Dear Friends,

We are inspired to work with people like Tani Lankoandé, and tens of thousands of other family farmers like her around the world, in creating solutions to hunger, poverty, and climate change. People sometimes ask me, “Why should I support Groundswell International?” Here is my response:

- We believe and invest in people. Women’s groups, communities, and local organizations are the experts in creating better lives for themselves. Groundswell strengthens their capacities and provides them resources to do so.

- Together we have real answers to some of the world’s most daunting challenges. Agroecological farming, strong local food systems, and community-led development are proven strategies to build healthy farming and food systems from the ground up.

- These solutions won’t spread on their own. We need growing networks of community leaders – women and men – who can spread solutions farmer-to-farmer, create strong community organizations, and build local markets. Groundswell systematically invests in making this happen.

- Community-level work alone is not enough. We link grassroots organizations with wider efforts to ensure that governments and major development programs support farming communities rather than undermining them.

- There is strength in unity. Groundswell builds and coordinates a global partnership of dynamic local organizations to learn from each other, become more effective, and accomplish more.

- Finally, we invest resources efficiently and transparently where they can do the most good: at the local level.

We are proud to share some of the ways your support made an impact in 2015. We look forward to continuing to grow this grassroots movement together.

Sincerely,

Steve Brescia
Executive Director
Your Support Empowers Farmer Heroes Like Tani

Tani Lankoandé is a young farmer from the Sagadou region of Burkina Faso. Where she lives, farming conditions are precarious because of irregular rainfall patterns and degraded soil. As a result, farmers have difficulty growing enough food to eat three meals a day or to nourish their families. Groundswell International and our partner organization Association Nourrir Sans Détruire (ANSD) are working with Tani and other committed farmers in her area to change that.

Tani is constantly innovating to grow more food in better ways. Not content to “lean back and wait for something to happen,” Tani experimented with a cost-effective solution using a resource she had on hand: dead leaves.

“It came to my mind that dead leaves from trees could be used as organic fertilizer. This agricultural practice is not well known in the area but the benefit is that it is accessible to everyone; particularly to modest producers who can’t afford chemical fertilizers and who don’t have livestock that can provide organic animal manure for their farms.”

By cultivating trees on her land and integrating the fallen leaves into the soil, Tani has increased its fertility. There is a visible difference in the areas where she has implemented the technique. Tani has been able to grow more nutritious food for her family. Now she is a volunteer promoter sharing this and other techniques with neighbors and surrounding villages.

“Today when I walk in my field, my crop has reached maturity. It is hard to contain my satisfaction. This year’s harvest is expected to be good. Producing that much on this hostile soil and climate conditions was almost unimaginable.”

By supporting farmers like Tani, you empower them to innovate and spread solutions to the soil fertility and hunger crisis in West Africa.

Read Tani’s story in her own words on our website.
Your support helped... Spread Solutions to Change Lives
Together, we are strengthening the exponential spread of effective ecological agriculture farmer-to-farmer.

Improving the Resilience of Farming Families in the Sahel
Out of nearly 500 applications submitted, Groundswell was selected as one of eight winning teams of the Global Resilience Challenge, a competition designed to strengthen resilience of the most vulnerable populations. Through a $1 million grant, we will spread innovative and viable solutions in West Africa’s Sahel region that empower farming families to grow more nutritious food, regenerate the environment, improve gender equity, and break the cycle of dependency. Thanks to your support, farming families in West Africa are already benefitting from these solutions.

Addressing Food Insecurity in Western North Carolina
Our partners represent a wealth of experience working with rural communities to enable people to become the lead actors in improving their own lives. We are thrilled to bring these lessons to the United States through our new initiative, Grow Food Where People Live. Collaborating with volunteers, residents and generous supporters, we created the first community Micro Farm at an affordable housing community in North Carolina. We are also working to create strong rural livelihoods and to strengthen the local food economy. Thanks to your support, families are working together to grow, cook, and preserve fresh, healthy food.

Your support helped... Strengthen Local Organizations and Grassroots Movements
Together, we are partnering with cutting-edge local organizations for lasting change.

Supporting Women’s Groups to Rebuild Nepal
We believe in working side-by-side with local partner organizations to ensure that the best solutions to hunger, poverty, and climate change are rooted in the local context. After the Nepal earthquakes in the spring of 2015, we partnered with the Nepalese organization BBP-Parivar to provide materials for families to rebuild their homes, recapitalize women’s savings and credit groups, rebuild collapsed water wells, and train women as vet techs or agriculture promotors. Thanks to your support, marginalized women are building better futures.

Building Sustainable Rural Communities in Haiti
Since 2009, Groundswell and Partenariat pour le Développement Local (PDL) have supported rural Haitians to create and strengthen 17 peasant organizations. Tens of thousands of farm families have learned to sustainably increase their food production using agroecological techniques. In 2015, we began the planning process for an agricultural training center for farmers to support their peers, create small businesses, and house a community-managed seed and tool bank. Thanks to your support, farmers are positioned to teach their peers and support community-managed enterprises.
Your support helped... Shift the Paradigm

Together, we are amplifying our voices locally and globally, and shaping the story and the policies to nourish people and the planet.

Building a Regional Action-Learning Platform in Latin America

Our allies and partners in Guatemala, Honduras, Ecuador, and Haiti were hosted in Brazil by AS-PTA, a local organization working to improve the lives of rural communities by spreading resilient, ecological agriculture. Together, we created a coherent regional action-learning framework focused on building sustainable local food systems with emphasis on local seed systems, agroecological farming, and consumption of healthy food. Thanks to your support, our partners are working together to tip the scales to a food and farming system that is better for people and the planet.

