Green Belt Movement Visits Haiti

By Leonie Hermantin

The much anticipated visit of the Kenyan delegation representing the Green Belt Movement (GBM) finally happened. On October 15, Lilian Muchungi, Josephine Wangari, Esther Wamucii and Mercy Karunditu, landed at Toussaint Louverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

This was the beginning of a journey of mutual learning and sharing between GBM representatives, Lambi Fund staff and members of grassroots organizations engaged in reforestation and agro-forestry projects in Haiti. This visit offered GBM representatives the opportunity to learn about Haiti’s degraded environment and its impact on the both rural and urban communities. It also allowed GBM representatives to become more knowledgeable about the Lambi Fund of Haiti by gaining a deeper understanding of how it works, its relationship to the communities it partners with, as well as the problems addressed.

The Lambi Fund of Haiti benefited tremendously from this exchange, learning about the Greenbelt Movement, its philosophy, its methodology, its accomplishments and challenges. It was a true peer to peer exchange.

On their second day in Port-au-Prince the GBM delegation visited a national fair “La Foire de L’Alimentation” which explored themes of domestic agricultural production and food security. The colorful stands and displays of regional crops and culinary delicacies provided a great introduction to subsequent discussions about agriculture, the environment and food security. These issues were debated at a conference held in the afternoon where about 40 Haitian students, environmentalists, and other stakeholders gathered to meet the delegation, learn about the Greenbelt Movement and offer GBM representatives a greater insight into Haiti’s environmental and ecological crisis.

The delegation left the next day for a visit to Gwo Mon located in the Artibonite Valley. The first site visit was at Lambi Fund’s plantain greenhouse in Gwo Mon. This center is a great model of collaboration where, by working with local organizations, Lambi Fund is producing a plantain tree resistant to the diseases which have devastated local plantain production. Members of the delegation were very impressed with this center as it offered solutions to concerns about crop and food security.

The visit to the Oganizasyon Peyzan Bige was GBM’s first encounter with a peasant organization. Members of the delegation were greeted with the haunting and vibrating sounds of the lambi (conch shell) calling the meeting to order. OPB is a grassroots organization that has partnered with the Lambi Fund to address the environmental degradation in the community of Bige with the construction of water cisterns and the commitment to plant 100,000 trees. So far, OPB has successfully planted 48,260 trees that were produced in the tree nurseries built throughout the community. The members had the opportunity to introduce themselves, discuss the nature of their projects, and listened with great attention to Josephine Wangari’s presentation of the GBM's tree planting methodology. This presentation was followed by a lively discussion among the delegates.

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The goals of Ti Komite Legliz Dewonsere (TKLD)—Little Community Church of Dewonsere—are to improve economic development by increasing pig and goat production in the community of Dewonsere and to improve the skills of its members.

After approving their initial plan to do this, Lambi Fund met with TKLD members to plan the project strategy, goals and objectives. TKLD leaders appointed members to the Executive and Management Committees. They decided that the members who received an animal had to meet certain conditions:

- Each beneficiary started breeding the kind of animal with which he was familiar.
- The breeders needed to have some pasture for goats and sheep to graze.
- Each beneficiary needed to have a shed to protect the animals from natural disasters such as rain or humidity, and from attacks from wild dogs that roam the area for food.
- The committee distributed baby animals to those who did not have any animals. The mother stayed with the breeder. The first members who received animals did not need to reimburse the committee for the cost.
- With female pigs, the boar owner kept one piglet, and the rest of the piglets were shared 50/50 between the committee and the breeder. The committee distributed the next piglets to the other members who did not have pigs.
- With goats and sheep, each time a female was bred, the breeder paid 10 gds. For boar service the payment was a piglet. When male goats and sheep could not breed anymore they were sold and the breeder kept part of the money.

For pigs, if the boar could not breed anymore, the committee and the breeder fattened it up to sell and the money was shared 50/50 between the committee and the breeder. Finally, the committee needed to replace the males who could not breed anymore.

- The breeder was responsible for correct veterinary care for the animals.

