



## *2017 Partners and Projects Guide*



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*“The time has arrived to question this model of ‘development’ that has been imposed on us in these past decades...We should and must have the obligation to leave water, air, food, and secure the safety for our sons and daughters, and other living beings...The time has come to act. We act NOW. We build and construct a plan of life against the culture of death.”*

*--Miriam Miranda, Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras*

*“We appreciate working as a partner with Grassroots and sharing a political vision. For Grassroots, projects are a tool of building solidarity, with the goal of building a global movement.”*

*-- Esther Vidal, Movement of People Affected by Dams*

Grassroots International combines savvy political analysis, reliable funding, and international networking to support global movements that are solving the root causes of poverty and climate change. For more than three decades, Grassroots International has worked in partnership with social movements and



frontline organizations at the local and global level to advance the human rights to land, water and food through grantmaking, building solidarity across organizations and movements and advocacy in the US.

That work remains more important now than ever, as more and more people

squeeze into the global 99 percent, with their rights, lands and resources under attack by elite corporations and institutions. But that is not the end of the story.

Small farmers, indigenous peoples, women and those on the losing end of globalization are joining hands to defend their lands and livelihoods, advance an alternative model of “living well” (*buen vivir*) that is both sustainable and shareable, and protect the earth’s precious resources. And Grassroots International is right with them, providing both essential financial support and political solidarity.

In partnership with peoples’ movements around the world, Grassroots International is strengthening hands-on solutions to the major challenges of our day: hunger, climate disruption, and social and economic inequality. Together we address the root causes of these challenges and seek to reverse

damage to the planet's eco-systems caused by harmful corporate-driven industrial agriculture, land grabs for financial speculative purposes, and megaprojects such as hydroelectric dams and mining.

The guide below offers examples of this work, including the partners and projects Grassroots International intends to support in 2017.

## Globalizing Justice: Our Vision

Grassroots International envisions a world in which a universal commitment to the health and well-being of the earth and all its peoples, fueled by successful global movements for economic and ecological justice, transforms production practices, consumption patterns, and economic and social relations to ones based on sustainability, equity, and the rights to land, food, and water.

### Principles and Ways of Working: Our Values

- Grassroots works in partnership with Global South movement organizations, US and global allies, and with our supporters and donors, all of whom are committed to and have contributed to making a more just and sustainable world possible.
- In all our partnerships, we work on the basis of shared vision and values; and principles of transparency, reciprocity, responsibility, and trust.
- The focus of our funding with Global South partners is *resource rights*—the rights to land, water and food. This includes movements for food sovereignty and climate justice led by people traditionally excluded from power. We establish long-term partnerships as we believe those to be the most effective, but maintain flexibility to do exploratory or shorter-term funding in order to advance the social, political and economic rights of disenfranchised people.
- Grassroots continuously strives to enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of global movements and local communities by facilitating connections and relationships amongst partners, US-based alliances, foundations, and with our donors and other supporters.



- Since Grassroots is located in the US, a country with disproportionate influence on the global economy, we will continue to deepen our advocacy efforts. Grassroots seeks also to amplify the voices of base-building and frontline organizations, which we view as primary agents of change, both in the US and overseas.
- The value we add to resource rights advocacy includes our ability to bring Global South perspectives, voices and personal experience to northern organizations and the US public; and

our capacity, based on more than three decades of experience, to communicate the links between seemingly disparate issues into a common frame to build support and understanding.

- Grassroots offers an effective way for individuals and organizations in the US to engage on international issues, act on their political convictions and strategically channel financial resources to create a more just and sustainable world.

### **Rights to Land, Water, Food Sovereignty and Climate Justice: Our Strategy**

Our strategy encompasses the following:

- **Movement Building:** We support efforts that increase the power of movements for resource rights; break isolation; allow effective strategy sharing; and unite cross-border campaigns whose impact is exponentially greater than the sum of the parts.
- **Sustainable Livelihoods:** We increase the capacity of our partners in the Global South to build sustainable, ecologically sound development solutions; advance women's and indigenous people's livelihoods; and serve as entry points for organizing and leadership development.
- **Human Rights Defense:** We accompany partner organizations in defending the full range of human and environmental rights, as well as monitor and document human rights abuses. We defend the rights of movement leaders and activists who increasingly find themselves under attack by governments and corporate interests.

## Global Partnerships

With land, water and seeds increasingly controlled by a small number of poorly regulated transnational corporations, effective social change for resource rights and a fair food system must match this global reach. We call this life-giving cross-border work globalization from below. This work puts us at the front lines of the struggle between private gain and public good.

In that work, we are honored to have formed partnerships with powerful and visionary global networks like [La Vía Campesina](#), which represents more than 250 million small producers in over 70 countries.

As we support the Vía's international reach, our relationship transcends national borders. This relationship is central to our core focus on Resource Rights for All, and has brought us into new regions of the world, new venues of struggle and innovative models of community life.

Through our relationship with the Vía, Grassroots has supported organizations in South and Southeast Asia and Africa (such as the National Union of Peasant Farmers - UNAC - in Mozambique and the National Coordination of Peasant Organizations - CNOP - in Mali), regional work in Latin America, the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform, the Global Campaign to End Violence Against Women, as well as broader work to raise up food sovereignty as one of the real solutions to create climate justice.

Grassroots works with the Vía Campesina at national, regional and global levels. For example, in 2016 we will renew funding for the Vía Campesina International Operational Secretariat, currently based in Southern African through the Zimbabwe Small-scale Organic Farmers Forum (ZIMSOF).

La Vía Campesina's overall work continues to advance 6 main *Strategic Lines of Action*:

1. Stop Transnational Corporate Control over Agriculture, Human Life, and the Planet;
2. Build Our Food Sovereignty Alternative through Agrarian Reform, Peasant Seeds, and Agroecology;
3. Struggle to Unmask the "Green Economy" as a tool of the TNCs, and to Slow the Climate Crisis;
4. Further Integrate Youth and Women in the Movement;
5. Organizational Strengthening; and
6. Build Alliances and Solidarity.



## Partners and Projects in Brazil

***“Agroecology is a tool of social change that integrates women and men as a part of a whole, and returns to us the dignity of being a peasant.”***

- Jessica Da Silva Britto, Popular Peasant Movement (MCP), Brazil

***“The secret is using agricultural practices that are in harmony with the local environment, not at war with it like industrial agriculture.”***

- Edileu, Landless Workers Movement (MST), Brazil

The inequalities that afflict Brazilian society are enormous: a mere 1.6 percent of Brazilian landholders still control 47 percent of the nation's privately owned land, and 60 percent of the population shares just 15 percent of all wealth. In tandem with the destructive practices of industrial agriculture and land grabbing by agribusinesses and megaprojects, foreign companies' control over local resources has increased as Brazil continues down its neo-liberal economic path. The impact on Brazil's rural communities and the nation's vast forests, land, water systems and biodiversity is devastating.