Showcasing Success Stories Around the World

Voices on the ground speak loudly and clearly about the benefits and success of agroecology. We strive to magnify these voices to help influence policy and create a shift to a more just and sustainable food and farming system. The voices of farmers in Burkina Faso were amplified around the world by a documentary produced by the award-winning environmental show Earthrise. Aljazeera also published an article to accompany the documentary. Links to both are available on our website. Thanks to your support, agroecological farming is increasingly recognized as a viable solution to feeding the world’s people and addressing the effects of climate change.
Growing the Groundswell & How You Can Help

We are so grateful to all of our amazing supporters for their dedication to creating change from the ground up. Your support allows farmers around the world to build better futures for themselves and to transform their communities. Check out a few of the ways that individuals and organizations have created groundswells of support.

The Trinidad Conservation Project (TCP) is a grass-roots community of individuals and churches who are committed to working with rural farming families in central Honduras to sustainably improve their lives and their environment. TCP volunteers have raised money to work with Groundswell and our partner Vecinos Honduras to empower five villages in the department of Santa Barbara.

Students at NYU dedicated their semester to a learning project to develop social marketing strategies for Groundswell. Championed by Board members Jamie Wimberly and Peter Rajsingh, five student teams developed campaigns for raising the level of awareness about the importance of agroecological farming and investing in development from the ground up.

At the University of Maryland’s Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership, students are learning about philanthropic leadership first hand. Following a selection process, the students chose Groundswell to receive a $10,000 grant to improve the food security and rural livelihoods of marginalized women and their families in rural Nepal.

We believe that community-led savings and credit groups are a meaningful way to jumpstart small businesses in rural communities. The congregation at First Presbyterian Church in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania shares this belief and donated a portion of their capital funds to provide training, capacity building, and micro loans to women in Haiti.

A generous supporter established the Groundswell International Milburn Legacy Fund for Africa, a $1 million endowment that will generate an expected $50,000 each year to transform the lives of farming families in West Africa.

Buchi Kombucha and Sow True Seed, two socially minded companies located in Asheville, have partnered with us for the last three years to raise money and awareness for food and seed sovereignty in Western North Carolina. Five cents of every bottle of Buchi Seed directly benefits our US Initiative—Grow Food Where People Live.

Interested in organizing your own groundswell of support or visiting one of our program sites? Visit our website to learn more ways to get involved or contact us at info@groundswellinternational.org with your ideas.
Since 2009, Groundswell International has generated over $7.6 million to strengthen rural communities to build healthy farming and food systems from the ground up. To date, 88 cents of every dollar has been spent directly on programs. We project over $2 million in revenue in 2016.

**Operating Expenditures 2015**
- Programs: $1,337,032 (10%)
- Fundraising: $158,510 (5%)
- Management & General: $76,154 (85%)
Total: $1,571,696

**Revenue Sources 2015**
- Contributions & Other: $443,634 (32%)
- Grants: $934,692 (68%)
Total: $1,378,326

**Assets**
- **Current Assets**
  - Cash and Equivalents: $486,370
  - Grants Receivable: $5,106
  - Other Assets: $12,785
  - **Total Current Assets**: $504,261
- **Long-Term Assets**
  - Endowment with Community Foundation: $22,641
  - Property and Equipment, Net: $2,628
  - Investments: $2,412
  - **Total Long-Term Assets**: $27,681
- **Total Assets**: $531,942

**Liabilities & Net Assets**
- **Current Liabilities**
  - Accounts Payable: $10,149
  - Partner Disbursements Payable: $1,748
  - Accrued Vacation: $6,423
  - **Total Current Liabilities**: $18,320
- **Net Assets**
  - Unrestricted-Undesignated: $178,223
  - Board Designated Endowment: $22,291
  - Total Unrestricted: $200,514
  - Temporarily Restricted: $312,758
  - Permanently Restricted: $350
  - **Total Restricted**: $313,108
  - **Total Net Assets**: $513,622
- **Total Liabilities and Net Assets**: $531,942

**Program Spending by Region**

Full financials available upon request  [www.groundswellinternational.org](http://www.groundswellinternational.org)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jamie Wimberly, Chair
Founder and CEO
Distributed Energy Financial Group LLC

Kathleen Earl Colverson, Vice-Chair
Associate Director, International Programs at University of Florida

Perry Clutts, Treasurer
Owner & Organic Farmer, Pleasantview Farm
Board Member, Organic Trade Association

Eileen Oldag, Secretary
Consultant, Non-profit Organizational Development

Ross Borja, Board Representative of Groundswell’s International Council
Executive Director, EkoRural, Ecuador

Bernard Guri, Board Representative of Groundswell’s International Council
Executive Director, Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development, Ghana

Peter Rajsingh, Board Member
Partner, Castellar Partners LLC
Adjunct Professor, New York University

Stephen Sherwood, Board Member
Lecturer and Research Fellow, Wageningen University; co-founder of EkoRural and Groundswell; owner of a family-run organic farm in Ecuador

Sonja Swift, Board Member
Director, Windrose Fund
Trustee, Swift Foundation

STAFF

Steve Brescia, Executive Director
Christopher Sacco, Director of Operations
Fatou Batta, Regional Coordinator for West Africa
Peter Gubbels, Director for Action Learning & Advocacy for West Africa
Paige Jeffries, Finance Director
Cristina Hall, Associate Director of Communications & Outreach
Caeley Kane, Communications Assistant

Questions? Call at 828.333.4719 or contact us at info@groundswellinternational.org.

Groundswell is a 501c3 nonprofit and a member of the Guidestar Exchange. Donations are tax deductible and secure.