Purchased goats sheep and pigs

Lambi Fund gave TKLD funds to buy animals. TKLD bought 5 female pigs and one boar, 24 female sheep and 3 males, 6 female goats and 1 male. Lambi Fund provided funds to buy animal food. Lambi Fund also provided funds to purchase medicine to provide quality veterinary care for the animals. The Veterinary Technician accompanied organization members to the markets and helped them choose the best animals for the project.

Hiring a Veterinary Agent

Lambi Fund and TKLD hired a veterinary agent for the first year to care for the animals. The veterinary agent started by distributing medicine to the members. Now in the second year of the project, the organization members pay the agent. Each time the agent makes a call, the animal owner pays a small cost for the medicine. This money serves to refresh the stock under the control of the management committee.

Over the course of the project the veterinary agent visits the animals each month. If there is a problem, the organization calls the agent immediately to bring in the sick animal. For example, there was a sheep that had a problem with her

“With the pigs, sheep and goats we have more income to send our children to school. We have better lives thanks to the Lambi Fund of Haiti. In the heart of the project, we who received the little goats, sheep and pigs are very happy with the way things are run. In this way, TKLD gave proof that we understood the project and are working on prospering. Animals are starting to produce offspring and this allows us to reap the benefits from having a goat, sheep or pig. In the next round of breeding, we hope that more animals will be born and the economic situation will improve even more. All members of TKLD are very satisfied.”

—David, a member of TLKD
pregnancy. The babies died in utero and the veterinary agent came quickly to remove the babies and save the mother.

Training on Breeding

Lambi Fund hired a consultant to give a training seminar on animal breeding for 40 members of TKLD. Topics taught included: different types of Animal Husbandry (goat, sheep, or pig), feeding the animals, veterinary care for each type of animal, type of safe shelter for pigs during the rainy season and types of sheds for goats and sheep.

Project Impact

The project has had a great impact in the area, on TKLD members, and on the organization itself:

- a) Each TKLD member has at least one animal they are raising.
- b) Members’ knowledge of different types of breeding has improved.
- c) The animal population in the area has started to increase.
- d) The organization has gained popularity in the area, and has gotten stronger. Many people have decided to join TKLD because of the success of the breeding project.
- e) TKLD members have developed strong solidarity among themselves.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The project started a year ago, and TKLD believes this is a great victory, especially for members who previously had no means to purchase an animal. The existing schools in the community are not large enough for the needs of the community. In order to address this problem, the organization is using revenue from their animal husbandry projects to build a small community school to increase the number of children attending primary schools.

Need a Carbon Offset? Plant a Tree

Each of us uses about 6 trees in paper products every year. Increased deforestation increases carbon emissions. A carbon offset is something you do to negate the carbon emissions that you personally create. By replanting trees we can counteract the deforestation caused by our paper use. For those of us who fly, planting trees can offset our carbon emissions created by consumption of jet fuel.

Planting trees also has value for rural populations in Haiti. Trees hold soil in place to prevent erosion, prevent flooding and keep water supplies clean.

A donation of $22 provides a tree and training to one community organization. A donation of $220 provides a grove of trees and training to a community in Haiti. Offset your carbon emissions and make a difference in Haiti. Use the donation form in this newsletter or go to http://www.lambifund.org/support_help.htm

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exchange between OPB members and GBM delegates comparing and contrasting strategies and discussing the political and cultural contexts in which environmental work is conducted. OPB members took the delegation on a tour of reforested sites, answered questions about tree selection, maintenance and rates of tree survival.

The next day the delegation visited another grassroots organization, ODEPERIB, where members greeted them with songs of welcome and solidarity. The dialogue focused on issues of civic education and engagement. Members of ODEPERIB shared their frustrations about their inability to garner any support from locally elected officials. Lillian Muchungi stressed the importance of advocacy in Kenya’s environmental movement and urged the ODEPERIB members to partner with the Lambi Fund around issues of advocacy. The meeting was followed by a site visit where ODEPERIB members took the delegation on an extensive visit of the multiple sites where reforestation, as well as agroforestry projects, were implemented.

Saturday was a very special day as the delegation had the opportunity to meet with representatives from all of the organizations in the Gwo Mon area that partner with the Lambi Fund. This meeting took place at Lambi Fund’s Center for Food Security and offered representatives from different peasant organizations the opportunity to hear about the Greenbelt Movement and share their experiences.

