



ANNUAL REPORT 2018



groundswell
international

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groundswellinternational.org



EQUITY, IT'S BEAUTIFUL

Burkina Faso



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Steve Brescia
Executive Director



MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

What is the most powerful force that can be unleashed to address the linked challenges of hunger, poverty, climate change, and environmental degradation?

**Dear Friends & Partners of
Groundswell International,**

“Strengthen farmer organizations...”

We collaborate with partners to foster a virtuous cycle that links farmer agroecological innovation, to farmer-led scaling, to local markets, to enabling policies.

What is the most powerful force that can be unleashed to address the linked challenges of hunger, poverty, climate change, and environmental degradation? We believe it is the creative capacity of the world's small-holder family farmers, about one third of the world's population, to continue to organize, innovate locally, and farm productively and sustainably with nature instead of against it. That is the essence of agroecology. That is the force for positive, ground up change that Groundswell International seeks to invest in and strengthen.

Groundswell is a network designed to support community-led agroecological innovation and scaling. We do this by working closely with partners to create Action-Learning and Amplification programs in ten countries in three regions: West Africa, Latin America & the Caribbean, and South Asia.

This past year I had the privilege of visiting farmers' and women's organizations in Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Ghana, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico to see how our collective work continues to grow and generate impact. Community based organizations are transforming lives while working to build necessary changes in our farming and food systems from the ground up. Their example is what inspires us. We are happy to share some highlights in our 2018 annual report.

Thank you for helping to make this work possible.



Steve Brescia
Executive Director / Co- Founder

WEST AFRICA

HIGHLIGHT



Support farmer groups to experiment on their farms, and grow more diverse and abundant food.



Ensure the full participation of women, youth and those whose voices are often not heard.

AGROECOLOGY PLUS SIX (AE+6)

More than 12 million small-scale farmers and their families in the risk-prone, dryland areas of the Western Sahel have become chronically vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity. This growing crisis is due to a constellation of factors, including the collapse of soil fertility and climate change. Agroecology Plus Six (AE+6) is a low cost, systems-approach of agroecology and resilience strategies, which can spread and be adapted to meet the needs of millions of smallholder farming families.

FAMILY FARMER BENEFITS: FOOD PRODUCTION & NUTRITION

Agroecological “foundational” innovations have been adopted by 2,308 farm families in six communities in Burkina Faso, Mali, & Senegal. In particular, Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) of trees, and ecological soil and water conservation have made farming systems more productive, diversified, and resilient. In addition, women’s savings and credit groups, rotating animal loans, ‘warrantage’ (grain storage system) and dry season gardening have improved dietary diversity and nutrition, and reduced debt for the poorest households. By cultivating moringa and baobab as shrubs in home gardens, families ensure year-round harvesting and consumption of nutritious leaves.

WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

Over 94 women’s savings and credit groups were established in 45 villages. These households recovered their soils and natural resources, adapted to climate change, and diversified their farming systems. Municipal governments are increasingly integrating agroecology and resilience strategies into their plans and budgets.

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With its cascading approach, farmer-to-farmer training efficiently allows for a transition to agroecological intensification. Convening local stakeholders at municipal levels improves local governance for resilience. Women’s savings and credit groups enable women from more vulnerable households to generate income and assets.

SHARING STRATEGIES: FAO SYMPOSIUM ON AGROECOLOGY

Groundswell’s AE+6 program was featured as a selected innovation in the [FAO’s 2018](#) global symposium to Scale-up Agroecology to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The program is also featured as a Showcase on Biovision’s [“Agroecology Info Pool”](#)

