

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Letter from the **Executive Director** COLLABORATION / SOLIDARITY



Dear Friends,

We are pleased to share our 2022 annual report with highlights of Groundswell International's recent accomplishments and our future directions. In addition to the updates and data presented, we are providing links to key documents and embedded videos that allow you to hear directly from the rural people who are the real agents of change for the impacts described.

Groundswell's mission is **strengthening communities to build healthy farming and food systems from the ground up**. We take that mission seriously, by working to strengthen the capacity of community-based organizations that connect people around their common goals and aspirations – like the examples in this report from rural Mexico, Haiti, and Burkina Faso. We support these local organizations to test and spread ecological farming solutions that increase food production, incomes, and resilience to climate change, while recovering degraded farmland. We foster local economies and connections between farmers and consumers, increasing the consumption of healthy and diverse local foods to improve families' nutrition and health. Together, we leverage this local work for wider systems change – the transition towards agricultural and food production that is healthier for people and the planet.

The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted our travel, as it did for all of us. Yet in September of 2022 we were able to gather our network members again at our global conference in Andhra Pradesh, India. Being together was a reminder that our global collective is built on the same purpose and principles reflected in village collectives and solidarity groups we work with around the world. Unity brings strength. One stick held in your hands can be snapped easily, but ten sticks bundled together are too strong. We are using our collective strength, locally and globally, to build:

Knowledge: People-centered and ground-up platforms to test and spread agricultural innovations and solutions that work with nature instead of against it.

Solidarity: The essential trust, mutual support, and organizational cohesion needed to achieve shared goals.

Assets: Greater production, control, and distribution of key community resources like native seed varieties, locally produced food and grain, savings and credit, and livestock.

Voice and Power: Democratized decision-making that allows people to meet their needs and pursue their dream. Thank you for joining us in this work.

Thanks for all you do to build collective impact together,

Steve Brescia



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global network

collaborating in 10 countries

748 supporting
community based organizations

across 1019 communities

with over 164,549 farmers
applying agroecology

to regenerate over 419,699 acres
of degraded land

and improve the lives of

959,419 people

HAITI: AGROECOLOGY AS A POVERTY SOLUTION



IMPACT

- The adoption of agroecological farming led to impressive increases in productivity and doubled per-hectare profitability in comparison to conventional farming in the program area.
- The typical agroecological farmer had a gross, annual crop income that was US \$437 higher per hectare than the average conventional farmer.
- 98% of farmers surveyed state that they hope to expand to other plots they farm, which could increase their net incomes by \$700 per year, in a context where 30% of Haitians live in extreme poverty, with incomes of under \$785/year.
- Satellite data verified greater green cover and climate resilience of agroecological farms.

Groundswell International has been collaborating with *Partenariat pour le Développement Local (PDL)* in Haiti to strengthen farmer associations in the north of Haiti's Central Plateau basin to regenerate their farmland and improve their lives. To evaluate the impact of this work, we collaborated with environmental economists at Altus Impact based in Switzerland and the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) Initiative based in Germany. The results of the evaluation are summarized in the [Policy Brief - Agroecological Farming in Haiti: A Poverty Crisis Solution](#). Evaluators carried out surveys of 330 households sampled from three communal sections in northern Haiti, the municipal sections count a total population of approximately 30,000 people (5,000 households and 3,000 peasant association members). [Watch here to hear from farmers like Rosenie and Fidèle](#) about the impact of agroecological farming on their lives. Haiti is facing a severe political, economic, and social crisis, but spreading farmer-led agroecological innovation and extension can contribute to building real solutions.