What followed the meeting was a celebration of cultures. The entertainment was provided by the incredibly talented,
Member Profile: Nozia Antoine

President, Asosyasyon Fanm Lascahobas (AFL) (In English: Women’s Association of Lascahobas)

Name: Nozia Antoine
Age: 29
Occupation: My husband and I own a commuter bus which travels from Lascahobas to Port-au-Prince.
Family: Married with two boys

Why did you decide to participate in the Lambi Fund women’s conference?
I attended the conference to learn more about strengthening my organization and to improve our capacity to mobilize members of local grassroots organizations. I hope that the Lambi Fund will return to Lascahobas to offer training workshops about community organizing and community engagement in the near future.

Have there been any changes in your life as a result of your association with the Lambi Fund?
I am from the town of Lascahobas, an agricultural town located near the Haitian Dominican border. As the president of AFL, I led the organization to address the needs of its members at multiple levels. Under my leadership, AFL approached the Lambi Fund for support on a project of fruit processing. Members prepared jams, jellies and conserves for commercial distribution. This was the AFL strategy to offer sustainable economic development opportunities to its members.

AFL members who participated in previous Lambi Fund workshops adopted the use of solar ovens to dry some of the fruits.

How has it affected your family?
My family is now economically independent and I am a leader in the community.

How have your plans for the future been affected by your participation in the organization?
I credit the leadership workshop I attended last year as the inspiration for my ambitious foray in local politics.

What is the importance of the sustainable development project to your community?
I am concerned about securing a sustainable source of income for AFL members. However I do not want to lose sight of my organization’s responsibility to advocate for the rights of women and to promote greater civic participation among grassroots organizations and stakeholders.

Has your participation in the women’s conference changed your role in the community?
Yes. How?
This year I, and other AFL members, went through great lengths to attend this conference, traveling for over 10 hours with two children in tow. I traveled with my six-month-old son Bibi. I think I was “driven” to attend the Lambi Fund Leadership conference, because it is my only opportunity to meet with other women who are also engaged in community building activities.

In 2006 I ran for mayor in Lascahobas. The incumbent had refused throughout his tenure to meet with grassroots organizations and acknowledge their issues and concerns. My campaign strategy was to mobilize women’s organizations, grassroots and peasant organizations to raise awareness about the need for a more inclusive style of governance. My ultimate goal is to develop a social and physical master plan for the town of Lascahobas. I think of my campaign as very successful since I only lost by 100 votes.

Help Nozia make her dreams for Lascahobas a reality. Contribute to Lambi Fund Women’s programs to develop leadership skills among Haitian women.

Lambi Fund Attains Highest Rating by Charity Navigator

The Lambi Fund of Haiti has received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America’s largest independent evaluator of charities and NGO’s.

“Charity Navigator salutes your charitable efforts. Receiving four out of a possible four stars indicates that your organization excels, as compared to other charities in America, in allocating and growing your finances in the most fiscally responsible way possible. Congratulations on your 4-star rating from Charity Navigator,” said Kateri Snyder, Program Analyst, at Charity Navigator.
New Projects

The following new projects were recently approved by the Lambi Fund and are in need of funding. Your donation will help bring these projects to life.

Goat Breeding
The 220 members of the Association of Grassroots Microcredit Funds of Peasants of Veney (AGKPV) plan to improve socio-economic conditions with a goat raising project. They need funds to buy 64 goats, establish a veterinary pharmacy, supply food for the animals and training for the goat breeders, and plant 20,000 trees.

Potable water
MJDMH (Mouvement des Jeunes pour le Développement du Morne l’Hopital) plans to provide about 40 families (240 people) with potable water by constructing ten rainwater cisterns. They also want to build a communal cistern on the school site owned by the organization to provide drinking water for school children. The members will construct the cisterns while Lambi Fund will purchase the materials and provide training on water treatment and hygiene.

Ox Plowing Service
Ti Komite Legliz, Oscar Romero (TKL/Oscar Romero) raises beans, corn, cabbage and tomatoes. The 75 members of TKL Oscar Romero plan to operate an ox plowing service to cultivate the land more productively. Lambi Fund will purchase six oxen and plows, train the plow operators and train the members on project management and organizational development.