In 2016, the political crisis in Brazil deepened after an illegitimate government took power through an impeachment proceeding against the democratically-elected president, Dilma Rousseff. Social movements are calling the impeachment proceedings an institutional coup designed to further advance the neoliberal project in Brazil. Popular gains and social rights such as pensions, fair wages, labor rights, and other social projects face serious threats. Also endangered are natural and mineral resources such as land and oil, as well as public resources, which are all now open to foreign companies without earlier regulations or protections. According to Brazilian social movements, the coup aims to reverse the democracy gained through hard-fought grassroots struggles, including lives lost. Since the rightwing takeover there has been a resurgence of repression of social movements and those who oppose the coup.

Yet Indigenous Peoples, rural landless workers and urban slum dwellers are at the forefront of a movement striving to counter these trends and build an economy that serves all people. Since 1998, Grassroots International's Brazil Program has focused on two key issues: the rights to land and water,



### Brazil Projects (and partners)

- National Agroecology Training Project (MST)
- Base Organizing and Leadership Development (MST – Maranhão)
- Agroecology Project (MST - Maranhão)
- Human Rights Training and Defense (MST - Pernambuco)
- Creole Seeds Project (MCP)
- Food Sovereignty, Education and Political Participation as Human Rights (ASSEMA)
- Resistance in the Amazon: Grassroots Organizing and Defense of Water and Land Rights (MAB)
- Human Rights Education, Advocacy and Legal Defense in support of Rural Social movements in Brazil (Rede Social)



and defending social movements that are being criminalized. Geographically, the program focuses primarily on the northeast, central plateau and Amazon regions (including the states of Maranhão, Pernambuco, Bahia, Goiás, Sergipe, Piauí and Pará).

Grassroots is currently providing support to the following organizations in **BRAZIL**:

The **Landless Workers Movement (MST)**, Latin America's largest popular movement, has been at the forefront of social action for comprehensive “People’s Agrarian Reform,” food sovereignty and climate justice. The MST works with landless peasants to identify and settle on underutilized land, gain legal title to the land and bring it into productive use. Through the MST’s efforts, more than 1.5 million people have been settled on 17 million acres of land, and currently more than 120,000 families are living in encampments, awaiting settlement. The MST is also one of the most powerful peasant and landless workers movements and plays a vital leadership role within the global peasant farmer network La Vía Campesina.

Grassroots works with the MST at state and national levels through sustainable agriculture, training and legal defense projects. Projects for 2017:

- **MST - National Agroecology Training Project:** Across the 23 states where its settlements are located, the MST promotes agroecology (integrated farming, land and water use based on traditional knowledge and local control using organic, ecologically and socially sustainable



practices). MST’s agroecological model prioritizes the use of local seed varieties, diversification of crops, recovering and building local knowledge and fostering food sovereignty. Through this project, the MST provides hands-on training and classroom opportunities to leaders organizing in settlements won through agrarian reform. Leaders gain technical skills and experience in agroecology and cooperation to strengthen their organizing strategies, taking into consideration the current political context

and future scenarios in the Brazilian countryside. These leaders then disseminate and amplify cooperation and agroecology practices in agrarian reform settlements in Brazil, as a strategy to overcome political and social challenges and to continue strengthening their food production systems. The MST also supports the development of the Latin American School of Agroecology, which promotes food sovereignty and social justice. Additionally, agroecology plays a key part of the MST and La Vía Campesina’s climate justice strategy – expanding the use of methods which actually cool the planet by sequestering carbon in soils and which develop local resilience to climate impacts.

- **MST Maranhão – Base Organizing - Strengthening Youth Leadership and Self-organizing in Agrarian Reform Encampments and Settlements in the State of Maranhão:** This project aims to develop the leadership and organizing skills of youth living in agrarian reform encampments and settlements in Maranhão. In the countryside, the government’s consolidation of a rural



development model that favors agribusiness and megaprojects (mainly private) comes at the expense of peasant family farming, with youth severely impacted. That's why the MST actively seeks to encourage youth participation at local, state and national levels. Youth leadership will continue to be crucial in order to organize around income generation through sustainable food production, and advocate for policies that guarantee a dignified life, such as secondary education in the settlement areas. MST sees this work as a way to stop the problem of rural youth migration to big cities.

- **MST Pernambuco - Agroecology Project:** MST intends to amplify agroecological practices through training and providing direct support to the families in transition, so they can expand their knowledge of agroecology, as well as sharing technical skills with other families in the settlements and in the nearby settlements. Through the Agroecology Project, farmers are learning that more crops can be produced at lower costs using sustainable methods than through using costly and toxic chemical fertilizers and other inputs that are commonly promoted by industrial agricultural approaches. Local families will learn and apply their knowledge to rebuild their food sovereignty and the local economy based on peasant-led agriculture.
- **MST Pernambuco - Human Rights Training and Defense:** Grassroots has supported various aspects of human rights monitoring, training and legal defense in Pernambuco over the last several years. Extreme disparities of wealth and land concentration have led to violence and human rights abuses by large landowners, particularly against land reform activists. Through this project, MST offers trainings for land activists about legal procedures and documentation of human rights abuses as well as legal assistance in cases against its members.



The **Popular Peasant Movement (MCP)** is at the forefront of promoting farming practices that are ecologically sustainable, economically viable and promote biodiversity and peasant autonomy. Since 2008, MCP has worked with peasant families to save, multiply, distribute and market Creole (or heirloom) seeds as a way to defend the peasants' autonomy and preserve biodiversity. MCP is at the forefront of struggles in the central state of Goiás and in the Northeast region to resist aggressive agribusiness land grabs (including large-scale industrial agrofuel plantations) and genetically modified seeds, to address climate change and high levels of poverty, and to promote agroecological farming practices.

Project for 2017:

- **Creole Seeds Project:** The MCP is expanding its highly successful initiative to save, multiply and distribute creole seeds and to encourage the use of local seeds in order to restore biodiversity. The Creole Seeds Project is reenergizing small-scale farmers to organize for sustainable and productive rural development policies, to denounce the impacts of agribusinesses on their

communities, and to fight for their right to remain on the land. The participatory farmer-to-farmer education methodology of the Creole Seeds Project creates new possibilities for farmers to study and implement sustainable agriculture practices such as the rotation of grazing areas and “agroecological corridors” which combine annual crops with plants in ways that produce large amounts of biomass, help fertilize the soil and reduce erosion.

The **Association in the Settlement Areas of the State of Maranhão (ASSEMA)** organizes thousands of women-headed rural families in Northeast Brazil to remain on and make a living from lands gained through agrarian reform. Founded by courageous women who chose to fight for their community instead of accept evictions, ASSEMA continues to organize for a more equitable distribution of resources to address the structural inequities that have kept the region’s poor hungry for generations. ASSEMA provides technical, organizational and political support to communities of *babaçu* nut harvesters, Quilombola (Afro-descendent) communities, youth and peasant families in settlements, working with them to implement small-scale family agriculture and production. ASSEMA is working with the local families to expand access to rights and to improve their quality of life, based on the implementation of agroecological practices in food production, solidarity economy and the empowerment of rural women and youth.

Project for 2017:

- **Territorial Governance of Babaçu Nut Harvesters:** Through this project, ASSEMA will provide ongoing technical support, leadership development and training for women *babaçu* harvesters in order to strengthen their land rights efforts and management of cooperatives. This project aims to strengthen the *babaçu* nut harvesters’ skills in organizing, advocacy, cooperative management and coordination to ensure the sustainable conservation of their lands, environments, and the full exercise of their rights. Through this project, women and youth will acquire the skills and experience needed to continue organizing for the defense of their territories.

