

# GRAIN

## in 2019

Highlights of our activities



# Contents

About GRAIN .....	3
Year in review .....	4
Corporations, power and the global food system .....	5
<i>Farmers deal a blow to RCEP</i>	
<i>Legalising corporate theft in Africa</i>	
<i>An upgrade for bilaterals.org, celebrating 15 years</i>	
Land grabbing and the struggle for land .....	8
<i>Farmlandgrab.org: 10 years of the online clearinghouse</i>	
<i>Supporting the Alliance against Industrial Plantations in West and Central Africa</i>	
<i>Box: Going to court: legal action against oil palm plantations</i>	
<i>Fire and smoke in Brazil</i>	
People's control over seeds .....	13
<i>Biofortification as a business strategy</i>	
<i>Multimedia productions</i>	
<i>In defence of seeds: Latin America</i>	
Food sovereignty to fight the climate crisis .....	18
<i>Climate audit of the EU-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement</i>	
<i>From Santiago to Spain: presentes at the counter-COP25</i>	
<i>Shifting the discourse on climate change in Africa</i>	
Getting the word out .....	22
GRAIN 2019 in numbers .....	23
GRAIN's team in 2019: on the world map .....	24
Behind the scenes at GRAIN .....	26
<i>Celebrate 30 years with us</i>	
Annex: GRAIN publications in 2019 .....	28

Front cover: GRAIN staff visited the Mbour fish harbour during our annual meeting in Senegal, October 2019

# About GRAIN

GRAIN is a small international non-profit organisation that works to support small farmers and social movements in their struggles for community-controlled and biodiversity-based food systems.

Our strategy is two-fold: information work and movement building.

We specialise in monitoring and analysing trends that are affecting farmers' and rural communities' livelihoods. As a decentralised organisation with staff located around the world, we are able to follow these developments on the ground and with frontline partners. Our publications intend to inform our partners, policymakers and the general public - and are also a central tool in movement building and supporting struggles around the world. GRAIN has long been active in networking, building capacity, creating alliances and supporting strategy development among organisations and activists. We know the struggle to vindicate small farmers and food sovereignty is long and difficult and can only be carried out collectively.

Our work is organised in four interrelated areas:

- ✓ Corporations, power and the global food system
- ✓ Land grabbing and the struggle for land
- ✓ People's control over seeds
- ✓ Food sovereignty to fight the climate crisis



GRAIN staff 2019

# Year in review

The world was on fire in 2019.

The cathedral of Notre Dame went up in flames, and protests poured smoke into the Paris streets all year long.

Bolsonoro incited rage in Brazil, and over 125,000 hectares of the Amazon burned.

California wildfires and Australian bushfires wreaked havoc on people, places, produce and creatures large and small.

The fires were figurative as well: fires of indignation and activism ignited protests from Algeria to Catalunya and Indonesia to Hong Kong. Governments were toppled in Bolivia and Iraq, Sudan and Lebanon. Calls for democracy, integrity and justice were heard from Chile to India. Some are calling 2019 the Global Protest Wave.

- 4 These fires have been sparked by forces we grapple with in all our work: in the literal cases, the climate crisis, exacerbated by international finance and corporate control. In the figurative cases, government policy impacting economic stability, dignity, justice and sovereignty for citizens. We make some of these connections in our publications, linking pension funds to the farmland on fire in Brazil and proposed trade deals threatening dairy farmers in India. And we accompanied groups on the frontlines of the protests and struggles, supporting the People's Climate Summit in Santiago, Chile and Madrid, Spain at the counter-COP25 and visiting communities displaced and disadvantaged from industrial oil palm plantations in West and Central Africa.

As we did our part to put out the fires this past year, we also recognise the importance of burning: to clear the terrain of old and unhealthy structures, eliminate disease, release seeds, and encourage new growth. We hope in reading these highlights from the year that you feel the spark to take action for a more just, resilient, democratic world where food sovereignty grows from the ashes.

In hope and solidarity,

The GRAIN team

# Corporations, power and the global food system



- ✓ Confronting today's growing corporate control over the global food system.
- ✓ Exploring how corporate power impacts small-scale food producers.
- ✓ Linking corporate power to the food crisis, control over resources, and global trade relations.