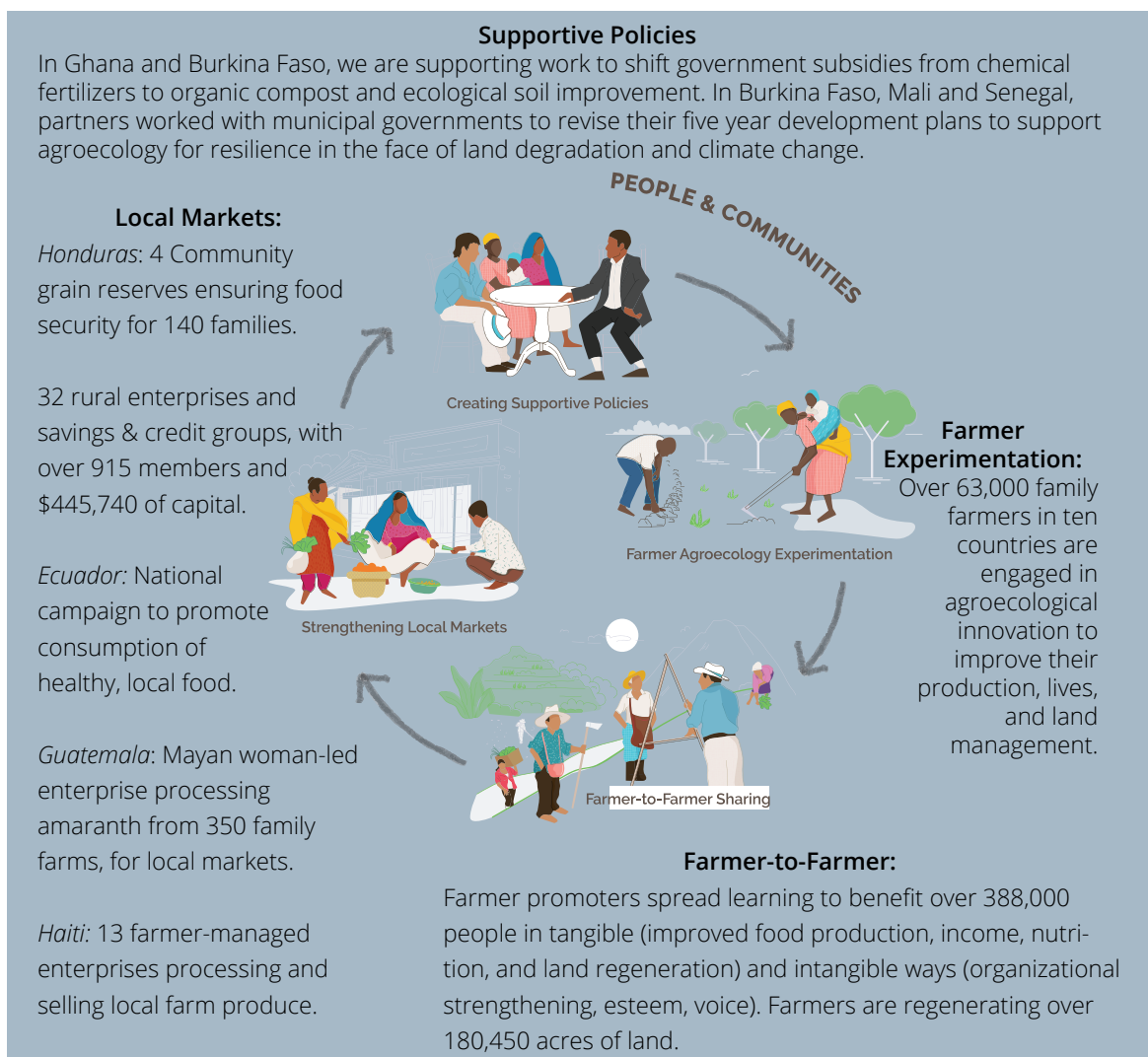
GROUNDSWELL

THEORY OF CHANGE

Action-Learning and Amplification:

Groundswell supports Action-Learning and Amplification programs in three regions. By supporting a virtuous cycle, we strengthen communities to build healthy farming and food systems from the ground up.

Key innovation and scaling themes include: Agroecology; Local Food Systems; Women's empowerment; Climate resilience; Strengthening the capacity of farmers and women's groups; and creating Enabling policies. **Some Results From 2018 Are:**



SOUTH ASIA

HIGHLIGHT



BBP Pariwar strengthens the capacity of women's savings and credit groups for ecological agriculture. Empowering women is central to scaling agroecology.



The program focuses on women from the “untouchable” dalit caste, who suffer severe inequality.

Groundswell International is partnering with BBP Pariwar in central Nepal to strengthen groups of socially excluded dalit (untouchable) women to organize and improve their lives in sustainable ways.

The groups allow women to begin to mobilize and manage their own funds, create opportunities for group support and learning, and allow women increased decision making power and leadership development.