**The Movement of People Affected by Dams (MAB):** Established in 1991, MAB advocates for the human right to water and land, particularly for people displaced by dams and other mega-projects and provides legal and organizational support to families who have already been displaced or who are being threatened with the loss of their homes and livelihoods. The threat from mega-dams has risen dramatically as the climate and energy crises have fueled the growth of so-called “clean and green”



energy sources like hydro power. However, MAB’s work exposes how these projects, many of which receive carbon credits under international clean development mechanism arrangements, actually increase deforestation and methane emissions, while devastating local ecosystems and the communities connected to them.

MAB is building a strong movement to advance an alternative and sustainable energy model that respects the energy sovereignty of the

Brazilian people. This is a model centered on sustaining the environment, culture and communities. The project incorporates participatory mechanisms for civil society to discuss, build, influence and control energy policies at local, state and national levels. MAB has successfully stopped the privatization of rivers and other natural resources, and advocates for alternative energy policies that benefit both poor people and the environment. As water and energy are key issues that intersect with climate change, MAB is also playing a key role in the development of a stronger international movement for climate justice.

After years of organizing in the Tapajós region, MAB won a major victory when the São Luiz do Tapajós mega-dam, the largest hydroelectric project planned for the Amazon, was canceled in August 2016. MAB celebrates the decision and stresses that it is the result of years of struggle by the Indigenous Peoples, riverine and other communities threatened by the construction of this dam.

Project for 2017:

- **Developing Leadership and Building Resistance in the Amazon for the Defense of Land and Water Rights:** MAB is working with communities threatened and affected by the construction of dams along major Amazonian rivers, the Tapajós and the Xingu. The Amazon region is in the center of the government's 10-year energy expansion plan. Beyond electrical energy generation, the proposed dams are part of a joint government and corporate vision to develop a transportation infrastructure for soy and other agribusiness products and for mining commodities. Through this project, MAB aims to strengthen organizational capacity, advocacy and leadership development to defend human rights and the territories of Indigenous Peoples and other communities in the Tapajós and Xingu regions in the state of Pará. MAB will focus its work on political education and leadership development of youth and women, given the important role they play in the struggle.

**Social Network for Justice and Human Rights (Rede Social):** The protection of human rights goes hand in hand with the healthy growth of social movements. For this reason, Rede Social works closely with



rural social movements, providing training, legal defense and public education to protect the labor, land and water rights in Brazil. Over the past 15 years, Rede Social has worked with social movements, rural workers, Indigenous and Quilombola movements, women's rights groups, student movements, and trade unions.

Rede Social provides social movement organizations, the media, government and Brazilian and international human rights communities with research and documentation on rights abuses in Brazil. Rede Social's main objectives are to combat impunity, reduce violence against members of social movements, and protect the collective rights of social movements. In addition, Rede Social has been a leading voice in exposing agrofuels in Brazil and across Latin America as one of the false solutions to climate change. The organization has played a key role in exposing human rights violations against rural workers and displaced rural families affected by this industry.

Project for 2017:

- **Human Rights Education, Advocacy and Legal Defense in Support of Rural Social Movements:** Land and water conflicts have impacted the lives of thousands of peasant and landless families, Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendent Quilombola communities and other traditional communities. The rural populations in resistance whose livelihoods depend on land and natural resources have suffered all kinds of violence – including evictions, death threats, assassinations, massacres of members of the social movements, arbitrary arrests and harassment – coming from large-scale landowners, large companies and the State.



Therefore, training and focus on human rights and environmental and climate justice, along with legal advisory work, are crucial for mobilizing complaints and campaigns against human rights violations and environmental crimes. This project provides legal assistance in numerous ongoing cases involving organizers of social movements in Brazil. In addition, this project supports communities in defending their fundamental rights, while raising the visibility of human rights violations in rural areas. The legal support and training enables communities to expose and counteract the criminalization of activists and rural organizers, and empowers them to demand appropriate measures from local authorities to put an end to impunity. The work also includes awareness of the importance of preserving natural resources upon which rural communities, as well as society in general, depend for their survival.

## Partners and Projects in Mesoamerica

*“Agrarian reform and food sovereignty is a struggle today throughout the entire world. The reality of not having land is like not having a country. We are moving forward, thanks to international solidarity. And there is no doubt, we will advance in the struggle against poverty and hunger.”*

- Rafael Alegría, Via Campesina-Central America, Honduras

*“We don’t live off gold, nor do we live off silver. We live off of the water, the air, the sun, and the fruits that Mother Earth gives to us. These are our most precious treasures, and we must care for them, whatever it takes.”*

- Member of the Committee in Defense of Natural Resources, Magdalena Teitipac, SER Mixe, Oaxaca, Mexico

Despite a wealth of natural resources, culture, minerals and biodiversity, Mesoamerica remains one of the most impoverished regions in the world, with indigenous peoples, small farmers and women among the poorest. Yet peasant farmers and indigenous peoples constitute the two most significant social and economic justice movements in Mesoamerica today. On one front, these movements are challenging

the mounting inequality and injustice that have been spurred by free trade agreements, deregulation and massive privatization schemes – the main thrust of neoliberalism in the region. And on the other front, peasant farmers and indigenous peoples are putting forward powerful alternatives that start with rights to water, land and territory; protection of native seeds and biodiversity; food sovereignty; women’s rights; and promoting climate justice.

The struggle between the neoliberal agenda and the rights of small farmers and indigenous peoples has become increasingly militarized and volatile. Transnational corporations seeking to expand their reach and limit opposition have relied on increased military might, border control and land grabs. For this reason, human rights defense plays an important role along with movements for resource rights.

Grassroots International supports projects in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, as well as region-wide throughout Mesoamerica. All of our partners in the region work to defend the human rights to land and water, food sovereignty, and climate justice, often by developing successful local, sustainable agricultural and livelihood alternatives in harmony with the earth. Our partners are at the forefront of vibrant movements making transformative changes to challenge the systems oppressing Indigenous Peoples and peasants in the region.

## Mexico

Grassroots is currently providing support to the following organizations in **MEXICO**:

**The Union of Organizations of the Sierra Juarez of Oaxaca (UNOSJO)** is a Zapotec indigenous organization, established in 1990 by 26 regional and community-based indigenous campesino organizations in the Juarez Mountains of southern Mexico. UNOSJO fosters locally controlled, environmentally and culturally appropriate development and defends the land rights of the area’s indigenous communities. They are a leading voice protecting watersheds and access to water, defending indigenous varieties of corn. Through participation with the Network in Defense of Corn, the Oaxacan Collective in



### Mexico Projects (and partners)

- Building Zapotec Territorial Autonomy (UNOSJO)
- The Land and Water Rights Defense Project (SER Mixe)
- Building Autonomy through Food Sovereignty in the Autonomous Indigenous Communities in Chiapas (Enlace Civil)
- Strengthening La Vía Campesina Mexico through the promotion of Land and Territory Rights, Food Sovereignty and Climate Justice Education (UNORCA, Via Campesina Mexico)





Defense of Territories, and in the Confederation of Peoples in Defense of Water, UNOSJO organizes to resist the introduction of genetically modified (GM) corn in the Oaxacan countryside. In recent years, UNOSJO has been active in exposing and resisting extraction, as well as carbon offset programs like REDD+ (“Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation”) that allow polluters to keep polluting in the Global North, while violating territory rights in the Global South.