## Farmers deal a blow to RCEP

RCEP is the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, a 16-country mega-regional trade agreement in East Asia. If adopted, it will be the biggest trade deal in the world. Negotiations have been going on since the deal was first proposed in 2012.

This year, after a series of relentless blows to RCEP across the Asia-Pacific region that knocked off its UPOV91 and ISDS clauses, in India, the unity and amplitude of social movements finally forced the government to withdraw from RCEP.

This huge decision comes after persistent, organised mobilisation by a wide cross-section of civil society throughout the country and the region. Indian farmers, in particular from the dairy sector, would have been adversely affected by RCEP. India's withdrawal will likely precipitate pressure on other countries to pull out.

GRAIN has been present at multiple negotiating rounds and helped to support civil society mobilisation over the past several years. In 2019, we helped farmers prepare presentations during the Bali round of negotiations. We contributed to drafts of letters asking RCEP countries not to join UPOV91, then circulated them among our networks and collected signatures. We spoke at workshops and provided resources for farmers, labour unions, and other groups to take action against the advances of the negotiations - and participated in those rallies and demonstrations against RCEP. We prepared informational material





*Dairy farmers in India march in protest of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. As a result of pressure from farmers and civil society, India pulled out of negotiations in November 2019. Photo credit: KRRS (Karnataka Rajya Ryot Sangha - LVC member from India)*

6 explaining the potential impact of RCEP on both land grabbing and the dairy sector in India, foreseeing the extremely important role of the dairy industry in these trade negotiations. We helped groups get their message out in the press and also spoke to the media with a clear message: keep agriculture and dairy out of RCEP negotiations.

Though we cannot claim “victory”, we are thrilled with this small step – and huge showing for farmers groups – towards protecting small-scale, domestic farming for India. We will continue to mobilise and be vigilant as negotiations continue for this mega-trade deal.

### Legalising corporate theft in Africa

More free trade agreements loom large over Africa. Of critical importance is the recently-launched African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). We have continued to raise awareness with regards to the AfCFTA and how its liberalisation agenda will affect smallholder farmers, vulnerable groups like women and youth and economies across Africa.

In May, we participated in a region-wide workshop on the East African Community’s agricultural sector. GRAIN prepared a presentation titled: “FTAs: legalising corporate theft and threatening farmers’ seeds” exposing the link between trade and seed policy agendas. The meeting served to connect policy discussions with local realities and create a space for engagement to build advocacy campaigns across the region. Relatedly, the meeting was able to shine a light on the

many African countries that are facing the decision to sign on to seed legislation and harmonisation processes, specifically UPOV91. As a result of this meeting, groups agreed to take home the discussions to adapt campaigns to their context for better advocacy. Keep an eye on [bilaterals.org](http://bilaterals.org)’s special section on African free trade agreements and upcoming GRAIN publications for more analysis.

### An upgrade for bilaterals.org, celebrating 15 years

Bilaterals.org exists to support movements engaged in struggles against free trade and investment agreements. GRAIN participates in it, along with others. A new, improved version of the website was launched this year, as bilaterals.org celebrates its 15th anniversary. In the spirit of being an open-publishing and collaborative platform, the team gathered feedback to assess users’ needs and expectations to keep the site relevant and useful. This consultation process confirmed that bilaterals.org is considered a unique tool that is helpful to a wide range of activists. It is visited by over a million different people annually.

Significant new features include a new design, enhanced search engine, and new sections on specific regional trade agreements. The three main languages continue to be English, French and Spanish, but there is also an increasing number of materials in other languages, such as Indonesian Bahasa, Japanese and Portuguese, and we expect this diversity to continue.

The scope of the project continues to develop: the team often responds to ad-hoc requests from groups globally, from creating new pages to publishing leaks of draft negotiating texts or other undisclosed documents.



*The new version of the bilaterals.org website provides a dedicated space to specific regional trade agreements like RCEP as well as a new design, enhanced search engine and materials in multiple languages*

# Land grabbing and the struggle for land



- ✓ Exposing today's massive assault on fertile farmland by investors, speculators and agribusiness.
- ✓ Keeping land grabbing high on the global agenda.
- ✓ Building alliances and strategy to stop land grabbing.

