

**2022**  
**Impact**  
**report**



**SeedChange**

Formerly USC Canada

# We are celebrating thanks to you!

Together we've been helping farmers around the world grow resilient farms and communities. This global effort includes the transformative work we've done with farmers here at home. Our Canadian program, *The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security*, turns 10 this year! Join us in celebrating all that has been achieved with your support!

Catherine Wallenburg, seed grower at Northern Seeds and participant in our Canadian program on her farm in Farrellton, Quebec.  
Photo: Anne-Marie Laplante



# Thank you for your generosity!

Your generous donations help farmers around the world tackle some of the biggest challenges of our time: climate change, injustice in the food system, and the loss of seed diversity.

By helping farmers protect their seeds and improve their harvests through sustainable practices, you are growing a world where justice, health and sustainability are for everyone.

In the past year, **over 22,000 farming households around the world were empowered by your generosity.**

**We couldn't do this work without you! Thank you for growing a better world with SeedChange.**



## Our vision

An equitable world sustained by just and resilient food systems.

## Our mission

To build food sovereignty by working with partners to enhance biodiversity, promote ecological food systems, and counter inequity.

## This is where your support went in 2022

### Timor-Leste

A network of community seed banks helped 6 highland communities achieve a 20% increase in the number of varieties of vegetables they can access and grow.

### Honduras

In the face of extreme climate variations, our partner FIPAH's network of hundreds of local agriculture research committees are now benefitting from the resilient maize and bean varieties they developed.

### Bolivia

Over 300 Quechua Indigenous families now have highly diversified farms with improved soils that help guarantee household food security through support from our partner PRODII.

### Cuba

SeedChange and the National Institute of Agricultural Sciences (INCA) successfully supported the advancement of local seed production and certification across 16 municipalities, in which farmer's knowledge systems are formally recognized.

### Mali

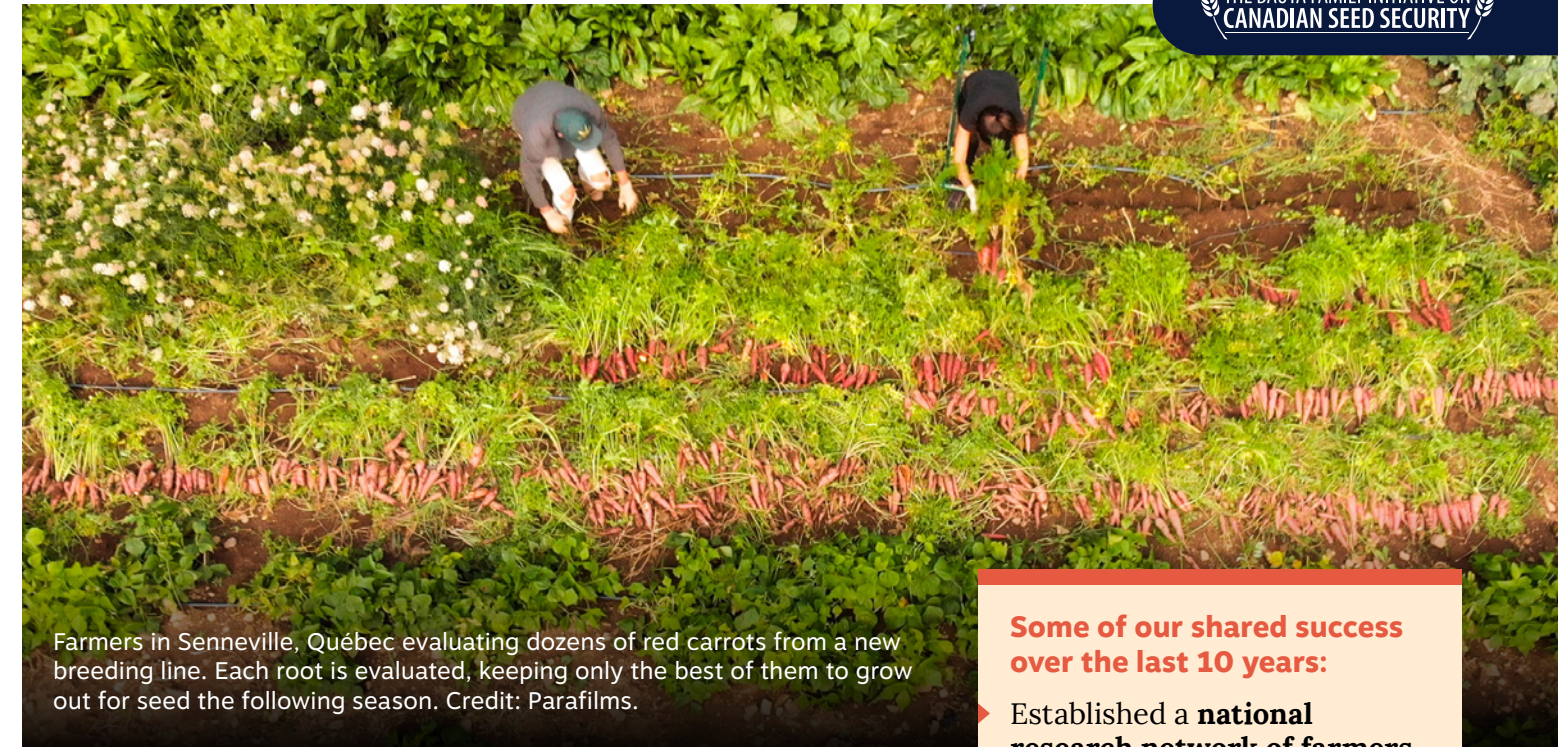
Partnership with IRPAD-Afrique has led to the creation of 2 seed production cooperatives in the rural region of Mopti.

