

Campaign for Climate Justice

Summary

*Grassroots International is a leader in the work to secure and preserve the most fundamental human rights for people around the globe: the rights to land, water and food. **The loss of resource rights is inextricably linked to the rise of climate change**, because as land and water disappear so does the earth's ability to regenerate. As issues related to climate change grow in urgency, Grassroots International is expanding its focus on climate by launching a Climate Justice Initiative. This effort will support both local, community-based organizations and global movements that offer viable, scalable solutions to address the climate crisis and global inequality.*

The negative effects of climate change are felt first and most deeply by those who are the least responsible for its cause. Yet these vulnerable local communities are developing dynamic solutions. With a little help from the Grassroots International community of donors, their successes can spread, serving as models for turning back climate change in the Global South. That's why, as we continue to move closer to the point of no return, Grassroots International is mounting a campaign to fund proven and powerful grassroots-based climate justice solutions.

The Climate Justice Initiative will support those most impacted by the ravages of climate change—including small farmers and Indigenous People—creating effective, local solutions. For families and populations who are most directly affected by climate disruption, the solution begins by defending land and waterways from damage wrought

by fossil fuels and other industries that cause environmental harm. It continues with the development of community-controlled energy and food systems that create a just and resilient economy and society

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Children along the Atlantic Coast in Honduras enjoy the sea. Families there organize to create climate change—resilient communities and stop extractive mining and industrial agricultural practices that spew greenhouse gas and poison their water supply. Photo by Steve Pavey / Hope In Focus / www.stevepavey.com



2 CAMPAIGN FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Situation

Communities in the Global South and in vulnerable Northern locations are already being severely affected by climate change. Due to the effects of climate disruption they are facing an unprecedented assault on multiple fronts: natural disasters, disease outbreaks, massive floods, drought, loss of drinkable water, and crippled food production.

Did you know that ...

- Industrial agriculture accounts for up to 80 percent of greenhouse gas production annually.
- Every day 48 football fields worth of land is deforested.
- Sea levels are rising 10 times faster than previously predicted: 10 feet by 2065. 100 million people live within 3.2 feet of sea level, so even a small increase could have disastrous human consequences.
- About one-fifth of all countries will experience chronic water scarcity by 2040.
- Scientists predict that at least 50 million—and perhaps as many as 200 million—people will be displaced by climate-caused natural disasters by 2050.

While climate catastrophes are reaching a staggering scale, action from world leaders remains woefully insufficient. In contrast, **some of the most effective solutions are coming from the very communities most affected by climate change.** Tragically, very little funding is going to these groups despite their remarkable advances. Only a

small fraction of philanthropic dollars (less than 5 percent in 2015) fund international work, and of that only a tiny portion supports grassroots organizing on the frontlines of climate change. That's why Grassroots International's climate justice initiative is so critical: it allows us to quickly accelerate the solutions that have the potential to make a difference.

Let us show you what is being done by people on the ground to counter the effects of climate change.



Fishing remains an important activity for the Garifuna communities along the Gulf coast in Honduras. Increased storms and climate disruption threaten the community and livelihoods.

The Climate Justice Initiative— Creating Solutions Now

Through its Climate Justice Initiative, Grassroots International is leading the way in providing impactful solutions to the problems of climate change...starting today.

The Climate Justice Initiative is a two-year campaign that will raise \$500,000 to support at least 10 strategic grassroots organizations at the forefront of the climate justice movement. They are community-led organizations **which are creating effective solutions that are turning back climate injustice** in Haiti, Central America, Africa, Brazil, the Middle East and elsewhere in the Global South. Each gift to the Climate Justice Initiative will have a ripple effect—its impact multiplied through social change movements which address the root causes of climate change.



Manal Abu Shalouf and her family live in the Gaza Strip. Many of her neighbors—and many women of the region—owe their livelihood and sense of hope to Manal's grandmother, Fatima Abu Shalouf. Faced with profound hunger due to loss of land and water, Fatima joined with other Palestinian families to establish and expand urban agriculture in Gaza. Now climate change compounds the already difficult circumstances of Gazan communities. With Grassroots' support, our partners there organize for local control of agriculture—starting with seeds—and utilize measures to preserve sparse water in order to grow nutritious food.

“Climate change produces more migration, especially of young people who don't see a future in their indigenous communities. It's very sad. But La Via Campesina is organizing rural communities to take back the control of our natural resources, to implement ecological processes to protect nature, cools the planet and make our world sustainable.”