The women receive hands on training and gain experience in agro-ecological techniques, including: household vegetable gardening; soil and water conservation; water harvesting in small ponds; production of organic compost, fertilizers and pesticides; crop diversification and rotation; use of cover crops/green manures to improve soil fertility; and the use of multi-purpose trees and shrubs to stabilize terrace faces and produce animal fodder.

The women are creating positive impacts in their lives, and those of their families and communities.

- 309 women and 16 men joined 14 savings and credit groups.
- All 325 received training and support in agroecological farming and improved animal husbandry.
- 33 families were able to establish on-farm ponds to harvest rainwater to extend the growing season.
- The program provided 127 women with goats to improve income and nutrition; the offspring will be passed on to other group members.

CHANGE IS THE LIVING MESSAGE
WE SEND TO A TIME WE WILL NOT SEE

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

HIGHLIGHT

'Gwoupman' in Haiti Building Local Food Micro-Enterprises

DESCRIPTION OF THE INNOVATION

Since 2009, Partenariat pour le Developpement Local (PDL), as a member of the Groundswell International network, has supported smallholder farmers through a process of reflection and action, to form self-led solidarity groups of 8 to 15 members called **Gwoupman**. By forming coordination structures within and across communities, 16 peasant associations with some 20,000 members have been established. They lead activities including farmer experimentation and farmer-to-farmer extension of agroecology, complemented by savings and credit cooperatives, seed banks and grain banks. Since 2016, **Gwoupman** have established 13 micro-enterprises to process their agricultural produce for sale to local customers.

BENEFITS FOR FAMILY FARMERS: FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

Family farmers are incentivized to scale agroecological farming practices, as they create outlets to process and sell their local produce. This allows them to keep more income, escape dependence on intermediaries, and prevent spoiling of their harvest due to lack of access to basic processing & storage. Smallholder farmers are owners of all steps, from production to processing to marketing. Food and the nutrition security of farmers as well as local consumers is enhanced.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Approximately 10,000 farmers have established agroecological 'model' farms, regenerating over 1,000 hectares of degraded land. Thirteen micro-enterprises are allowing some of them to increase income from processing and sale of their products. Peasant associations, which lead holistic local development processes, are strengthened. They are fostering a circular economy based on agroecology, social solidarity and local food culture.

Our Haiti program was also featured as a selected innovation in the FAO global symposium on agroecology.



Groundswell Board visit to Haiti: Sept. 2018

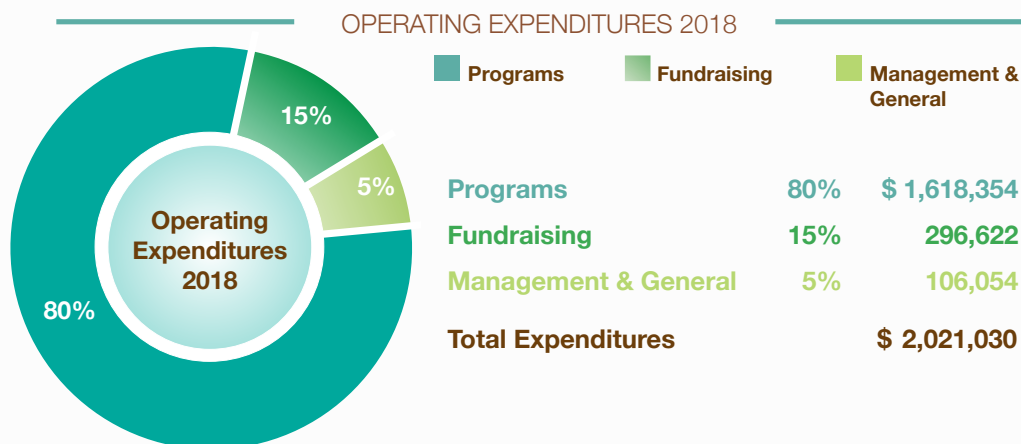
"To me, agroecology is essentially increasing food production and the quality of the land through sustainable ways that respect the local indigenous cultures." - Afua Bruce



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Financial Report 2018

We are profoundly grateful for the many generous donors who make our work possible.