### 

**Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia**  
Our new program, Rural Women Cultivating Change, helped over 10,000 rural women and men in its first year.

### Canada

Our Canadian program celebrates 10 years working to build food security with farmer-led seed saving and breeding.



Farmers in Senneville, Québec evaluating dozens of red carrots from a new breeding line. Each root is evaluated, keeping only the best of them to grow out for seed the following season. Credit: Parafilms.

## Celebrating seeds across Canada!

The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security, a program of SeedChange, has been working for 10 years to increase Canada's food and seed security. Together, we have strengthened – and will continue to strengthen – Canada's sustainable agriculture sector.

Together, we:

**CONNECT** We connect farmers to one another to exchange information, share best practices, and develop seed security together. Through training and research programs farmers learn how best to save seed for their own needs. This means more secure and diverse seed for their farms and one less risk in the food supply system for Canadians.

**INCLUDE** No one knows seeds like farmers, yet traditional seed breeding programs have typically excluded them from the plant breeding process. With your support, we're changing that. Farmers are always at the heart of our plant breeding programs.

**SHARE** At a time when patents and other forms of intellectual property protections are being applied to seeds and plants, we work to educate farmers about these policies, and advocate for farmer-led seed systems. We work to ensure seeds stay in the public domain and support the creation and expansion of regional seed banks that store locally-adapted seeds.

### Some of our shared success over the last 10 years:

- ▶ Established a **national research network of farmers and seed growers** working on **over 100 different** plant breeding and variety trial projects across Canada annually.
- ▶ Helped expand Seeds of Diversity's seed collection from **1,471 historically significant seed samples** in 2013 to **over 7,000** by 2022.
- ▶ Became the **go-to educational resource on organic and ecological seed production and plant breeding in Canada**, organizing over **800 training events** reaching over **10,000 participants** from farming communities across the country.
- ▶ Helped develop and commercialize **farmer-bred varieties of organic red bell pepper and potatoes**, and in the process of registering **farmer-bred varieties of organic wheat, oat, and potato.**

**Thank you for investing in research, farmer-to-farmer learning, and the conservation of Canada's agricultural biodiversity.**



# See what your support has grown!

## The impact on farmers and Canadian agriculture is clear

Together we have grown a network of hundreds of farmers, seed growers, researchers, and partners, committed to advancing climate resilience and seed security in Canada. Farmers report that the greatest benefits of the program are: **increased knowledge, stronger networks of seed growers, better training and skills, and greater interest and ability to save seed.**



Rachel Vanderpyl and Petra Heidenreichová clean seeds on Vancouver Island, BC. They are using the mobile seed equipment provided by our BC partner, FarmFolk CityFolk.