Goat and Sheep Breeding
The members of the Peasant Organization of Pereni (OPP), a community of 1,225 residents, plan to raise goats and sheep. Lambi Fund will purchase 22 goats and 11 sheep, provide food for the livestock and training for the members. The members will also plant 20,000 trees.

Reforestation
PEDISEG is a federation of 56 grassroots organizations with over 4,200 members near Gwomon. They will plant 180,000 fruit and forest trees to reforest the badly eroded area. Lambi Fund plans to purchase the seeds and the materials to construct the tree nurseries, and provide reforestation and organizational development training. The members will construct the nurseries, plant the seedlings, and educate the residents about the needs for reforestation.

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dynamic and politically engaged women’s musical group called Awozam, all members of a women’s organization partnering with Lambi Fund in the Northwestern part of Haiti. It was truly an opportunity for sharing knowledge and culture. The Kenyan women donned their traditional dresses and regaled the crowd with traditional Kikuyu songs and dances, impressing all gathered with their high pitched ululations. The day ended with a tree planting ceremony by the GBM delegation.

Upon the delegation’s return to the capital, they met with the Honorable Marie Laurence Lassegue, Minister of the Women’s Condition. She expressed enthusiasm about the historic partnership between the Lambi Fund and the Greenbelt Movement and offered her support of this Global South collaboration and partnership.

The visit accomplished its stated objectives of mutual exchange between the Greenbelt Movement and the Lambi Fund. The next steps will entail an assessment of the trip and discussions about areas of interest where the Lambi Fund and the Greenbelt Movement will partner to improve Haiti’s environment through sustainable grassroots efforts. Representatives from the Lambi Fund will attend a GBM sponsored Pan African Network summit next spring in Kenya and learn even more from the people who are responsible for the reforestation projects in the Greenbelt Movement throughout Africa and the African Diaspora.
BOOK REVIEW “Brother, I’m Dying” by Edwidge Danticat

BY KAREN ASHMORE

As a regular donor to Lambi Fund, Edwidge Danticat has maintained close ties to with our organization. Over the past few years that I have known her, she has talked about her Dad and her uncle and how much she looked up to them, as well as her loving relationship with her daughter. Earlier this year, she modestly told us that her new book was coming out this fall. While I was in Washington DC to attend a Lambi Fund board meeting, I stopped by the Politics and Prose bookstore to see if the book was on the shelves yet and immediately bought the newly released book.

After the board meeting, my return flight was delayed by nine hours. I spent the entire time curled up with “Brother, I’m Dying” at the DFW airport. Once I started, I could not put it down. I was captivated not only because the book filled in all the details from the snatches of family stories I had heard from Edwidge but also because she is a superb story teller.

The stories she weaves of her life in Haiti and then her life in the U.S. are centered around her relationships with her two father figures—her uncle who raised her as a child and her Papi. She magically draws you into her family life and the enriching and sometimes heartbreaking experiences of a Haitian family. The picture she paints of Haiti is truthful, as is the poignant impact of U.S. foreign policy on Haitians. This moving and unforgettable story will capture your heart. Buy the book on the Lambi Fund website at http://www.lambifund.org/books.htm

Good Bye, Frisner

It is with heartfelt sadness that the Lambi Fund mourns the death of Frisner, the trusted driver for ground travels in Haiti. He was a valuable employee of the Lambi Fund and his early, untimely death (due to a heart attack) leaves a large void. We will miss him.

Che fans and wine lovers

Laurel Glen Wineries developed a special bottling of a smooth cabernet honoring freedom fighter Che Guevara to benefit the Lambi Fund of Haiti. This is a delicious wine to serve with pastas, meats, pizza, robust cheeses, and with any other hearty foods. Wine lovers with a social conscience can order it can order the wine by clicking on the Laurel Glen link at http://www.lambifund.org/support_help.htm

Why the Lambi Fund of Haiti Works

The Lambi Fund of Haiti works because of its unique bottom-up collaborative approach that is different from the top-down approach of many charities. The Lambi Fund’s original, grassroots development model succeeds because it relies on Haitians themselves to determine the needs and the most effective solutions in each community. The Lambi Fund’s emphasis on democracy, a community’s actual needs, and peasant-led solutions ensures more successful outcomes.

