to accomplish our strategic objectives:

1. **Empower 500,000 people** living on less than $1.25 per day to improve their lives.

2. **Consolidate and sustain:** Consolidate strong partner programs for lasting impact in Haiti, Ecuador, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Mali.

3. **Spread the results:** Include new partners in two additional countries.

4. **Strengthen local food systems:** Test and refine practical strategies for strengthening local food systems across five countries. We will launch a three-year action and learning process in Haiti, Ecuador, the US, Burkina Faso and Ghana by facilitating learning cross-visits among partners, identifying effective practices, testing them on the ground and evaluating and documenting outcomes and lessons.

5. **Build a learning community:** Facilitate learning among Groundswell partners and allies on effective principles and practices for supporting rural social change.

6. **Strengthen the global movement:** Support communities and organizations in the global north and the global south to connect in support of healthy farming and food.

7. **Tell the story:** Document and share our work to influence rural development programs and policies.

**Efficient use of resources**

We are working hard to use our resources efficiently and for greatest impact. Our approach of strengthening community-based organizations to create, manage, spread and sustain positive changes in their own lives is low cost and does not generate dependencies on external funding. We’ve kept our overhead for administration and fundraising at 10% (it may go up to 13% as we consolidate our structure). One reason we have been able to accomplish much with limited resources is because we have volunteered a significant amount of our time in this start-up year for Groundswell — because we believe in what we are doing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groundswell Budget</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
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<th>Additional Funds Leveraged by Groundswell Partners</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$590,000</td>
<td>$1,025,000</td>
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How you can help

Groundswell is committed to strengthening our work and spreading it to reach more rural communities. But we cannot do it without your support. We have three requests:

1. Please donate as generously as you are able via check or on www.groundswellinternational.org.
2. Consider a monthly pledge of $25 or more. Do it online or write info@groundswellinternational.org to set up a regular electronic funds transfer (EFT) from your checking account.
3. Spread the word: tell family and friends, help us grow the network of people who support Groundswell.

Impact of your giving

- For $65 one family learns to sustainably grow more food.
- For $300 farmers learn to improve their own seed and capture rainwater for irrigation.
- For $4,000, we strengthen the capacity of a community-based organization to improve food production health and connect to local markets.

Grow the Groundswell network

Get the word out! By growing our social network we can vastly increase the number of people who know and support Groundswell.

Visit our blog to stay informed — www.groundswellinternational.org
We publish a new post every Tuesday.
Friend us on Facebook — www.facebook.com/groundswellInternational — and suggest our page to your friends.

Are you interested in doing more? Please consider becoming one of the committed supporters who ensures a strong foundation for this work by donating between $1,000-$10,000. We welcome your investment to build the future with us. Please call Steve Brescia, Groundswell’s International Director, at (202) 832-9352 to talk about it. You may also email Steve to find out more at sbrescia@groundswellinternational.org.

Why we need your support

We raise funds through grants and individual donations. While grants are vital, they often come with certain restrictions. Your support for flexible community-led development allows us to build relationships with people, support them to organize and develop their plans, strengthen their work, and adjust as we go. This makes it possible for communities to lead the process of improving their farming, growing more food, and transforming local economies. If outsiders lead the process or bring the answers, it stops. We strengthen communities to create their own change. That is what makes us different.