Project for 2017:

- **Building Zapotec Autonomy: Indigenous Peoples’ Territory and Resource Rights:** UNOSJO is working through community radio, community and youth workshops and regional forums to organize and defend Zapotec territorial and resource rights, and culture. Through this project UNOSJO will organize popular education events to strengthen Zapotec people’s identity and autonomy, and create spaces for discussion and alliance building to generate opportunities for the education of members of the Zapotec community and others in the southern region of Mexico. UNOSJO works closely with our partner SER Mixe on developing agroecological farming and communal statutes to defend land and resource rights in Zapotec territories.

**Mixe Peoples Services (SER Mixe)** is an indigenous organization serving more than 130,000 people in 30 communities in the state of Oaxaca. It supports human rights work for and provides legal assistance to indigenous peoples of Oaxaca, particularly in disputes over expropriated land, organizing against mining and extraction and resolving territorial conflicts between indigenous communities. SER Mixe also works with communities to promote agroecology, as well as to strengthen the voice and participation of women. SER Mixe is active in the Network in Defense of Corn and the Oaxacan Collective in Defense of Territories, and is connected to international indigenous movement building.

Project for 2017:

- **Territorial Reconstitution and Defense of Indigenous Rights** promotes indigenous territorial land and water rights in the Mixe regions, as well as across other indigenous regions (including Zapoteco, Mixteco, Huave, and Chinanteca), where long-standing land conflicts continue. Through this project, SER Mixe provides conflict resolution skill-building as well as legal assistance. SER Mixe is working to strengthen the organizing process in these indigenous communities concerning the importance of communal statutes as community-based mechanisms to protect land, territory and natural resources, without support or imposed conditions from government or corporations.

#### **Enlace Civil:**

Founded in 1996 at the behest of autonomous indigenous communities in Chiapas, Enlace Civil serves the expressed needs of the autonomous indigenous movement in Chiapas. The organization does not offer projects to communities; rather, it takes community demands and serves as a bridge to those in Mexico and in the international community in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples in the state as they

work toward *lekil kuxlejal* – also known as *buen vivir*, meaning “living well” – an indigenous worldview about living harmony with and between people and Mother Earth.

Enlace Civil works primarily to support the dissemination information from Indigenous communities in Chiapas; channel national and international support to strengthen the development of autonomous indigenous communities in Chiapas, in accordance with the needs and criteria proposed by the people themselves; and accompany community actions and projects in the struggle for more just and democratic living conditions. Current projects that Enlace Civil supports include education, health care, agroecology, production and marketing.

Project for 2017:

- **Building Autonomy, Strengthening Political Participation and Empowering Autonomous Indigenous Communities in Chiapas.** The Juntas de Buen Gobierno (JBG – Councils of Good Government) are a model for building emancipatory power, creating local government bodies where direct democracy can be exercised and where members of the indigenous communities



participate in the decisions that affect them. The JBGs promote and strengthen self-government and participatory processes which allow communities to decide on the redistribution of resources, taking in consideration the needs of each community, and what types of projects the community will carry out. Through this project the JBG “Hacia la Esperanza” (“Toward Hope”), aims to strengthen political participation and empower youth, indigenous women and the autonomous indigenous communities in general.

**La Vía Campesina Mexico** promotes organizing peasants and Indigenous Peoples throughout the country toward food sovereignty and climate justice, and connects with other similar movements around the world. Through education and organizing efforts, the network mobilizes hundreds of communities to advocate for the rights of Mother Earth and local families, and build solidarity links between rural and urban communities.

Project for 2017:

- **Promotion of Land and Territory Rights, Food Sovereignty, Climate and Environmental Justice Education:** This project will strengthen alliances between farmers, Indigenous Peoples and other rural and urban groups from communities affected by environmental injustice, especially from extraction and megaprojects. The project includes education and organizing efforts in defense of the land and water rights of peasants and Indigenous Peoples in Mexico, and advances pro-food sovereignty policies both locally and internationally. La Vía Campesina Mexico will develop these strategies through state, regional and national fora around climate and environmental justice, the existing threats to land and territories, and agroecology as a vehicle to achieve food sovereignty and as a real solution to climate change.

## Guatemala

Grassroots is currently providing support to the following organization in **GUATEMALA**:

The **Peasant Unity Committee (CUC)** was created in 1978 and is the first national organization formed by peasants and Indigenous Peoples in Guatemala. CUC works in over 200 communities and six micro-regions of the country to defend the land, water and food rights of impoverished peasants in Guatemala, primarily in communities facing displacement or environmental damage by mining, dam, and industrial agriculture corporations. CUC has also played a critical role in uniting movements across diverse sectors and organizations in Guatemala – including peasants, Indigenous Peoples, women and youth – to advance structural changes under the broader banner of social justice.

Project for 2017:

- **Strengthening the Base, Youth Organizing, Education and Advocacy towards *Buen Vivir* (Living Well):** Through this project, CUC will empower women, men and youth leaders through organizing, political education, agroecology training, advocacy and alliance-building to advance rural development with gender equity. This includes providing legal and organizational support to communities, while coordinating campaigns to defend the rights of indigenous peoples and peasants to land, territories, water, food sovereignty, and climate justice. CUC aims to advance the demands for rural development and to stop human rights violations stemming from laws and initiatives that undermine and discriminate against indigenous peoples and peasants.

## Nicaragua

Grassroots is currently providing support to the following organization in **NICARAGUA**:

The **Association of Rural Workers (ATC)** is the main member of La Vía Campesina in Nicaragua, and plays an important role strengthening the peasant movements not just in Nicaragua, but across all of Central America. Founded in 1978, the ATC unites



## Central America Projects (and partners)

### Guatemala

- Strengthening the Base, Youth Organizing, and Advocacy toward *Buen Vivir* (Living Well) (CUC)

### Nicaragua

- Central America Training and Leadership Development (ATC/the Via Campesina)
- Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform, Land and Territory (ATC/the Via Campesina)

### Honduras

- Afro-Honduran Communities' Territory Rights Defense through Cultural Resistance (OFRANEH)
- Women's Commission in Central America (CODIMCA/the Via Campesina)
- The Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH)

over 50,000 campesinos and landless rural families from cooperatives, small landholding associations and unions. La Vía Campesina - **Central America**, with the ATC, created the Francisco Morazán Regional Training Center in Nicaragua to train peasant and indigenous members from across Central America in agroecological farming as well as community organizing, advocacy and food sovereignty. The Vía Campesina - Central America's regional membership includes:

- **Nicaragua:** The Association of Rural Workers (ATC), the National Coordination of Ex-Combatants (CNOR), and the Nicaraguan Association “Israel Galeano” (ARNIG), the National Union of Associated Producers (UNAPA) and the Agriculture Forestry Roundtable (MAFNIC);
- **Honduras:** the National Center of Rural Workers (CNTC), the Council for the Integral Development of the Peasant Woman (CODIMCA), the Union of Peasants and Indigenous Peoples of Honduras (UCIH), the Association for Rural Development of Honduras (ADROH), the National Association of Peasant Women of Honduras (ANACH), the Peasant Movement of Aguan (MUCA), the Association for the Development of Peasants of Progreso (ADCP), the Peasant Movement of San Manuel Cortes (MOCSAM) and the Regional Agricultural Cooperative Pate Pluma Limitada (CARPAL);
- **Guatemala:** The National Coordination of Guatemalan Widows (CONAVIGUA) and the Peasant Unity Committee (CUC);
- **El Salvador:** The National Association of Agriculture Workers (ANTA), the Federation of Agrarian Reform Cooperatives (FECORACEN), the Standing Committee for Rural Women (MPMR), the National Union of Agricultural Workers (UNATA), the Veterans Association of Salvadoran Guerrilla (AVEGSAL), the Women Organizers Cooperative Foundation (FUNPROCOP), the National Federation of Cooperatives of Agricultural Production (FENACOPAZ) and the Agricultural Association (MONTE ARARAT);
- **Costa Rica:** The National Forum of Peasant Organizations (MNC), the National Union of Agriculture Producers of Costa Rica (UNAG) and the Union of Smallscale Agricultural Producers (UPPA);
- **Panama:** The Peasant Union of Panama (UCP), the Peasants and Indigenous People Union (UIC) and Peasant Organization Coclesana 15 de mayo (OCC-15 de Mayo).



Projects for 2017:

- **Vía Campesina - Central America Training and Leadership Development of Peasants and Indigenous Peoples in Central America:** Geared towards the specific needs of campesino, indigenous and Afro-descendent organizations, the Vía will be training members at the Francisco Morazán Training Center on methods for advancing agrarian reform and food sovereignty in Central America. Half of the participants are women, and at least one third are youth.

- **Vía Campesina Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform, Land, Water and Territory:** Through workshops and coordinated actions, this project seeks to strengthen local and global land struggles to promote agrarian reform, develop strategies to influence government policies at national and regional levels and protect territorial rights, with special emphasis on food sovereignty and on access to land for youth, women and Indigenous Peoples. The campaign also advocates for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests, as another tool to stop land and ocean grabbing. The campaign's broader vision includes reducing hunger and poverty, strengthening the capacity and influence of indigenous and peasant organizations, and defending their rights.

## Honduras

Grassroots is currently providing support to the following organizations in **HONDURAS**:

The **Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras (OFRANEH)**: A grassroots organization working with Garifuna (Afro-descendent) communities in Honduras, OFRANEH works to protect Garifuna communities' economic, social, and cultural rights, particularly with regard to farming, fishing, and defense of Mother Earth. Their territories and rights are increasingly coming under attack from large developers attempting to take over Garifuna territories for profit, and from the impacts of climate change on their coastal lands. Other major threats include the planned building of "charter cities," the expansion of agrofuels plantations, the development of mega-tourism projects, the expansion of organized crime, and the exploration and extraction of oil. Through a network of community radio stations, the organization promotes health and environmental education, supports the use of Garifuna language, promotes youth and women's leadership development and coordinates community actions to defend the Garifunas' ancestral territories. OFRANEH is also engaged in national, regional, and international movement-building against militarization and for climate justice.

Project for 2017:

- **Afro-Honduran Communities' Territory Rights Defense through Cultural Resistance:** OFRANEH is working to defend and recover Garifuna ancestral territory in areas such as Vallecito. Vallecito has become one of the pillars of the territory rights struggle for the Garifuna people. It represents collective resistance to the systematic land grabs happening throughout the Atlantic coast where the Garifuna ancestral territories are located. Vallecito has become a refuge for those losing their land both from land grabs and from the impacts of climate disruption. Dozens of Garifuna families displaced by impacts of climate change (such as severe storms, rising sea levels and erosion) have engaged in permanent reoccupation of Vallecito. Through this project, OFRANEH aims to support the permanent camp located in Vallecito as a main strategy for the defense of over 845 hectares of land threatened by agribusiness, extractive companies, and organized crime. In addition this project will advance the establishment of a coconut production project to secure income for the Garifuna families living in the Vallecito region, and as another way of reclaiming their ancestral territories and culture.



**Council for the Integral Development of the Peasant Woman (CODIMCA)** is the lead organization for the Women's Regional Commission of La Vía Campesina – Central America. Created in 1985, CODIMCA was one of Honduras' first peasant women-led organizations focused on women's land rights. The organization promotes women's land rights through agrarian reform and advocates for more services in rural areas such as schools, health clinics, roads and electricity. It trains women in community organizing and project management and supports member groups in developing common strategies and actions. CODIMCA also provides support to youth groups in Honduras.

Project for 2017:

- **Strengthening La Vía Campesina's Women's Commission and Global Campaign to End Violence Against Women in Central America:** This project will strengthen women's commissions in each of the region's six countries by supporting the leadership of rural women in the defense of resource rights, food sovereignty, climate justice, women's rights and gender equality. They also play a lead role in the implementation of La Vía Campesina's Global Campaign to End Violence Against Women in the region. Furthermore, the Women's Regional Commission has been working with broader feminist movements to create a joint agenda with organized rural women to lift up women's leadership and women's economic empowerment, support full participation of women, and advance understanding of women's rights within mixed-gender peasant organizations.

**The Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH)** was founded in the early 1990s to fight for Lenca territorial rights, the protection of their natural resources and the defense of Lenca culture. Since then, COPINH has become one of the strongest voices in Mesoamerica for the defense of indigenous peoples' rights and has actively worked to strengthen and unify Honduran social movements. Through decades of struggle, COPINH has expelled dozens of illegal logging operations from Lenca territories, recovered over 200 indigenous communal land titles, and represented the voices of indigenous communities at international spaces.



Since the beginning of 2013, COPINH has been struggling against a mega-complex of four large dams in the Gualcarque River basin, called the Agua Zarca dam project, being undertaken by a Chinese corporation called Sinohydro and a Honduran company called Desarrollos Energéticos S.A. (DESA). The Agua

Zarca hydroelectric dam project was rejected by the Lenca people of Rio Blanco, organized by COPINH, because it would privatize the Gualcarque River, invade their territory and violate their rights. Also, this project violates the International Labor Organization's Convention 169 that established the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Such projects can only move forward with consent from the affected indigenous communities, which in this case did not occur.

The Lenca people bravely resisted the construction of Agua Zarca dam in their territory for about a year, despite many attacks, criminalization of movement leaders and even deaths of key leaders- including Berta. Community members organized to keep the roads blocked 24 hours a day, seven days a week, preventing DESA's access to the dam site. Through COPINH's organizing efforts, Sinohydro terminated its contract with DESA, publicly blaming DESA for not informing them of the massive social conflict in the region. The community won another major victory when the International Finance Corporation, a member of the World Bank Group, withdrew its funding due to concerns about human rights violations.

In 2016, COPINH leader Berta Cáceres, recipient of the Goldman Environmental Prize and other international awards, was assassinated – the most recent of a series of environmental and Indigenous leaders to be murdered. Following her assassination, COPINH and other movements in Honduras said: “Berta has not died; she multiplied!” Despite ongoing threats and intimidation, grassroots movements continue to organize for human rights, environmental justice and to protect the sacred Indigenous territories.

