

# LOCAL ACTION FOR THE GLOBAL GOALS: Promoting Innovative Conservation And Development Solutions



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*



EQUATOR  INITIATIVE  
15 YEARS



SGP The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme 25  
YEARS

## Authors

Joseph Corcoran  
Anne L S Virnig

## Design

Kimberly Koserowski

## Equator Initiative

Sustainable Development Cluster  
Bureau for Policy and Programme Support  
United Nations Development Programme  
304 East 45th Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10017  
Tel: +1 646 781-4023  
[www.equatorinitiative.org](http://www.equatorinitiative.org)

## Cite as:

United Nations Development Programme. 2016. *Local action for the global goals: Promoting innovative conservation and development solutions*. New York, NY: UNDP.

## Cover Photos:

Front Cover, Left: A fisherwoman tends to her nets in Gokova bay, Turkey. *Photo credit: Zafer Kizilkaya, Akdeniz Koruma Derneği.*

Front Cover, Right: A Gurung man carries a bundle of non-timber forests products in the Himalayan foothills of Nepal. *Photo credit: Conservation Area Management Committee, Parche.*

Back Cover: One of 70 fisherwomen providing leadership on resource management in the Bozburun-Datça Area of Gökova Bay. *Photo credit: Zafer Kizilkaya, Akdeniz Koruma Derneği.*

## Interior Photos:

All photos on pages 3 to 19 were provided by the Equator Prize winning communities recognized in this publication. Photos in other sections were also provided by Equator Prize winners: Asociación de Capitanes Indígenas de Yaigojé Apaporis (p. 2, credit Juan Gabriel Soler) and Arnavon Community Marine Conservation Area Management Committee (p. 20).

© 2016 United Nations Development Programme

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States

The Equator Initiative gratefully acknowledges the leadership of Jamison Ervin and Eileen de Ravin, as well as the generous support of its partners.



CONSERVATION  
INTERNATIONAL



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development

FORDHAM  
THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

The Nature  
Conservancy  
Protecting nature, Preserving life.



pci media impact



Norwegian Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs



UNITED NATIONS  
FOUNDATION

## PREFACE

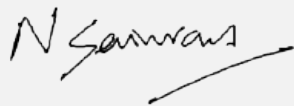
In 2015, the world agreed to an ambitious set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and 169 associated targets. The SDGs seek to catalyze a new development paradigm that treats social, economic, and environmental progress as indivisible.

Efforts to protect, restore, sustainably manage, and equitably share the benefits of biodiversity will be essential to advancing and sustaining the SDGs. Of particular importance is the role of biodiversity in reducing poverty, fostering food security, sustaining livelihoods, and generating economic growth. Biodiversity is especially important for the approximately 740 million people living on less than US\$1.90 a day, 70% of whom depend upon nature to meet their basic needs. It is these indigenous peoples and local communities whose well-being and very survival is contingent on our ability to creatively address the development challenges that we face today. Their work on the frontlines to achieve sustainable development serves as a powerful engine of locally-sourced solutions.

The United Nations Development Programme recognizes the critical role local initiatives play in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. For 15 years and 25 years, respectively, the UNDP Equator Initiative and the UNDP-implemented GEF Small Grants Programme have worked to shine a light on outstanding community-based initiatives that illustrate innovative sustainable development solutions.

The 208 Equator Prize winners and over 20,000 projects supported by SGP provide an evidence base of the impacts of local action to conserve biodiversity while meeting food, livelihood, and economic needs. These initiatives demonstrate that local action, with the proper support and recognition, leads to substantial impacts at the national and international levels. By liaising with local, district, and national level government, as well as with other NGOs and intergovernmental organizations, Equator Prize winners and SGP grantees are part of creating an enabling policy environment to encourage creative development solutions that reflect local realities.

To achieve the ambitious 2030 Agenda, we must build linkages between locally grounded action, national policies, and international priorities. The 68 Equator Prize winners and 24 Small Grants Programme recipients highlighted in this publication – representing just a fraction of diverse grassroots initiatives working around the world to meet development needs – demonstrate the ability of local initiatives to provide results across the SDGs. UNDP is committed to supporting these initiatives, and to connecting local action with national and international policy to achieve innovative, scalable solutions to the Sustainable Development Goals.



**Nik Sekhran**

Director of Sustainable Development, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support  
United Nations Development Programme





## INTRODUCTION

Indigenous peoples and local communities often depend on natural resources and biodiversity to meet their subsistence needs and sustain their livelihoods. They have demonstrated their ability to be highly effective natural resource managers under the right conditions, but are also vulnerable to environmental degradation and climate change.