**95%** of farmers involved felt the activities were highly relevant to their needs and interests.

**81%** improved their abilities to select plants and engage in on-farm plant breeding.

*"I participated in selecting a wheat cross that performed notably better than conventional varieties in organic trials...a wheat that will be more genetically diverse, and feasibly more resilient in the face of climate change."*  
—Prairie farmer

*"This program is actually what caused me to start seed saving—fostering an awareness of why this is important."*  
—Ontario farmer

*"[Collaboration is] what happens when you get a group of farmers together, and researchers... It's a great opportunity to share ideas and to share our experiences and, ultimately, we're sharing those [plant breeding] selections with each other."*  
—Prairie farmer

## Seed work is slow work—but you make it bloom

Those who have spent years working to select and grow the best seeds possible know that it is slow work, taking years or even decades to witness the results. Every growing season is an opportunity to nurture a new generation of seeds better able to adapt to our changing climate and needs. **With your support we are working with more than 200 farmers across the country on projects to increase local seed production, save seeds at risk of extinction, and breed new seed varieties better suited for local climate and soil conditions as well as organic production.** Here are some examples of the incredible work that Canadian farmers are doing:



Photo: Rebecca Ivanoff

↑ Farmers Rebecca Ivanoff, Greta Kryger, Annie Richard, Kathy Rothermel (above), and Kim Delaney and Rachel Hultengren bred a new, flavourful red pepper that ripens early and is adapted to ecological growing conditions in southern Ontario. Making these locally bred varieties available to other farmers is essential to our future food security, especially in a rapidly changing climate.



↑ Chris Wooding with Red Fife Wheat at Ironwood Organics, Ontario. Chris is part of a network of farmers working to develop diverse populations of organic, farmer-bred wheat in our participatory plant breeding program.



Photo: Hannah Lewis, Grounded Acres Farm

↑ Dozens of radicchio varieties were evaluated to determine which were best suited for seed production in their region. This crop is of great interest to vegetable and seed farmers in Canada due to its unique culinary characteristics and winter hardiness.

## The seed that started it all

**It began as a love for a good loaf of bread.** This simple pleasure led Gretchen Bauta to wonder about what goes into every slice: the baking, the farming and—like following a trail of breadcrumbs—back to the seeds that grow the wheat.

**The further she looked into seeds, the more she realized that good seeds were essential to a secure and nutritious food supply but Canada was losing them.** An increasing homogenization of the food system meant that Canada was growing fewer varieties and primarily for large-scale farming operations.

**"It struck me as vitally important to maintain the biodiversity which was being lost at a tremendous**

**rate in all directions,"** said Mrs. Bauta. So that's what she did. Her visionary support and funding through the Weston Family Foundation led to The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security.

Today, after 10 years, the program has advanced seed diversity and security in Canada by building a network of farmers and researchers from across the country to exchange information, share best practices, and develop seed security together.

We are grateful to Gretchen Bauta, for her championing of a secure and thriving Canadian seed system. **We're also grateful to the thousands of Canadians who have continued to support this program with their donations. Thank you!**



*"I would say the biggest strength is that the Bauta program is in it for the long haul and when you're trying to make change, you have to be. And it's not that common."* —Dr. Martin Entz, University of Manitoba



# Your support for rural women is cultivating change



In 2022, our Rural Women Cultivating Change program launched in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania. This 6-year program will work with **over 30,000 farmers** to tackle the many barriers they face both on and off the farm.