## Farmlandgrab.org: 10 years of the online clearinghouse

This site, updated almost daily with new articles, is a clearinghouse of reports, news articles and press around global land grab issues. We also send out a digest of weekly highlights in English, Spanish, French and other languages to over 10,000 subscribers. The purpose of the site is to serve as a resource for those monitoring or researching the issue, particularly social activists, non-government organisations and journalists. As land grabbing continues to affect farmland and rural communities all over the world, there is a greater demand all the time for this service. The site is regularly used by frontline organisations and alliances against land grabbing for the publication of communiqués or collective documents or for leaking information important to their struggles.

## Supporting the Alliance against Industrial Plantations in West and Central Africa

The regional alliance against corporate oil palm plantations in West and Central Africa is made up of around a dozen small grassroots organisations defending their community's control over their territories from companies that are trying to take lands for oil palm and other industrial plantations. The alliance works by connecting grassroots leaders, especially women leaders, enabling them to share experiences, devise strategies and collective actions, build tools and unite their voices and struggles within the region and internationally. The alliance has converged over the past six years with coordination support from GRAIN and the World Rainforest Movement (WRM) and has now consolidated into a locally-led resource for communities and groups across the region for the fight against oil palm plantations.



*The regional alliance against corporate oil palm plantations in West and Central Africa held a number of key strategy meetings and convergences in 2019*



This past year, the Alliance had a number of key meetings and activities:

- ✓ In February 2019, an international solidarity delegation including GRAIN staff traveled to Port Loko, Sierra Leone, to support, advise and strategise with a community who successfully won lands back from an oil palm plantation through legal action.
- ✓ In May 2019, the alliance held a 4-day meeting in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire that brought together 31 participants from 10 west African countries. This meeting was important in the history of the alliance, as it has consolidated into a functioning, vital resource for local communities and groups across the region for the fight against oil palm plantations, and is locally-run and led.
- ✓ The alliance also organised a host of other activities, including village exchanges in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire to strengthen communities' capacity to resist large-scale land grabs by multi-national concessions and local elites. In addition, alliance members in several countries mobilised actions on September 21st, the international day against monoculture tree plantations, and organised a common front against sexual violence and abuse against women on the plantations.



The Alliance also produced several key publications this year to inform their collective struggle:

- ✓ *Breaking the silence: Industrial oil palm and rubber plantations bring harassment, sexual violence and abuse against women* (published on International Women's Day, 8 March 2019) – a collective report documenting and denouncing cases of abuses against women, with this call to action: 'STOP the harassment, sexual violence and abuse against women in and around industrial oil palm and rubber plantations IMMEDIATELY!'
- ✓ *Booklet: 12 tactics palm oil companies use to grab community land* (April 2019) – an illustrated training manual based on experiences of alliance members and lessons learned, to strengthen their resistance and better prepare to stop corporations from establishing industrial oil palm plantations on their lands.
- ✓ *Communities in Africa fight back against the land grab for palm oil* (September 2019) – published for the International day against monoculture tree plantations, an updated state of oil palm plantations, concessions and companies, with an encouraging conclusion: struggles by communities to defend their lands are slowing the expansion of industrial oil palm plantations in the region.

## Going to court: Legal action against oil palm plantations

As a continuation of its longstanding work against land grabbing, GRAIN supported several legal cases launched by communities to get their lands back from the Socfin and Bolloré Groups, large European companies involved in oil palm and rubber production in Asia and Africa.

In May, several organisations in Cameroon filed a pathbreaking legal action in France against Bolloré S.A. GRAIN was asked to be a legal party to the suit along with several other European and international NGOs. The unprecedented legal action launched by the collective of NGOs against Bolloré Group made waves in the media, with mentions in nearly 100 news outlets.

In October, we supported a legal action taken by over 100 indigenous Bunong families of eastern Cambodia against Bolloré. The events resulted in strong media coverage, which GRAIN is supporting along with strategy discussion, translation support and alliance building.

## Fire and smoke in Brazil

As we saw appallingly clear with the devastating fires in Brazil, land and livelihoods are at greater and greater risk due to deforestation, extractive industries, megaprojects and agribusiness – all fuelled by corporate interests and supported by governmental legislation.