ASSETS

Current Assets

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Cash and Equivalents | \$ 975,694 |
| Grants Receivable | 101,751 |
| Contributions Receivable | 10,635 |
| Prepaid Expenses | 12,932 |
| Deposits | 1,725 |
| Total Current Assets | \$ 1,102,737 |

Long-Term Assets

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Investments | 2,166 |
| Endowment | 22,263 |
| Property and Equipment, Net | |
| Total Long-Term Assets | \$ 24,429 |
| Total Assets | \$1,127,166 |

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities

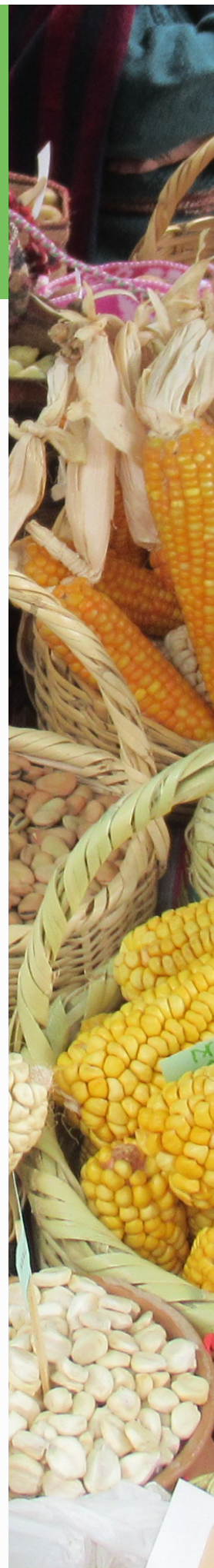
| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Accounts Payable | \$ 6,752 |
| Partner Grants Payable | 67,033 |
| Accrued Vacation | 15,077 |
| Total Current Liabilities | \$ 88,862 |

Net Assets

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Without Donor Restrictions | \$ 168,946 |
| With Donor Restrictions | 869,358 |
| Total Net Assets | \$ 1,038,304 |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets | \$ 1,127,166 |

FY 2018 audit is available on our website. Full financials available upon request.

www.groundswellinternational.org



OUR SUPPORT STRUCTURE



Board of Directors:

- Vance Russell, M.S., Chair, Biodiversity Lead, Ecosulis
- D. Merrill Ewert, Ph.D., Vice-Chair President Emeritus, Fresno Pacific University
- Mark Stone, Ph.D., Treasurer, Meditation teacher; Retired IMF, State Department
- Ross Borja, Secretary, Board Representative of Groundswell's International Council; Executive Director, EkoRural, Ecuador
- Eileen Oldag, Board Member, Consultant, Non-profit organizational development
- Bernard Guri, Board Representative of Groundswell's International Council, Executive Director, Center for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD), Ghana
- Muthusami Kumaran, Ph.D., Board Member, Assistant Professor of Nonprofit Management & Community Organizations, College of Agricultural & Life Sciences, University of Florida
- Perry Clutts, Board Member, Owner & Organic Farmer, Pleasantview Farm; Board Member, Organic Trade Association
- Margaret (Peg) Malloy, Board Member, Philanthropist and Real Estate Broker
- Jan Middendorf, Ph.D., Board Member, Associate Director, Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Sustainable Intensification, Kansas State University

Current Staff:

- Steve Brescia, Executive Director
- Rhonda Devan, Finance Director
- Christopher Sacco, Director of Strategic Initiatives
- Fatou Batta, Regional Coordinator for West Africa
- Peter Gubbels, Director for Action Learning & Advocacy for West Africa
- Brennan Gerald, Creative Strategist

In January 2019 we welcomed new board & staff members:

Board

- Jay Slaughter, M.S., Board Member, Management Consultant
- Jeannette M.E. Tramhel, LL.M., Board Member, Senior Legal Officer, Organization of American States (OAS)
- Afua Bruce, M.B.A., Board Member, Director of Engineering, Public Interest Technology, New America

Staff

- Edwin Escoto, Regional Coordinator for Latin America & Caribbean
- Tsuamba Bourgou, Regional Coordinator for West Africa
- Michaela Andersen, Finance Administrative Assistant



GET IN TOUCH WITH US



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How To Get Involved?

- [Donate](#): Invest in family farmers now to grow real change.
- [Learn](#): Sign up for our newsletter. See how you can make a difference.
- [Follow](#) and share: @GroundswellInt
- [Contact us](#): Want to visit our programs? Engage more deeply? Get in touch.