Project for 2017:

- **Protecting Indigenous and Women's Rights:** As the recent assassination of world renowned environmental and indigenous rights leader, Berta Cáceres, illustrated, Indigenous peoples and women often face brutal threats and challenges. COPINH has been solidifying its capacity to defend and promote Lenca culture, territory, livelihoods, rights and the status of women. They defend alternative, climate-resilient models of development for the indigenous people of Honduras, with the ultimate goal of achieving a dignified, humane, and self-sufficient society. COPINH has been instrumental in stopping mega-projects including for-profit hydro dams that threaten to destroy local communities and ecosystems. Grassroots International support will boost international rapid-response networks; develop women's leadership and training; support “know your rights” workshops and trainings; support legal cases in international court; and assist with developing and implementing emergency security strategies, including personal protection measures.

## Partners and Projects in Haiti

*"We noticed that peasants were suffering a lot. Rose Edith got us together and made a base for the movement. We started with gwoupmans and got everyone who had the same problem together. We started a co-op after we got a lot of people together. We did farming, raised animals, and sold merchandise. Some parents couldn't pay for their children to go to school, so we encouraged them to take money out of their savings by selling animals and vegetables, and that way, they were able to send their kids to school."*

- Angéline Loui-même, member of MULAC, MPNKP

*"The majority of families live off the land. With climate change, people can't produce enough food to feed themselves and take care of their children. Last year, there was little to no rain, and this year, it is not falling as it should." – Gislaine St. Fleur, MPP*

*"Since the founding of Haiti, the peasants' fight has been a fight for land ownership."*

—Camille Chalmers, PAPDA

Haiti—the home of a powerful slave revolt that created the world's first Black republic—is most often mentioned for its current status as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Despite the fact that Haiti has many natural resources and a history as the richest colony in the Western Hemisphere, the people of Haiti continue to lack justice, peace and prosperity. Civil and political rights may exist on paper but human rights violations abound. A corrupt and ineffectual justice system has been unable to address the crisis. And ongoing occupation by UN MINUSTAH forces has created an atmosphere of militarization and lack of respect for Haitian self-determination while also introducing an ongoing cholera epidemic.

Haiti is still in the midst of an electoral crisis after cancelling elections earlier in 2016 due to fraud and rampant irregularities in the first rounds. New elections for president are scheduled in 2017.

Many of Haiti's most pressing problems have external origins. From crippling trade policies to direct military invasion, Haiti has faced numerous threats from her neighbors. And now, five years after the earthquake, stories of corruption and scandal from international aid abound from the Red Cross to the Clintons. Meanwhile, Martelly's "open for business" policies have left Haiti's peasants facing land grab after land grab by industrial parks with sweatshop wages, agribusiness, mining interests, mega-tourism



### Haiti Projects (and partners)

- Promoting Agroecology in the Central Plateau, through Reforestation, Prevention of Erosion, Organic Agriculture and Food Production (MPP)
- Goat Distribution and Organizational Strengthening (MPNKP)
- Strengthening Family and Agroecological Peasant Agriculture through Advocacy and the Transition of Farming Systems (PAPDA)
- Haiti Human Rights Promotion and Defense (POHDH)



projects, and more. Bad interventions in the name of humanitarian aid continue, and in 2016 Haitian social movements and Grassroots International joined together with organizations across the US to denounce plans by the USDA to dump 500 metric tons of peanuts on Haiti. This plan would potentially devastate Haiti's vital peanut sector under the seemingly benevolent guise of providing snacks to school children.

Haiti is also facing massive environmental challenges. Deforestation has left the country and especially the 66-80% of the population who rely on small-scale farming even more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as hurricanes, long-term drought, massive flooding, and erosion. Indeed, after three years of a terrible drought that dramatically decreased Haitians' access to food, Hurricane Matthew caused major flooding, destruction, and loss of life. As they always do, our partners spring into action with community-based disaster response, in the context of working toward broader structural change. Haitian grassroots movements are connecting with global climate justice struggles, building their own alternatives to fossil fuels, and developing solidarity economies.

Through our partnerships in Haiti, Grassroots International aims to be part of efforts to eliminate hunger, build food sovereignty, and promote climate justice. Among the objectives of the program are: to promote sustainable food production and its equitable distribution; to foster opportunities for solidarity economies that promote community-based sustainable livelihoods, especially for women; to strengthen grassroots communities' capacities to become the authors of their own future; to secure human rights as outlined in the Haitian constitution and the UN Declaration; and to contribute to climate justice and the restoration of Haiti's natural environment as a key component of food sovereignty.

Grassroots International currently provides support to the following organizations in **HAITI**:



The **Peasant Movement of Papaye (MPP)** is among the most important local peasant movements in Haiti with over 40 years of history and experience, including a broad range of autonomous development activities to improve peasants' livelihoods. In the economically devastated Central Plateau, Grassroots supports the MPP's expansive range of self-help development activities aimed at improving peasants' quality of life and making their voices louder locally, nationally and internationally. MPP is a pioneer in creating projects to address climate change. The organization has planted 30 million trees as part of its agroforestry work. It has developed a solar panel production project, and is known for its exceptional work in creating infrastructure to capture rainwater, ensure water access for local communities, and design agricultural techniques that conserve water. MPP is a proponent and pioneer of agroecology and plays a leadership role in international climate justice movements, through its participation in the Climate and Environmental Justice Collective of La Vía Campesina.

Project for 2017:

- **Promoting Agroecology in the Central Plateau through Reforestation, Prevention of Erosion, Organic Agriculture and Food Production:** The MPP's community and economic development projects aim to increase food production and food sovereignty in the Central Plateau through reforestation, soil and water conservation, organic agricultural production programs and training of local peasants. The project trains farmers in adaptation strategies and interventions in relation to the climate crisis, and connects with MPP's work to build alternative energy sources, and train peasants to maintain home gardens that require very little water. This project is part of the MPP's broader program to advance agroecology and to ensure access to clean water, and fits in with MPP's climate justice strategies.

The **National Congress of the Papaye Peasant Movement (MPNKP)** is one of Haiti's two national peasant movements, and is part of the *Kat Je* Platform. Literally meaning "Four Eyes," the *Kat Je* Platform is made up of four of Haiti's most powerful peasant movements. Grassroots' support to the MPNKP has historically focused on the Creole Pig Repopulation project. The Creole pig was once the most important economic asset for Haitian peasants, but the entire population was eradicated under U.S. pressure when swine fever hit the Caribbean. The MPNKP has done a great deal of work to reintroduce this life-giving asset. Because of an outbreak of another pig disease, MPNKP decided to focus on goat distribution. They see this project as an organizing tool that can work across regions and community groups. MPNKP is also active in agricultural and cooperative production, engages its members in political education and offers training and resources for responding and building resilience to climate impacts.

Project for 2017:

- **Goat Distribution and Organizational Strengthening:** The MPNKP has been distributing goats into Haitian rural communities, and training workers to provide veterinary care and financial management. This project does more than just re-establish a valued economic resource in the Haitian countryside; it provides a vehicle through which peasant groups, including those formed by women and youth, can build skills and become better organized and self-reliant.