Following up on the explosive exposé of pension funds grabbing land in Brazil, GRAIN continued to collaborate with Rede Social de Justiça e Direitos Humanos throughout this year. We travelled to Washington for strategy meetings of the alliance of groups working to stop pension and endowment fund investments in farmland and also to Boston to coordinate with Harvard Divest and other student groups pushing Harvard's endowment fund to divest from farmland and other ethically-questionable investments. In October, GRAIN, along with Rede Social, Friends of the Earth USA and the National Family Farm Coalition, published another damning report on farmland acquisitions by Harvard and US pension fund manager TIAA, connecting their farms to specific areas on the map that are suffering from fires in Brazil's tropical savannah, known as the Cerrado. Our work on these and other US and European financial institutions driving land grabs in Brazil and other countries has made it more difficult for them to raise funds, while deepening support



and connections between the affected communities and groups that can pressure the foreign companies grabbing their lands.

On the ground in Brazil, GRAIN participated in a livestream event on the Amazon and Cerrado destruction and produced a [report](#) about the fires and other narratives related to climate change from the perspective of the Global South. In addition, GRAIN has been active in a series of events highlighting cases of land grabbing and changes in legislation affecting land, especially in the biodiverse Cerrado region. Lastly, we are part of the newly-emerging collaboration of groups in support of collective territories in Brazil, made up of grassroots movements and local initiatives campaigning to maintain their lands and territories in the face of a new national land law that allows for massive privatization of public and vacant land in Brazil with very low prices.

# People's control over seeds



- ✓ Challenging corporate seed and intellectual property laws.
- ✓ Revealing unprecedented levels of corporate control over seeds and the push for GMOs.
- ✓ Cultivating emerging seed saving and exchange movements.

## Biofortification as a business strategy

This year we published a cross-regional report, *Biofortified crops or biodiversity? The fight for genuine solutions to malnutrition is on*. The report uncovers the corporate connections behind these new crops and argues that farmer-managed biodiversity and agroecology are more effective approaches to deal with nutrition problems in all contexts. As Sylvia Mallari of the People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty is quoted in the report as saying, "Biofortification is a business strategy, not a solution to global malnutrition." The report challenges the corporate hype around these "super"-crops ("golden" rice and the "super" banana), exposing the manipulation of hunger and highlighting the role of women in providing for family nutrition. GRAIN issued a [call to action](#) to women's groups and peasant organisations to form a coalition to boycott biofortified crops and foods and call for policies and investment that strengthen local

culture, agroecology and food sovereignty. The full report was written in English and translated to French, Spanish, Kiswahili and Indonesian Bahasa, and has been circulated widely, from the the regional Via Campesina - CLOC congress in Cuba to the Solidaritas Perempuan women's congress in Indonesia.

*The report and adjoining resources on biofortification were translated into Spanish and French as well as Kiswahili, Indonesian Bahasa and Tagalog (pictured here) for use by farmers and local communities around the world*



Burning in the Jamaxim Environmental Protection Area in Novo Progresso, Pará state, Brazil.  
Photo by Victor Moriyama / Greenpeace





The Kenyan Peasants League, the Via Campesina partner in Kenya, had the poster translated into five Kenyan languages for farmers to be able to use

documentary and short animation. The short has also been translated this year into German, French and Italian. We then ventured into the world of online courses with Instituto La Fuente and Alianza Biodiversidad, offering a course with the same theme as these resources, *Seeds, commons or corporate property?* It was offered in Spanish with around 100 participants from around Latin America.

Back in Africa, we facilitated the first two “Conversations with farmers,” a virtual meeting where farmers and civil society members from East and Southern Africa share perspectives about issues facing farmers. The rich conversations are led by small-scale farmers, who comment on their reality on the ground. This conversation provided a space for farmers and groups from across the continent to come together to share their views on seed harmonisation, speak towards building a movement to protect African seeds and raise up the need for farmers and Africans to struggle and own the narrative around food and their food systems again.

