In the mountains of Haiti, 10 rural women and men each contribute a can of seeds or a handful of cash to form a *gwoupman* (solidarity group). They begin to invest their own resources and to experiment with ways to farm the land more sustainably and productively and to prevent diseases that take lives. They join with dozens of groups like this across villages to create growing peasant organizations, seed banks, and savings and credit cooperatives. In rural Burkina Faso the desert is encroaching on land where families once grew basic grains. Women’s groups organize to visit and learn from other villages and return to apply new ideas. They are creating vegetable gardens on what was barren land and are teaching other farmers sustainable practices to restore soil fertility. In Ecuador, indigenous peoples’ organizations are recovering and multiplying a vital living resource – their native seeds – ensuring that families have the seeds they need to grow traditional food crops.

These people and organizations are the social infrastructure, the human ecosystem, that is regenerating a hopeful future. Groundswell is intentionally behind the scenes – supporting, facilitating and strengthening these community-led processes. For decades, the founders and partners of Groundswell have accompanied and learned from people-centered change like this in hundreds of villages across Africa, the Americas and Asia. Now we are growing Groundswell to continue strengthening this bottom-up movement for healthier farming, food systems, economies and landscapes.

We are constantly inspired by the power of people. Unsung heroes are taking practical action every day and joining forces to transform their lives and communities. It is a telling fact that nearly every language has some version of the saying “together we are stronger.” Just as with the village collectives in Haiti, Burkina Faso and Ecuador, Groundswell is a global collective of partners made stronger by our collaboration towards a shared vision.

The global food and agricultural system is not working for people or the planet, yet we witness lasting alternatives being cultivated every day in communities around the world. This is the groundswell we are nurturing. We invite you to join us.

Steve Brescia
International Director and Co-Founder
BURKINA FASO

Groundswell supports farmers to share their knowledge and experience with other farmers.

In early 2011, Fatou Batta, Groundswell’s Coordinator for Burkina Faso, led 26 women and men from nine villages in Eastern Burkina Faso to visit community organizations in Zandoma Province to the north. Kombari Odette and other members of the Gayeri women’s group participated. “We were amazed at how the women from those communities are growing vegetables on land that is even worse than ours,” said Kombari. “We now know we can do that as well.”

They were further inspired by a visit to Mr. Ouedraogo, a farmer who is successfully regenerating and farming land that was completely degraded just a few years ago. His farm became a classroom for the visitors, as he showed them how to break through the rock-like surface of the land using techniques called half-moons and horse powered zaï – which is ten times more efficient than hand digging. This allows him to capture and retain rainwater, add compost, and increase soil fertility and crop production. One participant commented, “We could see how his soil fertility improved and how large the millet plants were.”

The women of Gayeri returned to their village, convinced other women to join them, negotiated land from the village chief, and set up vegetable gardens. With Groundswell’s support they began to produce nutritious food for their families and to earn money for education and healthcare for their children. They are convincing their husbands to farm more sustainably. “We can’t keep clearing more land,” said Kombari. “It is better to stay on this land and make it productive.”
In Ecuador, Groundswell’s partner, EkoRural, works with thousands of farmers in the northern and central highlands to recover the production of native seeds, diversify farms, and improve resilience to climate change through water harvesting. To help sustain all of this, EkoRural is also strengthening the Canastas Comunitarias movement (community food baskets), creating market relationships between rural and urban communities that benefit both. According to the latest census, Ecuadorian consumers spend more than $5 billion a year on food. That is ten times the amount of international aid money invested in the country. Models like Canastas Comunitarias have the potential to transform Ecuador’s food system into a positive force that allows low income urban communities to access local food, improve their diets and health, and invest in rural communities to regenerate the country’s ailing landscape. Farmers earn more, customers pay less, and solidarity is strengthened.