We have always worked to help women defend their rights and reduce the barriers they face as farmers, by seeking equal access to land, credit, and training in the ecological farming practices that help them most. But women farmers also face barriers beyond the farm, like cultural norms that prevent girls from reaching their full potential. Or, the risk of violence at home and in the community.

With these challenges in mind, Rural Women Cultivating Change seeks to tackle three main themes: **increasing women's leadership, preventing sexual and gender based violence, and enhancing climate adaptation through agricultural practices.**

Working with local organizations that have the existing expertise in women's empowerment and agroecology has allowed us to **help over 10,000 rural women and men in the first year alone.**

Global Affairs Canada is the key funder of Rural Women Cultivating Change, **but it's your donations that made it possible for us to invest our time in facilitating this exciting new program. Thank you!**



Belaynesh Yimer, Ethiopia. A key participant in the Rural Women Cultivating Change program.

**3** countries: Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania

**7** leading NGO partners with self-help and community groups formed

**22** institutions in government, education and research collaborating with the RWCC

**500,000** people reached via communication channels in 2022

## Thanks to you things are spiraling up!

Your generosity on Giving Tuesday helped us raise \$21,473.25, allowing 168 women in Kenya to receive training to make their own spiral gardens.

### Spiral gardens provide food, empowerment and resilience

Spiral gardens are a powerful and eco-friendly growing technique used around the world to grow a high density of crops in a small area, with very little water. Each spiral garden

contains circular beds, stacked on top of each other, like a tiered cake. Each layer is filled with earth, sand, and high-quality compost, which can be made from readily available resources such as kitchen scraps, animal manure and plant materials.

### Food sovereignty starts by empowering women

Despite land shortages, rising food prices, climate change and water scarcity, spiral gardens give women a way to grow the food their families urgently need. When we combine spiral

garden training with activities that help women rebuild local seed security and defend their rights, we create the conditions for women to become leaders towards real food sovereignty.

### A simple and effective investment

The training program we deliver, via our partner (Seed Savers Network Kenya), gives women the immediate knowledge they need to build their first spiral gardens, using only recycled materials, home-made organic compost, and local seeds.

# Troy Mitchell: donor, beloved board member, and “voice from the rock”



After 11 long years Troy Mitchell attended his last SeedChange board meeting and his warmth and wit are already missed.

Troy's connection to SeedChange goes back to his youth. He fondly recalls growing up watching SeedChange

founder Lotta Hitschmanova on CBC TV. He was amazed to see a Canadian organization working in partnership with communities in other countries.

**“That idea resonated with me because I come from rural Newfoundland where reaching out and supporting other communities is so familiar”.**

Troy's interest in partnerships extended to his chosen career. He became a social worker and was heavily involved in supporting his community of Clarenville, Newfoundland.

**But a chat with his daughter convinced him he could do even more.** While watching the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the LiveAid concert with his 7 year old, he told her why it was so important to act in solidarity with international communities, to which she responded, “Well what have you done internationally dad?” He realized he had done nothing internationally. “So I made a decision

to do my part and get involved”. Troy started by fundraising with school children from across Newfoundland and Labrador and then built a successful cross-country skiing event to raise money for SeedChange.

As years went on he had deeper conversations with staff about food security, sovereignty, and human connectedness. Troy joined the SeedChange board in 2012 in order to further his work in solidarity with farmers. **“The approach and integrity of the work appealed to me as a human and a social worker”.**

Troy credits some of the work at SeedChange for his deeper understanding of food sovereignty and for helping him see his own culture in a different light.

**“I'm only one generation away from people living by their hands, season to season. Catching their own fish and using root cellars to get through the winter. I myself didn't even see what an important part of my culture that was until I got more deeply involved with SeedChange's work. The way the staff talked about communities, culture and sovereignty really impacted me”.**

“For anyone who is scared about the future and wondering what to do, I always tell them about this work. **SeedChange is the best kept secret in Canada. If more people only knew how important the work was they would be blown away. It's extraordinary”.**



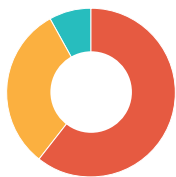
Beatrice Wangui harvesting from her garden. Highly-nutritious and locally popular leafy greens like spinach, kale and local varieties of cabbage grow especially well in spiral gardens. In Kenya, where studies show that the majority of local vegetables are contaminated with unsafe levels of pesticides, vegetables grown organically in spiral gardens fetch a good price for the women who grow them.