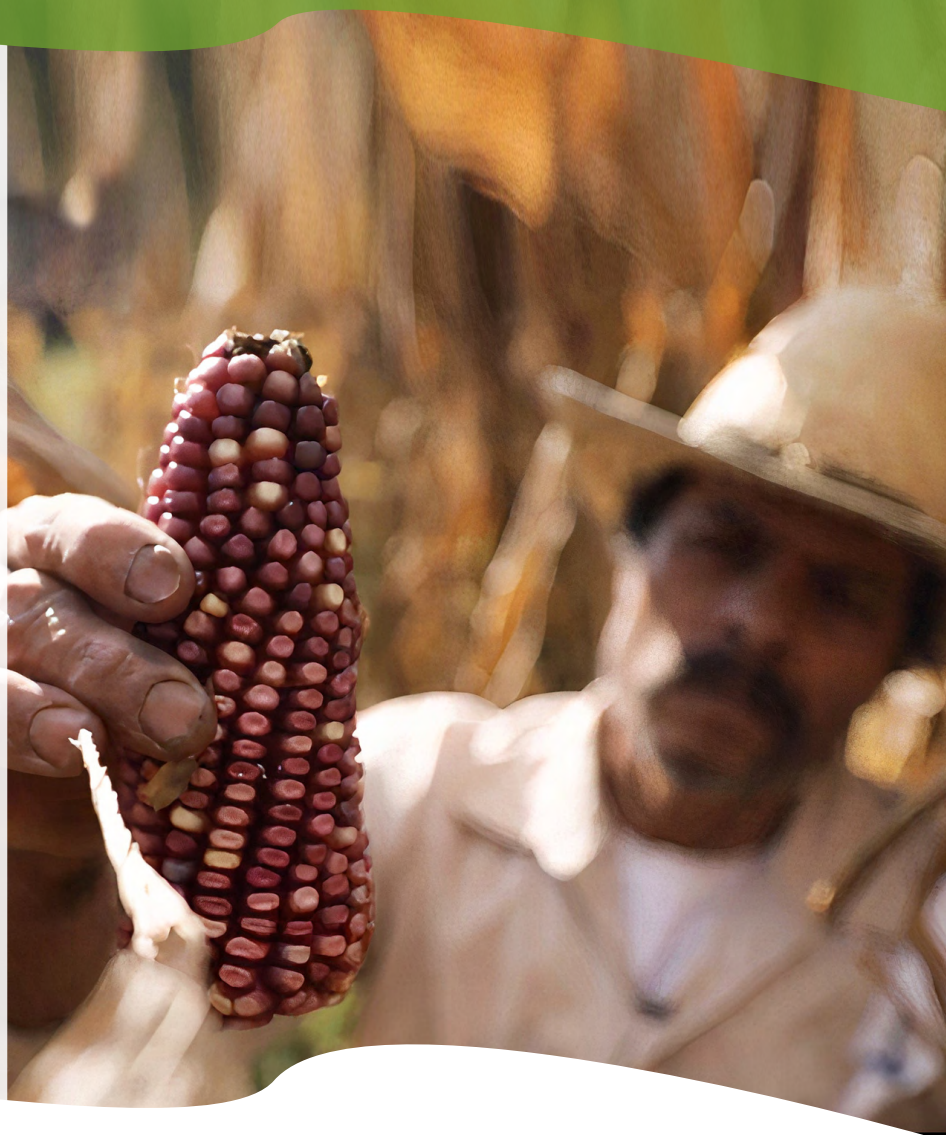
"An essential step is replacing the extractive agricultural and economic model with one that regenerates rural communities and landscapes and promotes food sovereignty. The greatest resources available to achieve that are Haiti's tenacious rural population and its land."

Cantave Jean-Baptiste, Director of PDL, and Steve Brescia, Executive Director of Groundswell International (Mongabay, March 6, 2023)

MEXICO: RESILIENT FARMER SEED SYSTEMS

IMPACT

- Supported eight NGO partners in Oaxaca, Chiapas and Campeche, Mexico.
- Worked with 1,202 smallholder farm families across 55 communities.
- Established 257 plots and local seed banks to produce and distribute 77 local seed varieties of corn, beans, wheat, and amaranth.
- They produced over 4,868 kg of seeds, enough for farmers to plant over 176.6 ha (436 acres) of land.



Seeds, soils, water, markets – these are all essential and interconnected parts of healthy farming and food systems. But at the center of it all are family farmers – their human ingenuity and solidarity, building on their indigenous knowledge, cultures, and legacy of continuously innovating solutions with nature, instead of against it. In 2022, we completed a three-and-a-half-year program in southern Mexico focused on strengthening indigenous farming communities and local NGOs to improve management of their native seed systems. The result is an increased ability and autonomy to adapt, store, and distribute, and cultivate their most effective and preferred native seed varieties, increasing their capacity for food production and bolstering resilience to climate change. This program served to strengthen farmer’s seed systems, to enable long-term seed and food security for the most vulnerable farming households, and to increase the capacity of eight local organizations through participatory learning. [In this video, indigenous farmers in Oaxaca like Miguel and Eulalia share](#) how the project has helped them grow their skills, strategies, and power to improve seed systems, food production, and ultimately their families’ lives.

“This project emphasized the importance and contribution of native seeds to the production of healthy and wholesome food, the organization of farmers for the seeds’ recovery, conservation, and use, and the social organization for their defense. Seeds represent cultural identity.”

Edwin Escoto, Regional Coordinator for Latin American and the Caribbean

BURKINA FASO: WOMEN GROWING AGROECOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS



IMPACT

- 2,620 women organized and participated in 42 savings and credit groups, enabling them to mobilize and control financial resources. They reinvest in agroecological production, income generation, and household needs.
- Women's groups in 43 villages have successfully negotiated with traditional authorities and landowners to gain access land for collective vegetable gardening plots.
- 495 women are involved in small enterprises for value added processing and sale of non-timber forest products.
- 40% of women have become active in their communities in leadership positions.