### In defence of seeds: Latin America

In Latin America, we continue to be vigilant in defence of local, farmer-controlled seed systems. From Mexico to the Southern Cone, GRAIN staff is active in networks, meetings and campaigns.

In March, GRAIN staff helped coordinate the Annual Assembly of the Network in Defence of Maize in Mexico, with over 500 people from at least 16 states around the country. This meeting between people and communities that defend the life of “people who defend and live with maize” was a real success. In September and October, we participated in preparing a collective declaration against the newest law to supposedly protect maize in Mexico. We worked with groups to issue



GRAIN materials join many others at the National Articulation of Agroecology (ANA) in Curitiba, Brazil

### Multimedia productions

This year, we presented our seeds work in a variety of formats. First was translating materials to additional languages to increase their reach to new audiences. This included making a Spanish version of the popular report, *The real seeds producers*, focusing on farmer-managed seed systems in Africa. This report has been copied hundreds of times and distributed throughout Africa, for the use of farmers and local organisations. Some organisations have adapted the results to make their own publications for use in their context. A poster was also developed with the key messages, in an easy-to-read visual format, and translated into local languages. With all this distribution, translation and adaptation, we can conclude that this material is very relevant for communities on the ground and especially farmers across Africa!

Then, we translated the Spanish language comic book, *Seeds in resistance*, into English, French and Portuguese. This resources lightens the complicated issue of seed legislation by integrating images and stories and joins a greater multimedia collection including a



another declaration in November against the Vegetal Variety's Federal Law reform proposal, and rejecting UPOV in general, arguing against the privatising of seeds, and ultimately against the privatisation of life.

In Argentina, GRAIN staff was active in campaigns against the Bayer-Monsanto seed law and resistance to GMO wheat including several public demonstrations and events, plus interviews and posting online. Part of this campaign included being involved in the Week of Food Sovereignty Action and against the "Bayer-Monsanto" seed law bill in February, which was not debated and lost parliamentary status. GRAIN supported efforts with information, analysis, articles and campaign coordination.

Over in Brazil, we participated in the annual plenary of the National Articulation of Agroecology (ANA) in Curitiba, where we discussed local strategies around collective land, seeds and agroecology, and traditional knowledge and biopiracy. We are also a member of the Biodiversity working group of ANA that works to monitor seed laws, GMO contamination, product labelling, the release of new technologies and products, and pesticide use and release, with an emerging campaign for a bill to implement a national pesticide reduction program. The Biodiversity working group also produced an [informational video](#) about gene drives and genetic manipulation in agriculture in October for the Brazilian public.



An important part of GRAIN's seeds work in Latin America is in collaboration with Alianza Biodiversidad, a collective platform of a dozen organisations and movements in Latin America, and editors of the quarterly publication *Revista Biodiversidad, sustento y culturas*. This year, the Revista published its 100<sup>th</sup> edition, with a retrospective of 25 years covering the struggles and hopes from the region. It was presented in Mexico, Ecuador and Argentina on various occasions. The Alianza also held its bi-annual meeting,

The Latin American magazine issued its 100<sup>th</sup> edition in 2019

this year in Paraguay. During this time, we took part in a public seminar on Agribusiness and Food Sovereignty at the Congressional Library of Paraguay, with more than 250 people present.

Prior to the meeting, participants engaged in a participatory workshop building the atlas of agribusiness and GM crops in the Southern Cone. The workshop engaged with over 40 representatives from peasant, social, ecological and communications groups from the Southern Cone, including participants from the GRAIN team who brought over 20 years of research on the impacts of the imposition of genetically-modified and glyphosate-resistant soy in the region. The forthcoming multi-media project analyzes GMOs and big infrastructure projects and their effect on land, seeds, water and biomes – plus highlights the resistances of the social movements, local communities and especially women movements.



GRAIN staff participates in building an atlas of agrobusiness operations in the Southern Cone in Paraguay, 2019

# Food sovereignty to fight the climate crisis



- ✓ Drawing attention to the industrial food system as a main driver of the climate crisis.
- ✓ Zooming in on industrial meat and dairy as key culprits.
- ✓ Proposing food sovereignty and agroecology as an important part of the solution.