2

For 15 years, UNDP and its partners have awarded the Equator Prize to outstanding grassroots efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of nature. The Equator Initiative has recognized 208 exceptional indigenous peoples and local community groups from more than 70 countries around the world.

For 25 years, the UNDP-Implemented Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (SGP) has promoted community-based innovation to conserve biodiversity, mitigate climate change, and protect international waters while generating sustainable livelihoods. SGP's work in over 125 countries has supported over 20,000 projects to advance local sustainable development solutions.

The Equator Initiative and SGP both advance local efforts to develop holistic approaches to addressing economic, ecological, and social challenges. Our joint experience demonstrates that when empowered with the rights and resources they need to manage their natural resources, communities can be drivers of transformational change.

Equator Prize winners and SGP grantees show how indigenous peoples and local communities effectively use environmental stewardship, biodiversity conservation, and natural resource management to deliver integrated solutions across all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

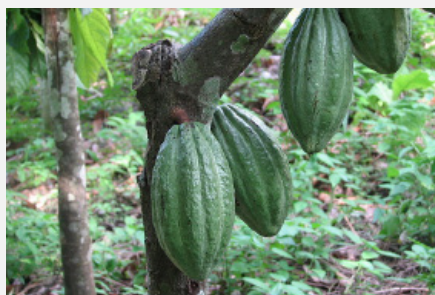
All 68 initiatives showcased in this publication are Equator Prize winners. The 24 SGP grantees are designated in the text by the \* symbol following their names. To access the full-length case studies and other media associated with the groups featured here, please click on the hyperlinked names of each initiative. To learn more about other Equator Prize winners, visit the [Equator Initiative Case Study Database](#).







For indigenous peoples and local communities natural capital is often the pathway out of poverty. Community-based natural resource management is a pillar of rural economic development, illustrated by the wide pool of Equator Prize winners and SGP grantees. They show how local environment initiatives increase local incomes, expand livelihood options, and improve local productivity. Numerous prize-winning initiatives have been developed by and for the extreme poor (those living on less than US\$1.25/day), leading to locally grown solutions for poverty eradication. These initiatives are particularly effective at increasing income among the most vulnerable, providing access to basic services, facilitating access to microfinance, and securing control of land rights and natural resources.



### Increasing local incomes

#### Iniciativa Talamanca, Costa Rica.\*

Iniciativa Talamanca is an incubator for community-based action that seeks to address persistent social and ecological challenges by expanding livelihood options and boosting income for local farmers. The initiative has developed a range of local processing and marketing strategies and created the first organic certification program of its kind for small farmers in Costa Rica. Over 1,500 farmers have established organic agro-ecosystems, leading Iniciativa Talamanca to become the largest volume producer of organic products in Central America. The initiative generates an average annual profit of US\$500,000 for poor and marginalized communities.



### Providing access to basic services

#### Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust (MWCT), Kenya.\*

This organization of Maasai communities in the Amboseli-Tsavo wildlife corridor has advanced a broad vision for linking ecosystem health with socioeconomic well-being by enhancing basic services through revenues from ecotourism. The trust supports 20 local primary schools and one secondary school, employing over 50 teachers and serving a total of 7,000 students. The MWCT health program, in partnership with the Kenyan government, operates four local dispensaries and funds outreach services to regions that lack access to medical facilities, reaching 8,000 people. By providing access to basic services to local communities, the trust provides a critical mechanism to raise local communities out of poverty.



### Facilitating access to microfinance

#### Fédération Locale des GIE de Niodior (FELOGIE-Niodior), Senegal.\*

This federation of women's economic interest groups works to rehabilitate mangrove ecosystems and promote natural resource management in the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve. The initiative has developed a participatory code of conduct for harvesting marine resources, purchased equipment to monitor reserve access, and established a central fund to provide microcredit loans to more than 7,000 people. The rotating communal fund – which stands at roughly US\$55,500 – has given women who were previously excluded from formal credit and savings systems access to small loans of between 50,000 and 300,000 CFA, enabling them to pursue pathways out of poverty.