- CARLOS MARENTES, SR., LA VIA CAMPESINA NORTH AMERICA,
AND CLIMATE JUSTICE INITIATIVE CO-CHAIR

4 CAMPAIGN FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

The Climate Justice Initiative will:

Fund Solutions: Provide critical catalyst funding to projects like those described below that:

- ❖ Protect natural resources, including rivers, water systems, land, and the Indigenous cultures stewarding those resources.
- ❖ Build alternative economic and community models that demonstrate resilience and productivity, particularly those led by Indigenous Peoples, women, small farmers and youth.
- ❖ Promote sustainable agricultural and forestry practices that cool the planet.

Promote successes: Advocate, educate and promote success stories and solutions developed by local communities that can be replicated around the world.

In addition to providing vital financial support to grassroots movements engaged in resilient and essential work in the face of climate change, the Climate Justice Initiative engages in strategic collaborations to challenge policies and practices that drive climate change (like industrial agriculture, free trade policies and resource extraction and abuse) while promoting just transitions toward sustainability.



How You Can Make a Difference

Together with Grassroots International, your support provides critical funding for 'best practice' climate justice projects that are cooling the planet, capturing carbon, and putting the brakes on industry-led activities that are accelerating global warming.

Here are two examples of the types of projects Grassroots International has funded and what will be replicated exponentially when the Climate Justice Initiative is fully funded:

5 CAMPAIGN FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Meet Rubem and Maria dos Santos

*Like his father, Rubem dos Santos worked long, dangerous hours cutting sugar cane in the arid Northeast of Brazil, barely scraping by. Chemicals applied to the fields were making him sick, and he and his wife Maria saw little hope for a better life for their daughter. Their life changed when Rubem and Maria joined the Landless Workers Movement, a popular social movement supported by Grassroots International, occupied and won title to a small piece of land. He then learned organic, sustainable farming techniques that conserve water, control soil erosion and yield a crop large enough to provide a steady income of \$450 a month—equal to more than 2 minimum wage salaries. As Maria says, **“our farm produces food to feed local people instead of poisoning our community.”***



“Grassroots International and the groups it funds are so essential to secure the rights that allow local people to grow safe, nutritious food and ensure a future for their communities and for our planet. And that’s why I’m glad that Grassroots International helps me connect with these movements and bolster their organizing efforts.”

— NAOMI KLEIN, ACTIVIST & AUTHOR

6 CAMPAIGN FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Meet Juslene Tyresias

Juslene’s eyes grow worried when she talks of her daughter, Esperanza. Juslene sees the country Esperanza will inherit being ravaged by climate change: a four year drought, massive deforestation, increasingly intense hurricanes and floods. Without significant changes, the future for Haiti’s children looks bleak.



Juslene wonders what future her daughter will have if nothing changes. That’s why Juslene and other woman leaders of the Peasant Movement of Papaye (MPP) are taking bold steps—as part of Grassroots’ Climate Justice campaign—to tackle climate change head on. They are establishing ecovillages, planting hundreds of thousands of trees, implementing water-management programs and working to create alternative energy sources to reduce deforestation.

“We went from having 15 women in the MPP years ago to 20,000 women today... And today women make up the leadership of the MPP.”

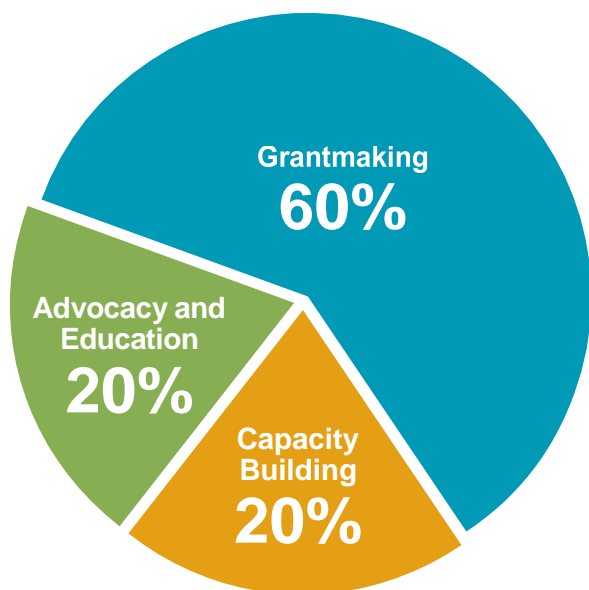
The kinds of resilient and sustainable projects the Climate Justice Initiative and Juslene implement in Haiti offer hope. One day, her daughter Esperanza may be among the nation’s most powerful leaders!



Our Unique Approach

Grassroots International's unique funding model directs support to effective local programs that address the roots causes of the problem. At the same time, our focus on advocacy engages donors and activists to help inform important policy decisions here at home.

Your Dollars At Work...