## Climate audit of the EU-Mercosur FTA

Red alert: the proposed EU-Mercosur trade deal would boost climate emissions from eight farm products by 8.7 million tonnes per year – one-third more than what is currently being produced! GRAIN calculated this figure doing a “climate audit” of the agricultural quotas of key products for export and import delineated in the draft agreement. Additional threats such as land grabbing, deforestation and displacement loom, as foreseen in the fires throughout Brasil this past year. The trade deal is another example of the preference of governments for agribusiness interests instead of small-scale, sustainable farming – leading to heightened climate destruction. As we say in the report, climate and trade are heavily linked, and we need to stop this and other similar trade deals: “If we are serious about cutting greenhouse gas emissions, we have to take action on key global mechanisms that promote the expansion of industrial food and agriculture—with trade agreements at the top of the list.”



*GRAIN's climate audit of the EU-Mercosur free trade agreement calculated anticipated emissions from key agricultural products. The report and helpful graphics were picked up by media and movements across the world.*



*GRAIN staff gave multiple presentations at civil society summits parallel to the COP25 in Santiago and Madrid linking the industrial food system to the climate crisis and offering agroecology and food sovereignty as solutions.*

## From Santiago to Spain: *Presentes* at the counter-COP25

When the 2019 United Nations Conference of Parties (COP) Climate Change Conference changed venues from Santiago, Chile to Madrid, Spain due to the political uprising in Chile, civil society groups decided to honour the People’s Summit in Santiago, and also create a parallel Social Summit in Madrid. Both summits provided a space to share and strengthen civil society and social movement efforts around climate and justice, as a challenge to the “official” governmental and corporate meeting of the COP25. GRAIN was able to participate in both spaces, due to our geographic proximity. In Chile, we organised a panel with LVC-CLOC, Anamuri, and Acción por la Biodiversidad called “Together we can cool the planet” with over 100 audience members. We also spoke on panels about the link between industrial agriculture and the climate crisis and the opportunities that peasant agroecology and food sovereignty provide. In Madrid, GRAIN participated in the solidarity March for the *Climate* and spoke on three panels: *Climate, Land and Sovereignty: climate narratives on the global south territories* with Grupo Carta de Belém, based on the joint publication of the same name; *Food Sovereignty versus False Climate Solutions* with LVC and ETC-group, and the *EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement* with multiple groups, presenting findings from our new publication. At both venues, we distributed our materials, new and old, to eager audiences.





convergence of the climate crisis and rising food imports in Africa is a recipe for catastrophe. Focusing on the vulnerabilities of the current dominant food system in Africa, the report *Africa and climate: Food sovereignty is Africa's only solution to climate chaos* details how food sovereignty is the only option that will protect the environment, feed the growing population and reduce climate impacts. Touching on trade, seeds, government programs and corporate initiatives, the report emphasizes the importance of prioritizing local food producers – predominantly women, local crops, local knowledge and local biodiversity as the key links to safeguarding Africa's food system against impending crises.



*GRAIN's 2019 annual partner meeting took place in Senegal in October and focused on issues of climate and trade. With around 20 partners from 10 different African countries, plus GRAIN staff, the meeting provided a space to discuss the connections between trade, food and climate change. We left the meeting with new strategic thinking and ideas about how we can build cooperation between climate justice groups focused on energy and food sovereignty groups focused on supporting agroecology and peasant seeds across Africa. Here our staff meets with partners in the Casamance region of Senegal during our annual staff meeting.*

20 *GRAIN participated in several events coordinated with African groups around climate change throughout the year, making the link between industrial farming and the climate crisis.*

### Shifting the discourse on climate change in Africa

GRAIN began the year meeting with groups active on climate issues in Africa. We met with 350Africa and did a week of work with 50 activists from groups around the country to launch [AFRICA VUKA](#), a platform to unite campaigns in Africa related to climate to build a united front. Then, we attended Africa Climate Week, a big mobilisation with the Africa Food Sovereignty Network in Ghana. Here, we supported five participants to engage and speak on panels, including two women farmers and three local organisation staff members. As GRAIN, we also presented on the impact of the industrial food system on global warming. Throughout the year, we participated in AFSA's Citizen and Agroecology Working Group and with La Vía Campesina Africa. In August, we attended the LVC African continental encounter of agroecology schools and training processes in Zimbabwe.