### Securing land tenure

#### Persatuan Penduduk Uma Bawang, Malaysia.\*

Although the customary land rights of the association's indigenous Kayan people are recognized by the Malaysian government, their lands have not been officially demarcated, making them vulnerable to land grabs. The association uses GIS to map community-managed forests, providing a spatial basis for legally defending community land claims. By combining mapping with active resistance to incursions by commercial logging and palm oil interests through road blockades and political advocacy, the association has been able to resist the destruction of the Kayan's traditional forests. This protection of indigenous lands is essential to protect forest-dependent local livelihoods and ensure local well-being.

## 2 ZERO HUNGER



Local ecosystem-based initiatives are often in a good position to address food security needs, particularly in vulnerable and economically marginalized communities. Equator Prize winners and SGP grantees show how such initiatives create sustainable food production systems, increasing food security and improving agricultural productivity. Indigenous peoples and local communities often maintain seed banks that protect genetic diversity and provide access to locally-adapted plant varieties essential for building resilience to climate change. The winners and grantees also show how federations of small-scale farmers and fisherfolk provide extension services to marginalized or isolated areas.

4



### Strengthening food security

#### [Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas e Indígenas de Cotacachi \(UNORCAC\), Ecuador.](#)

The remote communities of Ecuador's inter-Andean valleys have long faced the twin challenges of food insecurity and environmental degradation. Malnutrition affects approximately 40% of the region's population, and farmers receive limited technological and economic support from formal institutions. UNORCAC was founded to address these challenges and turn the relative abundance of rare native crop varieties to the advantage of farming communities. By conserving a wide variety of native tuber, root, fruit, cereal, and medicinal plant species, the initiative has diversified income and enhanced food security for 3,225 farming families.



### Improving agricultural productivity

[Fédération des Unions de Producteurs de Maradi Gaskiya \(FUMA Gaskiya\), Niger.](#) FUMA Gaskiya is a research-driven initiative that brings agro-ecological options to smallholder farmers. Comprised of 17 unions, 325 producer organizations, and 12,742 members, the work includes promotion of high-yield crops, sustainable production systems, participatory planning, and marketing of produce and organically-certified seeds. Fast-growing and off-season crops are being introduced to provide food security and alternative sources of income for local women. Crop yields have increased by up to 100% and farmer incomes have improved significantly, with US\$36,000 generated from high-yield varieties of millet alone. Community radio has been used as a medium for information exchange, knowledge transfer, and education.



### Maintaining seed banks

#### [Union of Agricultural Work Committees \(UAWC\), Palestine.\\*](#)

One of the oldest non-profit organizations in Palestine, UAWC supports Palestinian farmers to attain food sovereignty. UAWC works with farmers across Palestine to restore and conserve natural resources and to attain land and resource rights. In addition to various activities in land rehabilitation and restoration, water management, infrastructure development, and income diversification, the union maintains a seed bank that currently holds 270 samples from 36 different crop varieties. The seed bank gives local farmers the flexibility they need to adapt to rapidly changing climate conditions and to ensure food sovereignty needs are met.



### Providing extension services

[Programa de Campesino a Campesino \(PCaC\), Siuna, Nicaragua.](#) PCaC Siuna has operated throughout Nicaragua since the post-war period of the early 1990s. This 'Farmer-to-Farmer Program' began with the goal of controlling the rapidly expanding agricultural frontier within the Bosawás Biosphere Reserve, while enhancing food security, increasing household incomes, and strengthening regional governance throughout Nicaragua's North Atlantic Autonomous Region. 300 volunteer extension officers work in over 80 communities and provide technical assistance to more than 3,000 subsistence farming families. Participating farmers have demonstrated that planting a diversity of corn, rice, beans, plantain, yucca, pineapple, sugar cane, and taro crops – as well as leguminous cover crops to enhance soil fertility – provide a sustainable alternative to shifting cultivation that meets local subsistence needs.



### 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Good health and community well-being is the stated objective of many Equator Prize winners and SGP grantees that work in environmental conservation and sustainable natural resource management. They show that local initiatives often use revenues from common pool resource management to invest in public services such as health. Indeed, many Equator Prize winners and SGP grantees have used their revenues to build health care centers and medical clinics, thereby filling a gap in local access to safe, quality, and affordable medicine. Winners focus their health care interventions on local priority areas, including reducing childhood mortality rates, providing sexual and reproductive health care services for women, and treating communicable diseases.



