

RECLAIMING THE POWER OF FOOD, TOGETHER



37,500
FARMERS

162,000
FAMILY MEMBERS

12
COUNTRIES

Graciela Alvor and Veronica Zelaya Portillo in Buena Vista, Honduras.

Photo: Kath Clark/USC Canada

Thank you for seeding change in 2018

In the last year, you helped more than 37,500 farmers harness the power of food to deliver hope, health and sustainability to their community. Here are some of their stories.



Photo: Darwin Carranza/FLPAH

Sisters Delmi and Odalis Vasquez are now sesame entrepreneurs.

Sesame opening new doors for women in Honduras

Thanks to your generosity, women farmers from seven neighbouring communities in Honduras have come up with a new strategy to cope with increasingly dry conditions: growing drought-resistant sesame.

In Honduras, men usually earn income by managing cash crops while their wives focus on growing food for the family. That's why this women's microenterprise, led by its president, Clementina Sánchez, stands out: 180 women of all ages will be involved, taking sesame seeds all the way from the field to local markets.

The farmers in this project received one year of training from our partner on organic sesame production. They researched various drought-tolerant varieties and put together their business plan. Now, they're starting to grow organic sesame on a larger scale. Once harvested, they press the sesame for oil, then use the remaining sesame to make protein-rich bars. The result: healthy new local products on the market, and valuable income for the women and their families!

Your support made it possible for these creative women to launch their innovative business. Thanks to you, they have new income to reinvest in their community, they're setting a positive example for young girls, and they're helping their community adapt to climate change all at the same time.



Photo: Kate Green/USC Canada

Tutuli Rani is now a successful seed producer.

The ripple effect of organic seed in Bangladesh

The demand for organically-grown vegetables has been climbing steeply in Bangladesh, just as it has in Canada. With more Bangladeshi families wanting to limit their exposure to pesticides, farmers' need for seeds adapted to organic growing conditions also increased.

Tutuli Rani, a mother of three from the region of Thakurgaon, seized this opportunity by launching her own lucrative organic seed business. She did it thanks to you!

Tutuli joined a Seeds of Survival farmers' group three years ago. There, she learned how to grow and market high-quality seeds. Today, Tutuli grows gourds, beans, onions and leafy green vegetables for seed in her small garden. She's also recruited and trained women in her neighbourhood to do the same. Her share of the profits from their combined sales last year allowed her to cover her children's school fees and left some savings for the future.

As a result of your support, Tutuli now helps make organic food possible for more families in her community by supplying local farmers with good organic seeds. She also set in motion a path towards a more comfortable future not only for her family, but also for her children's future families. A perfect example of how small seeds can power big changes.

IN 2018

57%

OF LEADERSHIP POSITIONS HELD BY WOMEN IN OUR PROGRAMS

398

NEW ECOLOGICAL VARIETIES DISSEMINATED TO FARMERS FOR TRIALS

3,564

PEOPLE TRAINED IN SEED SAVING AND SEED PRODUCTION

15,421

FAMILIES SUPPORTED TO GROW FOOD IN HOME GARDENS



Photo: Cab Demiso

Moussa Traoré and his groups' local technical advisor, Nakani Diallo.

Youth rounding out the local food system in Mali

Young people from farming families in the rural region of Safo, near Mali's capital of Bamako, find themselves in a vulnerable situation. With a war raging in the north of their country and few opportunities to earn the income necessary to conquer the milestones of adulthood – getting married and establishing their own farm – many of them resolve to take poorly-paid jobs in the city. From there, some will undertake the treacherous voyage by land and sea to Europe as refugees.

Your support put a new option on the table for the youth of Zorokoro and Diogo. With the help of our local partner organization, Moussa Traoré and 14 other young people found an ecological way to earn income: selling fish. The youth raise freshwater tilapia in hand-dug ponds, harvest it, then smoke it on a resource-efficient wood oven they built themselves. Smoked fish keeps longer and fetches twice the price of fresh fish.

This smoked fish makes a sustainable and healthy addition to the menus of families in their community. That's not all: the nutrient-rich water from the ponds is also used to fertilize and irrigate nearby fields. It's an ecologically-sound initiative that increases overall farm productivity, delivers healthy protein where it's needed, and gives youth a much-needed alternative to migration.

Mali is going through a very difficult time, but thanks to you, young people like Moussa can now stay and make a positive difference where their energy is most needed.



Photo: Chris Thoreau/USC Canada

Carl McCorrister is breeding a potato for the Peguis First Nation.

A potato breeding a better future in Northern Canada

Food is always more than just food. Carl McCorrister, a former school teacher and member of the Peguis First Nation in Manitoba, believes in food's potential to revitalize local traditions, improve his people's health, and lessen the community's dependence on expensive imported foods. So he decided in 2008 to start a community garden.

"Our people took a big interest in our project. We gradually had more coming and helping and sharing in the harvest." But finding seeds adapted to the conditions of Peguis, located 190 kilometers north of Winnipeg, was a challenge.

That's why two years ago, Carl decided to become a seed breeder. With your support, he started working with our Canadian seed program and the University of Manitoba. Carl is now breeding a red potato that tastes good and grows well in his northern community. Because he's using organic practices, the resulting variety will have no need for chemicals purchased outside the community.

"We must begin to reclaim our heritage of growing and gathering our own foods once again. It is part of being a sustainable nation that can feed their people. It is part of the decolonization of our people", says Carl.