Women bear heavy responsibilities in rural households, including for farming and food production. Yet due to cultural norms they often have limited decision-making power and control over productive assets. To address these challenges, we support women in Burkina Faso and other countries to organize savings and credit groups. These also serve as organizational spaces for mutual support, solidarity, and group training in agroecological farming, livestock rearing, and other community-development skills. The savings and credit groups assign members management responsibilities, set their own rules for credit management, collect members contributions each week, and make low interest micro-loans to group members for priority needs. Women's group members learn agroecological farming strategies on their household farms, and negotiate access to land to produce vegetables during the dry season. This improves food access and nutrition for their families, and allows them to sell surplus vegetables for needed income. We support them with access to water, basic agricultural tools, and goats or sheep to reproduce and pass on to other women. Women's groups also sustainably harvest, process, and sell 'non-timber forest products' from trees on their land without cutting them down (e.g., shea nuts, fruit, oils, leaves). Watch here to learn how [Habibou's life has drastically improved by testing and adopting simple agroecological farming techniques](#).

"The short-term benefits of agroecology to addressing women's specific needs can eventually bring about wider changes. Improvements in income, food and nutrition security, self-confidence, organizational capacities, and economic wellbeing lay the foundations to instigate shifts in gender relations and women's status and decision-making roles within families and communities."

Tsuamba Bourgou, Regional Coordinator for West Africa



GROUNDSWELL GLOBAL CONFERENCE 2022: ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

In September 2022, Groundswell International held our Global Conference in Andhra Pradesh, India. About thirty representatives of our NGO partners, staff, board, and key allies were hosted by the [Andhra Pradesh Community-Managed Natural Farming \(APCNF\)](#) program. In addition to completing our Strategic Framework, we engaged in an in-depth learning exchange and field visits with APCNF staff, village level women's self-help groups, and agroecological 'champion farmers.' Based on lessons learned, we are developing farmer experimentation with partners around the world, as well as further learning exchanges and collaboration with the APCNF program. We will continue to test natural farming principles in different contexts, to regenerate soil biology, fertility, and productivity while reducing dependence on expensive chemical fertilizers and fossil fuels.



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2023-2027

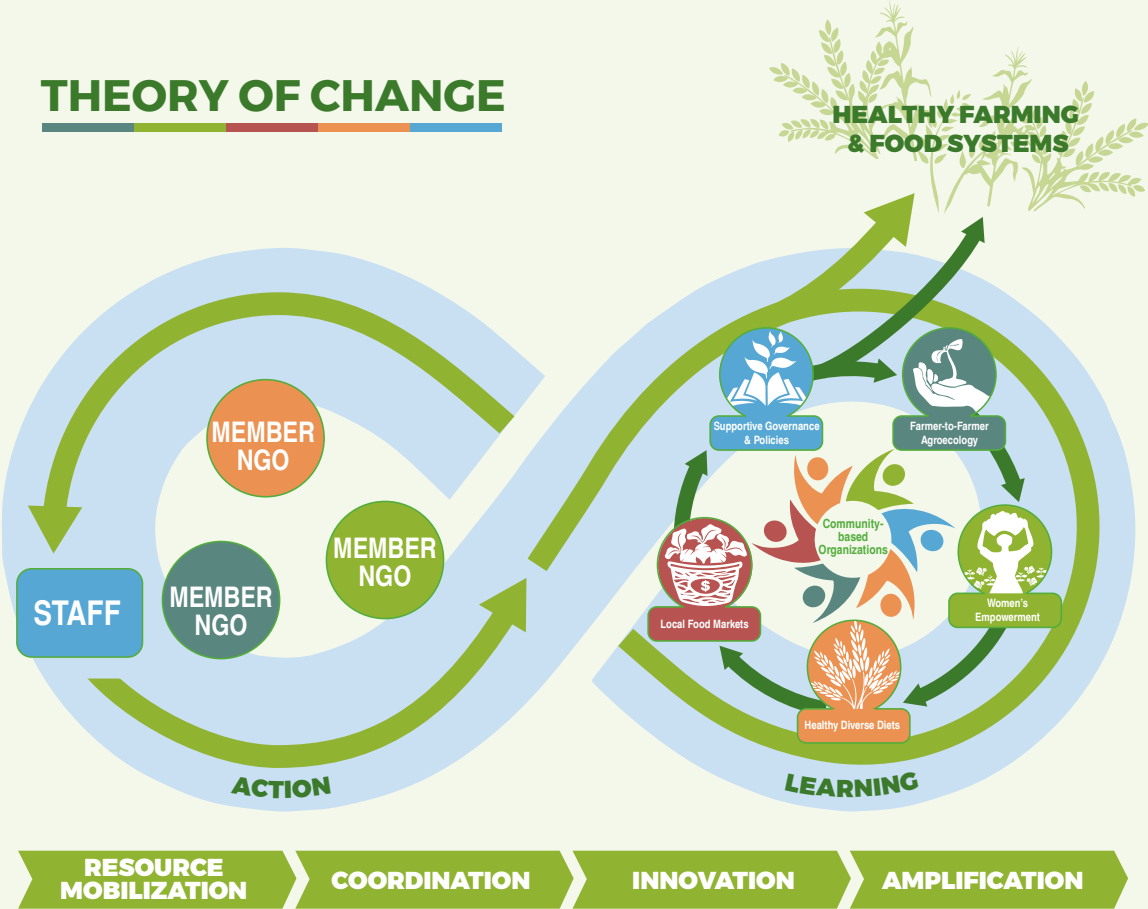
We carried out an intensive process of review, consultation, reflection, and planning over 18 months to develop our Strategic Framework for the next five years. We summarize the framework here in two graphics, a few sentences, and our partners voices. [Watch here](#) to learn what agroecology means to local communities, Groundswell’s role, and how we can overcome the legacy of colonialism.