Grantmaking to support projects, including:

- ❖ Alternative and sustainable agriculture systems, to cool the planet, restore soil and biodiversity, and create alternative economic models for small farmers
- ❖ Learning exchanges to share and replicate successful models
- ❖ Water protection and restoration, including protecting riverways and ecosystems threatened by hydroelectric dams.
- ❖ Currently, only 4 -6 % of US giving supports international projects, and the vast majority of that goes to health and emergency relief. Grassroots International is one of the few sources funding for social movements seeking climate justice, and your support for this campaign can make a big difference.

Advocacy and Education projects, including:

- ❖ Alliance-building to collaborate with leading US-based climate justice organizations and coalitions to strengthen trans-local movement building to challenge damaging policies and propose workable solutions
- ❖ Conduct popular education workshops for individual donors and activists to provide tools to understand the intersections of climate change, race, class, and international policies— including how concerned people in the US can be part of the solution.
- ❖ Communications and educational resources highlighting grassroots climate solutions
- ❖ Organize learning exchanges between frontline grassroots organizing groups in the US and Global South movements to strengthen trans-local organizing for climate justice.

Capacity building includes:

- ❖ Increased Grassroots International staffing to implement climate justice initiatives
- ❖ Improved infrastructure to monitor and evaluate programs and enhance communication systems
- ❖ Production of publications and other communications tools and resources

Campaign Leadership

Climate Justice Advisory Committee

Co-Chairs:

Tom Goldtooth, *Indigenous Environmental Network**

Naomi Klein, *Author and activist*

Carlos Marentes, Sr., *La Via Campesina**

Climate Justice Ambassadors

Co-Chairs:

Leticia Alcantar, *Board Chair*

Kathy Mulvey, *Climate justice activist*

Alice Rothchild, *Author and filmmaker*

** Institutional affiliations are provided for identification purposes only.*

“We will not let people wearing suits and ties to decide on our lives and the fate of the earth. Nature can live without us, but we will not survive without nature.”

—La Via Campesina words from the opening ceremony at the People’s Climate Summit

Key Staff and Board

Chung-Wha Hong,

Executive Director

Maria Aguiar

Leticia Alcantar, *Chair*

Janet Axlerod

Sha Grogan-Brown

Lauren Jacobs, *Secretary*

Mijo Lee

M. Brynton Lykes

Carol Schachet, *Staff*

Meredith Smith, *Treasurer*

Amelita Pascual Spear

Wenda Tai

“We need decisive action, and not in the form of misleading policies like the U.N. REDD program (Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation). While it pretends to protect forests, REDD and similar carbon-offset schemes allow continued destruction of our atmosphere and put our forestland and indigenous people’s homes, livelihoods, and cultures in continued peril.”

—TOM GOLDTOOTH, INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK AND CLIMATE JUSTICE INITIATIVE CO-CHAIR

Grassroots International's Climate Justice Principles

Climate Justice operates at the intersection of racial and social rights, environmental and economic justice. It focuses on the roots causes of climate change, and calls for a transformation to a sustainable, community-led economy. A Climate Justice framework acknowledges that those who bear the greatest immediate impact from climate change (i.e. developing countries, marginalized and poor communities and those in the Global South) are not the perpetrators behind climate change (i.e. industrialized nations, rabid consumerism and insatiable extraction). Below are the principles that drive Grassroots International's climate justice work:

Communities in the frontline of impact should be at the forefront of decision making.

We believe that donors and foundations are important constituencies for education and collaboration, to become an active part of the climate justice activism that's needed.

Climate solutions should simultaneously challenge the current economic system and build for the next system based on economic, social, racial and ecological justice.

- To promote this systems change, we must go beyond the dominant discourse of Adaptation and Mitigation and support locally driven economic and ecological resiliency.
- Just transition. While some sort of transition is inevitable, a just transition is not. We support transitioning from the current extractive economy to the next economy through a process that ensures equity and sovereignty.

Part of our education and outreach must include the imperative that the current dominant way of life and consumption patterns in the US must change. We have an opportunity to educate the public about "*buen vivir*" as the alternative.

Realizing that nature is a complex living network and processes and not a mere collection of things, the solutions that we support focus on restoring the life cycle of the planet (including the carbon cycle and water cycle) and aligning our communities to be in sacred harmony with Mother Nature, much of which we can learn from indigenous communities.

The "Polluter pays" principle should not only apply among nations, but should also be translated in philanthropy. This means, polluters – including corporations, nations, and philanthropies that have benefited from polluting industries – should pay the costs of adaptation, mitigation and economic transition. For philanthropies, it means more funding to the frontline communities, beyond just inclusion, and Grassroots International can lead by example as well as organize in philanthropic networks to make that happen.