**The Haitian Platform to Advocate Alternative Development (PAPDA):** Founded in 1995, PAPDA is a coalition of nine Haitian organizations working together to promote the emergence of a new Haiti, to challenge neoliberalism, and to promote public policies based in the common good. Toward that end, PAPDA works on diverse thematic areas, including external debt, alternative integration, food sovereignty, participatory democracy, and solidarity economies. Its work for food sovereignty focuses on developing unique and effective solutions to hunger, while at the same time pressing for structural changes in the nation's food and agricultural policies. PAPDA's work to build movements for food



sovereignty challenges the more traditional 'food security' strategy that has relied largely on imported food aid and has eroded local production and consumption of locally-produced grains and legumes.

Project for 2017:

- **Strengthening Family and Agroecological Peasant Agriculture through Advocacy and the Transition of Farming Systems:** Since 2013, Grassroots' support of PAPDA's work has centered around rural development and food sovereignty. PAPDA works with organizations at local grassroots levels to identify their demands to secure peasant rights. It then facilitates a process for groups to come to agreement around peasant demands at the departmental (state) level. From there, PAPDA has been working to bring groups together to discuss demands at the regional level with the goal of creating a set of cohesive national demands that have come from the grassroots across the country. . The organization uses the demands generated through this deep grassroots initiative for its broader advocacy efforts. The project will also continue PAPDA's work with local groups implementing concrete practices to increase food production and build the solidarity economy.

The **Platform of Haitian Human Rights Organizations (POHDH)**, founded in 1991, is a national coalition of nine of Haiti's foremost human rights groups. The coalition trains people at the grassroots level to work within their communities for human rights, and to monitor and document human rights abuses. Using a variety of outreach methods including media work and community radio, POHDH educates Haitians on their rights, especially women and children. POHDH now has a network of over 150 monitors in all 10 departments (states) of the nation. POHDH also does extensive work to monitor elections and to advocate for democratic processes.

Project for 2017:

- **Haiti Human Rights Promotion and Defense:** Through this project POHDH will strengthen its national network of local human rights monitors; press for judicial reforms and accountability from Haiti's judicial institutions; increase citizen access to the judicial system; improve coordination with international human rights organizations; keep national and international media and organizations informed on the human rights situation in Haiti; and develop a broad communications campaign against impunity and for a national culture of respect for human rights. This work includes human rights education and monitoring in different departments (states).

## Partners and Projects in the Middle East

*“The seed bank is like a treasure for the community.”*

-- Do'a Zaied

*“They’re calling our village an illegal outpost. These lands were ours before there was a State of Israel. My father is older than your State—and I am an illegal alien on my own land. I ask, where is justice?”*

--Nasser Nawaja, Susiya resident.

Land and water have been at the core of the conflict between Palestine and Israel from its very origins. Access to and control of these resources is critical for achieving Palestinian self-determination and for an enduring and just peace with Israel. Grassroots sees the struggle for resource rights in Palestine as a framework that has effectively generated excitement and energy among those on the ground who are working for structural social change.

Under occupation, Palestinians face the confiscation and destruction of land, homes and water resources; checkpoints and roadblocks; and the expansion of settlements and bypass roads. The Wall in the West Bank and buffer zone in Gaza further impinge on land and livelihood as Israel continues to unilaterally expand its borders. And within Israel, Palestinians face the challenges of racism and discrimination, impacting their own rights to land, water and food sovereignty.

Violence and land grabs the West Bank and East Jerusalem have escalated in recent years, including increased closures, cordons, and checkpoints and continued home demolitions and land confiscations.

Meanwhile Gaza continues to endure an ongoing siege that prevents basic building materials and other essential items from reaching the region still devastated after the 2014 attack that leveled whole neighborhoods and damaged 18 power plants and nine of Gaza’s water and sewage systems.

Grassroots International partners with organizations and grassroots initiatives in the Middle East that provide essential services and advance resource rights and food sovereignty. Our work with these local organizations—combined with that of allies and coalitions—facilitates international linkages to support the nonviolent Palestinian struggle for self-determination. Grassroots International **continues to be one**



### Middle East Projects (and partners)

- Urban Agriculture to Enhance Food Security and Women’s Livelihoods in Gaza (PARC)
- Protecting Palestinian Land and Water (Stop the Wall Campaign)
- Securing Farmers’ Rights (UAWC)
- Women’s Empowerment Project (UAWC)
- Protection of Palestinian Land and Property Rights (PCHR)
- Mental Health Services to Gaza (GCMHP)

of the only U.S. funders who support Palestinian organizations engaged in work for human rights, particularly the human rights to land, water and food.

Grassroots International provides support to the following organizations in **PALESTINE**:

The **Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (PARC)**, established in 1983, is a leading non-governmental organization in the fields of rural development, environmental protection and women's empowerment, working with more than 160,000 rural and marginalized Palestinians. PARC promotes sustainable development and improves access to food through food security initiatives—at the household, community and territorial levels—through innovative projects such as the Farm-to-Table program linking Palestinian farmers with consumers in Gaza.

Project for 2017:

- **Urban Agriculture to Enhance Food Security and Women's Livelihoods in Gaza:** PARC has worked for years to guide the creation of over 2,500 urban gardens on rooftops, backyards and other available spots of land in order to provide food, hope and life to hundreds of families in Palestine. Families use these gardens to grow food and generate income. The attacks in the summer of 2014 devastated much of Gaza. After the attacks, PARC focused on projects to rebuild water infrastructure in Gaza. In 2017, PARC will continue to provide opportunities for mostly women-led households to access sustainable livelihoods through urban gardening and animal husbandry while increasing awareness and engagement of local community by raising agricultural issues of high concern through training conferences.

The **Stop the Wall Campaign** is a coalition of Palestinian non-governmental organizations and community-based “popular committees,” youth and women that mobilize and coordinate efforts on local, national and international levels. These efforts are focused on stopping and dismantling the Wall



in the West Bank, resisting Israeli occupation and defending Palestinian communities' rights to their land and water. In recent years, Stop the Wall has been working to develop and strengthen the Land Defense Coalition, which aims to strengthen the will and determination of people from Palestinian villages which face expulsion and confiscation of land – such as South Hebron, the Northern Jordan Valley, the eastern part of Nablus and many other locations in the West Bank, particularly the Bedouin areas, including those in Jerusalem.

Project for 2017:

- **Protecting Palestinian Land and Water:** Stop the Wall (StW) will continue its work to defend land and water rights and resist the

Israeli Occupation in the Jordan Valley, east of Jerusalem, and in the southern Hebron hills. StW was instrumental in forming a Jordan Valley Council, composed of farmers, shepherds and local groups to organize against home demolitions, ethnic cleansing and development plans for the Jordan Valley that included the proposed introduction of Monsanto seeds. The Council conducts trainings, organizes demonstrations, documents the human rights violations committed by the Israeli Occupation and organizes isolated farmers throughout the valley to lift up their voices together. Now the council and other committees of farmers, youth, and women are confronting Israel's relocation plan for Palestinians in Area C, as well as Israel's violations of Palestinians' water rights. They are in particular planning to focus a lawsuit on the Israeli water utility company Mekorot. Additionally, Stop the Wall is organizing increased solidarity activities during the olive harvest, as more and more farmers are at risk of being cut off from their land by



Israel's "relocation plan." This year's project will also work to strengthen the organizing and coordinating capacity of the Land Defense Coalition.