"By producing a new potato in our community, we are reclaiming much of our food sovereignty that was lost through colonization."

361

NUMBER OF
YOUTH COOPS AND
ENTREPRISES YOU
SUPPORTED THIS YEAR

23%

OF LEADERSHIP
POSITIONS HELD
BY YOUTH IN OUR
PROGRAMS

41

FARMER-LED PLANT
BREEDING PROJECTS
YOU SUPPORT IN
CANADA

110

FARMER-LED VARIETY
TESTING PROJECTS YOU
SUPPORT IN CANADA

Net assets **244,921**

Statement of Revenue and Expenses

Global Affairs Canada	3,092,771
Support from general public	715,400
USC Foundation	950,000
Kenoli Foundation	43,934
Other (including investment income)	1,424,922
Total revenue	6,227,027
Program expenses	5,369,638
Non-program expenses	952,631
Total expenses	6,322,269
Excess (deficit) revenue over expenses	(95,242)



USC Canada Board members as of October 2018:

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Net Assets **6,311,853**

Net Assets Comprised Of

Lotta Hitschmanova Legacy Fund	5,673,682
Stewart Moore Endowment	310,780
Manson & Mary Toynbee Endowment	201,245
Kurt & Evelyn (Russell) Haas Endowment	103,683
Rick McTaggart Memorial Fund	22,463

Statement of Revenue and Expenses

Bequests	429,137
Investments	84,822
Donations	1,500
Total revenue	515,459
Administrative & Fundraising Expenses	147,197
Contribution to USC Canada	950,000
Total expenses	1,097,197
Excess (deficit) revenue over expenses	(581,738)

Summary

Revenue: \$6,277,027

- Support from general public: 27,4% (including through USC Foundation)
- Global Affairs Canada: 49,7%
- Other (including investment income): 22,9%



Expenses

- Program: \$5,368,592 (84.9%)
- Non-program: \$952,631 (15.1%)



For complete audited financial statements, please visit our website at usc-canada.org/accountability or contact us.

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USC Canada was founded in 1945 by Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova as the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada.

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In 2018, we asked you to help boost the income of women farmers in Honduras with solar coffee dryers.

Thanks to your generosity, three new communities will get their own dryers in 2019!

Why solar dryers in Honduras?

Thanks to a favourable climate, Honduras is Central America's top coffee exporter. Yet the communities we support have found it difficult to benefit from the crop.

Decades ago, they were pushed up into the mountains while corporations snapped up the fertile valley lands. They now farm a thin layer of topsoil on steep slopes. Both the soil and the dirt roads leading to cities can easily wash away under heavy rains. These are hard and isolated places to live, let alone farm. Many young people make the difficult decision to leave their families in search of opportunity elsewhere.

Shade-grown coffee for a better future

With the support of USC Canada's donors, our local partner organization started offering training for women farmers to integrate coffee on their farms.



"We used to have pieces of land we wouldn't work on. My plot of land was almost abandoned. Getting support was inspiring for me. It was encouraging. We built the plant nursery and planted the coffee trees – and look at us now! We are harvesting!" – Ignacia Gutierrez, Las Vegas

Victoria Aguirre, from Campanario Dos, jumped on the opportunity. She learned how to grow coffee bushes among staples like maize, beans and avocado trees. This kind of farming protects soils and biodiversity, yields nutritious food for her family, and produces beautiful shade-grown coffee that has the potential to fetch a good price.

But first, Victoria needs to harvest the ripe coffee berries by hand, remove the fruit layer, wash the beans and let them ferment for a day or two. **Then the final, critical step: drying the coffee slowly and carefully to retain its quality. Otherwise, buyers refuse to pay top price.**



Victoria Aguirre, from Campanaria Dos, sits in front of the solar coffee dryer that helped her take her coffee quality to the next level.

To help women like Victoria master this final step, our partner organization built a solar coffee dryer in her community in 2017, with your support. The large, greenhouse-like structure allows coffee beans to dry slowly. It was the final ingredient Victoria needed. **Today, her coffee is excellent and gets top price. She's now able to provide for her large family.**

She even earned the top prize at an international coffee tasting competition last year, making her one of the first women in Honduras to do so!

The solar dryer challenge

Victoria's success proves solar dryers are effective, environmentally-friendly and make a lasting difference in the lives of women farmers and their communities.

But at \$10,000 each, they remain out of reach for most family farmers.

So on Giving Tuesday 2018, we asked our supporters to help us finance solar dryers for farmers in three more communities.



"With the dryer, we can sell better coffee. We'll not only improve as a group of women growing coffee, but we'll also improve the lives of our families. We'll lead a better life, each one of us." – Wendy Sara Cabrera, Buena Vista

You did it!

In just one day, the USC Canada community raised \$33,919. That means Buena Vista, Las Vegas and Union Praga will each receive the support they need to build a solar coffee dryer in 2019!

Wendy, Rosa and Graciela can now look forward to getting a better price for their coffee harvest, thanks to you.



"I feel really happy because my harvest gains will be invested in my children's education."
– Rosa Aida Izcano, Las Vegas



"I hope that, with this dryer, we will make a better quality coffee. We'll make a good income for our families and our children."
– Graciela Alvor, Buena Vista



Bridgehead, an Ottawa-based fair trade coffeehouse chain, generously jumped in to raise \$6,000 to help build Buena Vista's solar dryer.

It's just one example of the ways in which you've been seeding change in the lives of farmers around the world in 2018. Thank you for everything you do!