At the same time, EkoRural is playing a key role in amplifying the voice of community-based organizations in national policy debates on food sovereignty. EkoRural has promoted the inclusion of grassroots voices in the Agroecology Collective and the Plurinational and Intercultural Conference on Food Sovereignty (COPISA). Following two years of local consultations, COPISA recently drafted a Law on Agrobiodiversity, Seeds and Agroecology, which will be debated by the Ecuadorian Congress in 2012.
HAITI

Partenariat pour le Développement Local (PDL), Groundswell’s partner NGO in Haiti, began strengthening community-led development in Bailly, in Haiti’s Northeast Department, in October 2009. A few months later, when the earthquake struck in January of 2010, PDL was able to work with the community of Bailly to provide emergency support to hundreds of displaced people fleeing the destruction in Port-au-Prince, even while they continued their long-term efforts to improve their own lives. By March of 2010, PDL had supported the people of Bailly to form about 80 gwoupman (solidarity groups of 10-15 women and men), hold an assembly across 12 villages, elect leaders and formally establish the Union of Peasant Gwoupman of Bailly (IGPB in Creole).

In that same month, members initiated Bailly’s first community-managed savings and credit fund and set up a local seed bank. To create the savings and credit coop, 110 people deposited a total of 3,500 gourdes (US$89), or about 82 cents per person. They established their own interest rates at 27% a year – far below the 250% normally charged by money lenders. By the beginning of 2012, the coop had grown to over 515 members with a total of US$3,000 in savings. And as farmers repay their seed bank in-kind, their seed stocks have also grown by 19%, from 2,159 pounds to 2,572 pounds. The people of Bailly are using their savings and credit and seeds to gradually improve their lives, by diversifying their farms, raising and selling chickens and eggs, and meeting health and education needs of their families. “The important thing,” explains Cantave Jean-Baptiste, Director of PDL, “is that the seeds and the money are theirs. The power is theirs. They own the process – not us.”

In less than three years, PDL has strengthened nine emerging local peasant associations like Bailly, representing over 148,000 people, while also continuing to support three existing organizations. With the support of PDL and Groundswell, rural women and men are taking the lead in improving their own lives and beginning to rebuild their country.
Groundswell is working with its local partner the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD) to strengthen rural women’s associations and communities in Ghana’s Upper West region. We are promoting agroecological farming and strengthening women’s savings and credit activities. In October of 2011, we supported 11 women leaders from the Lawra Rural Women Farmers Association (RWFA) in Ghana to travel across the border on an exchange visit to learn from rural women leaders in Burkina Faso. The women learned about agroecological farming as well as savings and credit strategies being implemented successfully in Burkina Faso, and we are following up to support them to adapt and spread these approaches in Ghana.

This support at the local level helps build the foundation for food sovereignty as CIKOD works to strengthen the emergence of a national association of women farmers in Ghana. Two women leaders who had participated in the exchange visit to Burkina Faso, Madame Rebecca and Madame Fatima, have been named as northern and southern regional coordinators for the national association. This work in Ghana is a part of the “We are the Solution” campaign, a women’s initiative across a number of countries to strengthen agroecological, African-led solutions to the food crisis and to advocate for supportive policies and programs. The women are challenging the promotion of “new green revolution” agricultural approaches based on industrial models, which are being promoted by some international donors and aid agencies. “We need to shine a light on the successful examples,” says CIKOD Director Bern Guri, “and to identify capacities that farmers already have for agroecological farming, strengthen them and spread the practices.” Guri is working to bring the voices of farmers into these policy debates, as a member of the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), the African Biodiversity Network (ABN), and by participating in a feedback session to the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).
Burkina Faso
Groundswell is working with local organizations in the eastern part of the country to strengthen a farmer learning network and scale proven agroecological practices in order to address the soil fertility crisis and improve the food security of over 29,500 rural families.

Ghana
We are collaborating with the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD) to strengthen rural communities and women’s associations in the Upper West to improve livelihoods through agroecological farming and women’s savings and credit.

Mali
Groundswell is collaborating with Oxfam America to address collapsing soil fertility and food production through the adoption of “fertilizer trees” by women’s savings and credit groups. The plan is to eventually spread the model to 26,000 women farmers in 200 villages.

Ecuador
Groundswell supports EkoRural in spreading agroecological farming and strengthening local seed and food systems in six Andean communities, scaling the Community Food Baskets movement, and strengthening Ecuador’s groundbreaking Food Sovereignty movement.