**The Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC)** was established in 1986 to improve the difficult social and economic situation of Palestinian farmers that is a result of the marginalization of agriculture and

confiscation of land and water resources under Israeli occupation. UAWC emphasizes sustainable development and food sovereignty rather than emergency and relief projects. UAWC projects have included water and land reclamation and development, food security and income generation projects, digging and rehabilitating wells, a dynamic regional seed bank, and education about gray water use. In recent years, UAWC has been making more connections between its work to resist Israeli occupation and to promote food sovereignty with work to address climate change. UAWC works closely with several of Grassroots International's partners in the Global South, and in 2013 became a member of La Vía Campesina. In 2014 UAWC was a recipient of the Food Sovereignty Prize and the UN Equator Prize.

Projects for 2017:

- The **Securing Farmers Rights Project** has traditionally focused on providing farmers with legal assistance following land confiscation notices from the Israeli military and solidarity programs to increase farmers' steadfastness on the land when the military demolishes their homes, crops, roads, and sheds. These programs will continue, while this year's project focuses on developing narratives of Palestinian farmers through storytelling and photography that can counter the dominant Israeli and US narratives of Palestinians as terrorists, in order to build understanding of and solidarity with Palestinian farmers' struggles for rights to land, water, and food sovereignty.
- The **Women's Empowerment Project** includes work to support the organizing of women's collectives as a way to promote women's leadership and sustainable livelihoods, as well as

supporting women’s work to raise their voices through alternative media. UAWC has also been working to integrate women completely into the structure of the agricultural committees that form the basis of UAWC’s work. This year, the Women’s Empowerment Project will focus on identifying needs for capacity building within the established Women’s Cooperatives, and then providing the tools, resources, and training to increase their effectiveness. The areas for capacity building may include development in finance and marketing skills. .

The **Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR)** works to protect human rights, promote the rule of law and advance democracy. The PCHR has gained an international reputation as an independent voice on human rights vis-à-vis violations perpetrated by both Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The PCHR monitors and documents human rights violations, campaigns against the death penalty, provides legal aid to victims of violations and advocates for greater economic and social rights, including the rights of the Gazan fishers who have been denied access to their fishing waters by Israeli Occupying Forces and of farmers whose fertile lands are in the “buffer zone” which Israeli military guard with gunfire. PCHR brings cases to local courts and also seeks justice for war crimes and violations of international law through international courts. PCHR was one of several human rights bodies who pushed for Palestine’s entry into the International Criminal Court. Since this took place in 2015, PCHR is working closely with other Palestinian human rights organizations to bring their cases before that body.

Project for 2017:

- **Protection of Palestinian Land and Property Rights:** This project aims to solidify Palestinian land and property rights, reduce violations against these rights, and ensure the restoration of land and property to their Palestinian owners. This is achieved through monitoring and documentation, legal assistance and representation, and international advocacy. Grassroots International supports PCHR’s legal unit, which links together many of their programs.

Grassroots International will also continue to support the **Gaza Community Mental Health Program (GCMHP)**. In addition to their work with children, women, and victims of organized violence in Gaza, they initiated and have been active in the Palestinian International Campaign to End the Siege on Gaza. Grassroots International supports GCMHP’s work providing mental health services to Gaza’s traumatized population—especially vulnerable groups such as children, women and victims of torture. GCMHP has carried out extensive therapy, training and research in response to mental health needs of a population living under the twin stresses of siege and extreme violence.



## Global Initiatives

Grassroots International is actively exploring ways to strengthen connections to resource rights movement organizations in Africa and Asia and to re-engage in those regions – both for us and for our partners throughout the Global South. As part of this effort, Grassroots makes a number of grants to organizations whose work is aligned with ours.



### Fund to Advance Resource Rights in West Africa

Family farmers have fed Western Africa for generations. All that changed when the government planted a virtual “For Lease” sign on the land. International buyers grabbed it up, quickly draining the land of nutrients with vast fields of monocrops for export.

This is the plight of many farmers throughout West Africa. Massive land grabs – combined with the influx of genetically modified seeds under the banner of the “Green Revolution,” and the promotion of laws that criminalize seed-saving and open markets to free trade – come with empty promises of increased agricultural productivity and the end of hunger.

But this so-called “Green Revolution” is responsible for poisoning precious farmland with toxic chemicals while profiting agro-industrial giants at the expense of the families and communities who depend on – and care for – the land.

Many threatened small farmers are joining a growing movement-building effort of peasant farmers who are part of *We Are the Solution*, a network of women-led family farmer organizations in five countries of West Africa, working to promote agroecology and food sovereignty as an alternative to the corporate takeover of agriculture in the region.



The **Fund to Advance Resource Rights in West Africa** supports grassroots organizations and social movements in West Africa that advance food sovereignty, climate justice and the human rights to land and water as solutions to hunger, poverty, and ecological disruption. It prioritizes support for social movements and community-based efforts that are led by women, small-scale farmers, indigenous peoples, and youth as those most impacted by these forms of injustice, and therefore the best experts in creating lasting solutions.

Grassroots International provides support to the following effort in **WEST AFRICA**:

**We Are the Solution (WAS)** is a collaboration of women-led family farmer organizations in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Senegal. *We are the Solution* is building a movement to strengthen women's political learning and development. Member groups recognize that chronic problems of hunger and landlessness will continue to exist unless we replace the Green Revolution and corporate-controlled agriculture with agroecology, a framework that values local farmers' knowledge and contribution to feed themselves and surrounding communities. Through the combination of local knowledge and interdisciplinary technical expertise, agroecology builds a food system that is socially just, environment friendly and economic viable.

Grassroots International has supported *We Are the Solution* for five years.

In 2017, Grassroots will join with other funders to expand support for women's leadership and resource rights in West Africa through support for We Are the Solution, as well as support for other social movements in the region, including the World March of Women and the National Coordination of Peasant Organizations (Mali).

#### **Global Learning Exchanges: Cross-Border Movement Building for Social Justice**

The Global Learning Exchange program provides financial support to Grassroots' partner and allied organizations in the Global South (primarily) and to U.S.-based allied organizations (secondarily), encouraging new methods of organizing and advocacy in the era of economic globalization and climate disruption. Specifically, the Global Learning Exchange program increases opportunities for strategic collaboration, organizing, learning and movement building among community-based organizations in the Global South and between them and their U.S. counterparts. Funding priority is given to 1) Grassroots partners; 2) initiatives that advance resource rights in the Global South; and 3) opportunities to connect our Global South partners with grassroots organizing and movement-building efforts in frontline impacted communities in the US.

#### **Grants to Support the Development of a Food Sovereignty Movement in North America**

Since 2007 Grassroots has funded advocacy, education and grassroots lobbying in the United States to change policies affecting our overseas partners as well as our U.S. allies. We continue to fund domestic ally organizations working to build the U.S.-based food sovereignty movement, as well as support food sovereignty advocates worldwide through organizations such as the **National Family Farm Coalition** and the **North American Region of La Vía Campesina**.