As a result, we hear positive feedback from peasants. Here is a quote from a member of an organization that developed a community solution to economic sustainability: “This project has taught us how to protect our fields and the surrounding mountains so that we have more crops, cleaner water and less erosion in the future.”

—Member of organization with sustainable agriculture project.

Our Programs

• Alternative sustainable development
• Environment
• Organizational and leadership training
• Community micro-credit
• Animal Husbandry

Our Principles

Lambi Fund supports peasant led community organizations in Haiti that promote:
• Non-violence
• Gender equity
• Self-sustainability

• Non-partisanship
• Grassroots democracy

Our Future

• Improved economic conditions
• Increased food availability
• Increase in potable water
• Improved environment
• Increased gender equity
• Improved democratic functioning

Haiti Director Josette Perard works with women at leadership training.
Haitian T Shirts
I love the “Haiti The First Black Republic” T shirts sold by the online Macaya Store. They make wonderful birthday and holiday gifts. The sizes run a little small so order larger than you usually would. Every member of my family wears the shirts including my teenagers. Order T shirts by clicking on the Macaya Store link at http://www.lambifund.org/support-help.htm.

I want to help grassroots organizations in Haiti on a regular basis.
I pledge to contribute $ _____ on a monthly/quarterly basis (circle one)

Please charge my (circle one):
Mastercard   Visa   AmEx

Card number   Exp. Date
Signature   Today’s Date

Return to: Lambi Fund of Haiti, PO Box 18955, Washington DC 20036   Or email us at info@lambifund.org

Why We Give

BY YANICK AND PATRICK BAYARD

We give to The Lambi Fund of Haiti because of our strong belief in Lambi Fund’s ability to reach people directly and enable them to become self sufficient. Lambi Fund does not give handouts, instead they provide tools to get the job done. Over the years we have observed documented results of Lambi Fund’s projects which have created improved economic conditions, reduced erosion and most importantly an increase in collaboration between grassroots organizations run by Haitians themselves. We are also impressed by Lambi Fund’s efforts to reach out to women and empower them to support themselves with their own micro businesses, leading to more equality between men and women.

Haiti needs us to invest in its people to re-build their country from the ground up; this very fragile and young democracy cannot succeed if the peasant communities of Haiti are not an integral part of this movement towards a cleaner, stronger, better self-sustaining economy. Lambi Fund has shown its commitment and produced clear results. We will continue to support Lambi Fund projects. As Haitians, it is an investment in Haiti’s future.

(Editors Note: As a youth, Patrick Bayard attended St Louis School in Haiti with Lambi Fund Board member Max Blanchet. Originally from Haiti, Yanick’s parents Lionel and Liliane Fombrun are the ones that first told the Bayards about Lambi Fund. The Bayard, friends and family have since donated annually to the Lambi Fund in memory of the Fombruns.)
Lambi Fund wins Film Fest Prize

Lambi Fund of Haiti won first and third place respectively in the Global Giving Film Fest with the most number of views and highest ratings by viewers worldwide on YouTube and Karma Tube.

Brandon McCarroll directed Pigs—Haitian Bank Accounts, a film about a pig project in southern Haiti that is led by a peasant woman.

Lauren Pray and Hannah Dwertman are the filmmakers for Reforestation and Clean Water in Haiti, which starts out with an animation about deforestation in Haiti and concludes with a profile of a grassroots group that is reforesting part of Haiti.

Lambi Fund Deputy Director Leonie Hermantin filmed the actual Haitian footage that was then used by the film makers to create an entertaining video. Go to http://www.lambifund.org/programs_videos.htm to view these two short but meaningful videos.

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Keep up with the latest news by signing up for our new email newsletter. Visit our website at www.lambifund.org and sign up online.

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MISSION STATEMENT
The Lambi Fund’s mission is to assist the popular, democratic movement in Haiti. The Lambi Fund provides financial resources, training and technical assistance to peasant-led community organizations that promote the social and economic empowerment of the Haitian people.

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