#### Increasing access to health services

**Traditional Healer Association, Chhattisgarh (THAC), India.** In a region plagued by malnutrition, poor hygiene, and high communicable disease rates, THAC takes an innovative approach to facilitating local access to medical care. The association empowers 'village botanists' who use medicinal plants to meet modern medical needs. Work also focuses on attaining scientific certification for traditional medicines that are effective to treat fever, colds, arthritis, malaria, and gastrointestinal diseases. Health services have been provided to more than 50,000 families across 500 villages in 12 districts, and average medical costs have been reduced by 70%. More than one million trees and half a million medicinal seedlings have been planted in 100 villages, simultaneously restoring threatened ecosystems and improving local health care resources.



#### Reducing childhood mortality

**The Pendeba Society of the Tibet Autonomous Region, China.** To safeguard the Qomolangma National Nature Preserve – an area that is roughly the size of Taiwan – this grassroots initiative employs locally-nominated volunteers known as pendebas from each of the 406 villages within the protected area. Pendebas work to promote environmental conservation, enhance income generation, and improve family health. Today, more than 80% of the reserve's villages have a functioning community-based health care system that provides pre-natal and maternity care, immunization, family planning, nutrition, sanitation, and disease control. Through these environmental and social programs, the initiative has reduced deforestation by 80%, protected critical endangered wildlife, and reduced child mortality by 50%.



#### Improving reproductive health services

**Zenab for Women in Development, Sudan.** This union of women farmers empowers 3,000 women from 53 communities. In addition to strengthening the land tenure status of women, the union provides training in organic agriculture, crop rotation, and the use of biological fertilizers to improve agricultural productivity. In order to ensure women are empowered to take control of their bodies and health care options, the initiative has invested in clinics that provide services in maternal health, family planning, and HIV and AIDS prevention. The union has further empowered local women through its aggressive campaigns against female genital mutilation, violence against women, and early marriage. Zenab also provides training for rural midwives on standard obstetric care to reduce mortality rates of women and children.



#### Treating communicable diseases

**Il Ngwesi Group Ranch, Kenya.** This Maasai ranch in the central Kenyan district of Laikipia has established an 8,645-ha community-conserved area that balances wildlife conservation, local pastoralist livelihoods, and the operation of a lucrative ecolodge. In order to meet critical local needs, ecotourism revenues are directed to health interventions. The ranch has launched an outreach campaign that includes education, testing, and counseling for malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV and AIDS. The campaign has reached 13 local group ranches serving a combined population of 40,000. The ranch also runs a health clinic and a mobile health facility that enables health workers visit seven local communities weekly. Il Ngwesi has served as a model for replication across the country for its work to enhance community livelihoods, health, and well-being.

## 4 QUALITY EDUCATION



A high percentage of Equator Prize winners and SGP grantees use environment as a platform to provide quality education. Winners and grantees facilitate direct access to primary and secondary education through the construction of schools, paying school fees for children that would otherwise not be able to afford them, or providing scholarships, all with revenues from local ecosystem-based enterprises. Many of these initiatives have focused on abolishing systemic barriers to education access based on gender, class, or ethnicity. Many more work to mainstream conservation, human rights, and gender equality issues into school curricula and to promote hands-on training in agriculture, conservation, and other vocational skills.

6



### Improving access to education

**Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha, Bangladesh.** In the low-lying northwestern region of Bangladesh, a mosaic of wetlands and waterways make travel extremely difficult, particularly during the monsoon season when extensive flooding occurs. To address this challenge, Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha operates a fleet of 54 solar-powered boats that provide public services to villages



### Providing vocational training

**Fondation Pole, Democratic Republic of Congo.** In 1975, Kahuzi-Biega National Park expanded from 60,000 ha to 600,000 ha, leading to the forceful relocation of indigenous Batwa communities. Deprived of traditional livelihoods, food, and cultural heritage, local communities turned to widespread poaching within the park's boundaries that defied official attempts at enforcement. Fondation Pole has pioneered an innovative



### Supporting school fees and scholarships

**Tetepare Descendants' Association, Solomon Islands.** TDA represents the legal owners of Tetepare Island, the largest uninhabited island in the tropical Pacific and one of the last remaining unlogged tropical islands in the world. To help indigenous landholders resist pressures from industrial logging companies, TDA pioneered 'community conservation agreements' whereby landholders and



### Mainstreaming conservation in curricula

**Yayasan Pengelolaan Lokal Kawasan Laut, Indonesia.** This foundation coordinates conservation, environmental education, and livelihoods programming for 26 locally managed marine areas (LMMAs) across eastern Indonesia. Critically, the network has mainstreamed environmental education into schools in five different regions of Indonesia. It has designed unique conservation

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_12260](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_12260)