To contribute to the information-building around climate change in Africa, this year we published an in-depth report looking at how the



# Getting the word out

A key part of how we want to achieve change is by providing information, analysis and data to the people at the frontlines of the struggle for food sovereignty. Informing the movement contributes to building strategies of resistance by exposing the powers and interests behind the machinations of the food system. In addition to in-depth research reports, we also produce educational materials that are accessible, useful and easily translated and reproduced by farmers, local communities and groups at the frontlines. This includes expanding into multimedia materials like videos and online conversations. Nearly all of our written materials are available in English, French and Spanish, and many are also available in non-colonial languages, this year including more materials in Portuguese, plus Indonesian Bahasa, Hindi, Japanese, kiSwahili, and Tagalog.

We dedicate a lot of time to communications and outreach, circulating materials virtually, posting online and synchronising social media. To that end, the big news of the year was the roll-out of GRAIN's new website.

The new version is cleaner and sleeker with an improved search function. All pages are available in our three working languages. We hope the new site will continue to serve as a resource for those searching information on the struggles for food sovereignty. Our other key communication channel is through social media. We consider it an important tool for broadcasting updates from partners, visibilising struggles on the ground to a global audience and sharing new resources.

Interestingly, it appears that we reach a quite varied audience, through major international media outfits but also via the channels of social movements on the ground. For example, this year GRAIN staff and material appeared on information platforms such as The Atlantic, The Washington Post, Reuters, Newsweek, and O Globo, but also through action and information networks as La Via Campesina, the World Rainforest Movement and the People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty.

We also know that our materials are replicated beyond our capacity to track and quantify: videos are seen at group viewings, materials are read over community radio and data is shared in presentations and list serves. Our resources also have an important role in print. Our staff share copies of reports at strategy meetings, infographics get printed on flyers at rallies, and magazines are making the rounds at workshops around the world. Here is where our materials really hit the ground, helping to shape strategy, inform campaigns, and strengthen arguments.



Illustration by Megan Basaldua, [www.basalmegvinegar.com](http://www.basalmegvinegar.com)



# GRAIN's team in 2019



# Behind the scenes at GRAIN

Bolstering our programme work is the hustle and bustle of our administration. GRAIN is not an office-type organisation, and only holds a coordination and administration hub in Barcelona. GRAIN is, rather, an international collective with our staff embedded with local efforts and groups around the world.

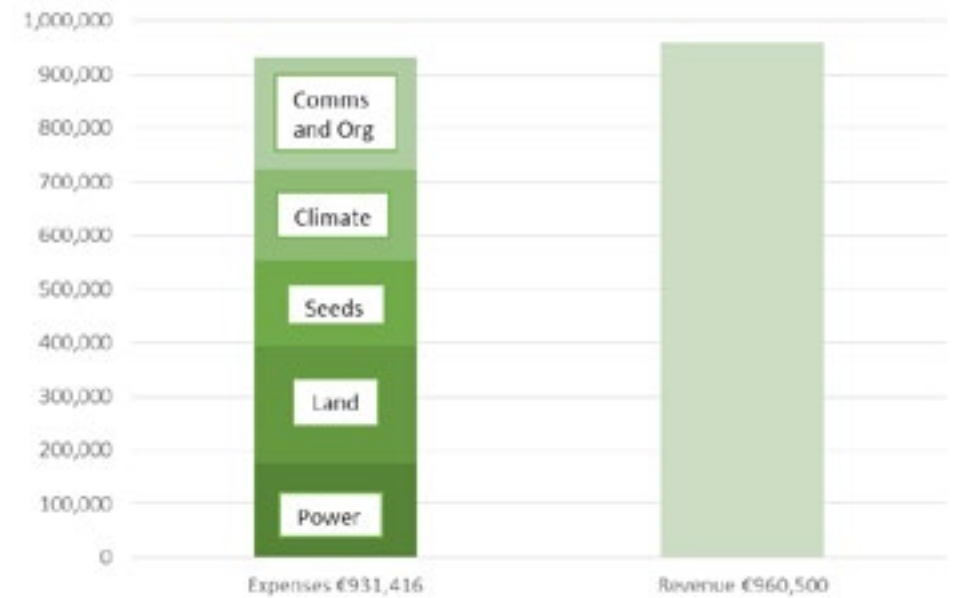
In 2019, we had 14 staff located in 11 countries. Updates for this year include Marion Girard moving on and welcoming new staff members to the team: Afsar Jafri joins our programme team from India and Alexandra Toledo, working from Spain, and contributing to our fundraising and grant efforts.