### SPIRAL GARDENS:

- Can fit up to 110 crops in very small space
- Can be built on top of poor quality land
- Are built with recycled resources already on hand
- Start producing within 2 months
- Yield up to 1000 kg of food per garden, year-round.

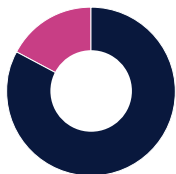


## Summary



**Revenue: \$6,724,066**

- Support from general public and foundations: **60%**  
(including SeedChange Foundation)
- Global Affairs Canada: **32%**
- Other (including investment income): **8%**



**Expenses: \$6,792,869**

- Program: **83%**
- Non-program: **17%**



### SeedChange Board of Directors as of October 2022

Nicole McDonald, Karim Salabi, Bernard Ndour, Ericka Moerkerken, Alejandro Argumedo, Sarah Crocker, Kim Delaney, Boaventura Eugenio Monjane, Alicia Fowler, Constanza Monterrubio Solis, Dr. Priscilla Settee.

**SeedChange Foundation members** Bruce Lourie, Bernard Ndour, Troy Mitchell, Darcy Ferron, Alicia Fowler, Robert C Kamp, Catherine Rowe, Jessica Wood.

**Staff as of October 2022** Leticia Ama Deawuo (Executive Director), Crystal Arsenault, Sophie Bourdon, Lauren Brander, Katie Breen, Nicole Davies, Aabir Dey, Marie Dulude, Teresa Garavito, Kate Green, Sandra Hines, Stephanie Hughes, Helen Jensen, Virginie Lavallée-Picard, Victoria Machakaire, Elodie Mantha, Hugo Martorell, Marta Monaghan, Tadiwa Muradzikwa, Beatriz Oliver, Denise Paradis, Norbey Perez, Brent Preston, Sheila Rao, Andrew Rushmere, Pratap Shrestha, Gabriela Warriier Renaud, Tara Scott.

## SeedChange Summary Financials for the year ending April 30, 2022

**Net assets** **179,051**

### Statement of revenue and expenses

Global Affairs Canada	2,157,009
Support from general public	642,802
SeedChange Foundation	600,000
Other foundations	2,791,624
Other revenue and investment income	532,631
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>6,724,066</b>

Program expenses	5,616,380
Non-program expenses	1,176,489
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>6,792,869</b>

**Total net expenses for the year** **(68,803)**

## SeedChange Foundation Summary Financials for the year ending April 30, 2022

**Net assets** **6,244,679**

### Comprised of

Lotta Hitschmanova Legacy Fund	5,157,063
Stewart Moore Endowment	351,789
Manson & Mary Toynbee Endowment	201,245
Kurt & Evelyn (Russell) Haas Endowment	118,401
Rick McTaggart Memorial Fund	27,763

### Statement of revenue and expenses

Bequests	400,440
Investment	55,370
Other	389,206
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>845,016</b>

Administrative & fundraising expenses	177,239
Contribution to SeedChange	600,000
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>777,239</b>

**Net revenue for the year** **67,777**

For audited financial statements, please visit our website at [weseedchange.org/our-work/financials](http://weseedchange.org/our-work/financials) or contact us at [info@weseedchange.org](mailto:info@weseedchange.org)

**Donate today**

**You make this life-changing work happen.**

Donate online. It's easy, fast, safe and secure.  
[weseedchange.org/donate](http://weseedchange.org/donate)

Call our toll-free number: **1.800.565.6872** and press 1

Please mail your cheque to SeedChange  
**56 Sparks Street, Suite 600, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5B1**

**SeedChange**

We are a registered Canadian charity: 11927-6129-RR-0001

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

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