Haiti
Groundswell works closely with Partenariat pour le Développement Local to strengthen the capacity of 12 peasant organizations, representing 210,000 people, to sustainably improve their lives.

Guatemala and Honduras
At its third annual conference in July 2011, Groundswell accepted three new partner organizations: CIKOD in Ghana, Vecinos Honduras, and the Foundation for Northern Development AQ’AB’AL (FUNDENOR) in Guatemala.

El Salvador
In December of 2011, Groundswell was invited to support El Salvador’s Ministry of Natural Resources to scale the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices among family farmers to increase resilience to climate change.

United States
Groundswell raises awareness about sustainable local food systems and agroecology as effective strategies to improve lives in rural communities and fosters a global network to facilitate the spread of best practices and people-centered development approaches.

Investing in the Promise of Rural Communities
“This is an important moment for us to work with others to build a new rural Haiti. We have to think bigger. We don’t just want to help poor farmers to manage their poverty. We want to support substantial improvements in their lives. We should invite the government and international organizations to better understand that the future of the country lies in investing in rural areas.”

– Cantave Jean-Baptiste, Director of Partenariat pour le Développement Local and co-founder of Groundswell International

PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE
Peter Gubbels, Groundswell’s Regional Facilitator for West Africa, authored a report titled “Escaping the Hunger Cycle: Pathways to Resilience in the Sahel” for the Sahel Working Group (nine of the largest European NGOs working in the region). Instead of crisis responses, the report recommends more coherent and sustainable strategies to address chronic hunger. The report has been influential with the NGO community, policy makers, and the media.

Global Partners and Programs
Since 2009, Groundswell has established program partnerships in Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Ghana, Guatemala and Mali that are improving the lives of over 300,000 rural people. Additionally, we were recently invited to support a national program in El Salvador.
Groundswell’s work is made possible by the support of individuals, foundations and non-profits who share our vision. We strive to be effective and accountable to the rural communities we support, our partner organizations around the world, and the people and institutions that partner with us and fund our work. In 2011 we spent 89% of our resources on programs and were able to increase program support by 35% over 2010.
Revenue Sources

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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
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Operating Expenditures

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<td>Programs</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
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<td>Management &amp; General</td>
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<td><strong>$614,147</strong></td>
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Statement of Financial Position (end of year 2011)

Assets

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<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
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<td>Cash and Equivalents</td>
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<td>Other Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
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Liabilities and Net Assets

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Liabilities</strong></td>
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<td>Partner Disbursements Payable</td>
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<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
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**Net Assets**

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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</strong></td>
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We need you in the circle! Join us in the way that fits best for you.

**Give:** Invest in family farmers and rural communities around the world.
Donate securely online at [www.groundswellinternational.org](http://www.groundswellinternational.org)
Mail a check to:

Groundswell International
1215 Kearney St. NE
Washington, DC 20017

- Sustain the work. Set up a monthly gift to provide the steady income needed to accompany rural communities in creating lasting change.
- Donate stock.
- Include Groundswell International in your will.
- Give a gift to someone through our online gift catalog.

**Organize:** Organize a house party or event. Be creative. We’ll work with you.

**Connect:** Follow us on our blog, Facebook, and Twitter. Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter. Spread the word to your friends and family.

**Volunteer:** We need many talented organizers and a few social networking gurus to help spread the word. Please check out our website or send us an email to inquire about these opportunities: [info@groundswellinternational.org](mailto:info@groundswellinternational.org)

**See for yourself:** Participate in a study tour. Stay tuned for upcoming tour announcements on our website and e-newsletters, or contact us for further information.

Groundswell is a 501c3 nonprofit and a member of the Guidestar Exchange. Donations are tax deductible and secure. Questions? Call at (202) 832-9352 or contact us at [info@groundswellinternational.org](mailto:info@groundswellinternational.org).
Groundswell International

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Groundswell appreciates the tremendous support of many institutions and individuals who make our work possible. We do not have space to list all donors, but extend a special thanks to the institutions and individuals listed below, many of whom have supported us generously since 2009.

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www.groundswellinternational.org

Groundswell International
1215 Kearney St. NE
Washington, DC 20017
202.832.9352
info@groundswellinternational.org