Theory of Change

As a network organized for action, learning, and collective impact, our updated Theory of Change recognizes that:

- community agency is central;
- our local NGO partners have the grounded expertise to lead;
- we use five broad objectives, synthesized from experience and adapted to local contexts, to design programs that promote virtuous cycles that build healthy farming and food systems.

THEORY OF CHANGE



STRATEGIC GOALS

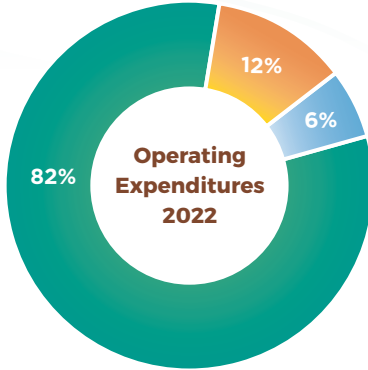
We will continue to build on this Theory of Change and our core program model, while emphasizing areas of growth and collective action-learning to increase our impact and the spread of ground-up solutions.

STRATEGIC GOALS 2023 - 2027



Since 2009, Groundswell International has invested over \$18 million in strengthening rural communities in 10 countries to build healthy farming and food systems from the ground up.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES 2022



	Programs	Fundraising	Management & General
Programs	82%		
Fundraising		12%	
Management & General			6%
Total Expenditures			

Programs	\$ 2,110,336
Fundraising	\$ 302,807
Management & General	\$ 162,273
Total Expenditures	\$ 2,575,416

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash and Equivalents	\$ 1,608,173
Grants Receivable	709,908
Prepaid Expenses	8,071

Total Current Assets \$ 2,326,152

Long-Term Assets

Investments	-----
Endowment	23,190
Property and Equipment, Net	-----

Total Long-Term Assets \$ 23,190

Total Assets \$2,349,342

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$ 90,010
Accrued Vacation	12,439

Total Current Liabilities \$ 102,449

Net Assets

Without Donor Restrictions	\$ 920,233
With Donor Restrictions	1,326,660

Total Net Assets \$2,246,893

Total Liabilities and Net Assets \$2,349,342





OUR SUPPORTERS

We are thankful for the incredible support of our numerous individual donors. Additionally, we are grateful for our institutional supporters listed below.

11th Hour/Schmidt Family Foundation

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Anonymous



GET INVOLVED

Thank you for being part of our community and supporting real solutions.

We encourage you to be involved in cultivating and empowering farmers across the world.



Spread the Word

Wish more people knew about Groundswell?
Share the latest updates with your friends on
social media.



Cultivate the Movement

Interested in hosting an event to
benefit Groundswell? Contact us to
receive tools for a successful fundraiser.



Grow Real Solutions

We are grateful for all donations!
[Become a monthly donor](#) to sustain and
grow Groundswell's impact.



Leave Your Legacy

Want to make a legacy gift that will
continue to bear fruit for years to come?
[Please reach out](#) to learn more.

Call 248-928-6797 or contact us at info@groundswellinternational.org.
Stay up to date with the latest from Groundswell International.
[Sign up for our e-newsletter here!](#)

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Questions?

Call 248-928-6797 or contact us at info@groundswellinternational.org.

Groundswell International is a 501c3 nonprofit and a member of Guidestar.

Donations are secure and tax deductible in accordance with the law.

Platinum
Transparency
2023

Candid.