Our board is also a small but diverse group, based in Brazil, France, Nigeria and Thailand. They guide our governance and programme work sharing their view of GRAIN's role with the movements each of them are deeply engaged in.

Every year, we organise an in-person meeting for our staff and Board. This year, we gathered in Senegal for several days of reflections on our current work and upcoming activities. Our board members joined us to develop plans for the coming years. We also organised a meeting with African partners to delve into issues of trade and climate in the region, informing our forthcoming strategy and work in this area.

Fundraising is also important for us, as a non-profit organisation. In 2019 we were busy mobilising resources to keep us solvent and stable. We carefully assess potential funders to ensure they align with our values and maintain our autonomy by avoiding dependency on any one source of income or influence. We are grateful for many long-term collaborations providing stable operating funds. And each year, we welcome new donors into our portfolio. In 2019, we received support from around 25 funders in Europe, the United States and Japan. Once 2019 expenditure needs were met, we were left a small margin that will allow us to start 2020 on solid footing. A breakdown of our revenue and expenses by programme area is represented here.

GRAIN Expenses and Revenue, 2019



## Celebrate 30 years with us

Looking forward into 2020, GRAIN will celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary! We hope to use this opportunity to engage with new audiences, new funders, new supporters and new partners, building on three decades of partnerships and collaborations. We are fortunate to count on the support of many committed, long-term funders that allow us to maintain our independence and political positions. Covering our costs and supporting fundraising efforts of partners is an ongoing effort, however, increasingly difficult with the narrowing civil society space, plagued by threats and literal violence to frontline advocates challenging corporate power. For these reasons, this year we are putting special efforts into connecting with funders willing to join us in the resistance. If you are interested or would like to introduce us to someone who may be, please contact us or use the "donate" button on our website. Likewise, if you have talents with translation and editing, we are grateful to receive new volunteers interesting in supporting our cause. Please contact us at [volunteer \[at\] grain \[dot\] org](mailto:volunteer@grain.org).





# Annex: GRAIN publications by programme area 2019

## Corporations, power and the global food system

*¡Fuera supermercados de África! La gente con sus sistemas alimentarios propios no los necesita*, 9 January 2019

The Belt and Road Initiative: Chinese agribusiness going global, 18 February 2019

*Tratados de libre comercio: Instrumentos de desvío de poder que sojuzgan el Derecho*, 19 February 2019

28 Defamatory vs defamation, 6 March 2019

All crises, THE crisis (the industrial agri-food system is central to all of them), 18 April 2019

The rise of the superbugs - and why industrial farming is to blame, 29 May 2019

“Greening” the Belt and Road Initiative? What about people’s rights?, 30 May 2019

Indian dairy under threat from new trade deals, 19 June 2019

US interfering in Thai move to ban glyphosate, 28 Oct 2019

## Land grabbing and the struggle for land

Civil society groups welcome decision of development bank complaints panel to proceed with complaint from DR Congo communities against palm oil company, 15 January 2019

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Communities in Africa fight back against the land grab for palm oil, 19 September 2019

Harvard and TIAA’s farmland grab in Brazil goes up in smoke, 18 October 2019

The fight against Senhuile goes on!, 17 December 2019

29

## People's controls over seeds

*Los verdaderos productores de semillas*, 24 January 2019

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"Seeds in Resistance" Comic, 14 March 2019

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Standardising seeds narrows diversity, 5 September 2019

Asia under threat of UPOV 91, 3 December 2019

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30 Food sovereignty is Africa's only solution to climate chaos, 31 July 2019

Step aside agribusiness, it's time for real solutions to the climate crisis, 25 September 2019

Dutch farmer protests signal need for deep solutions to the climate crisis, 10 October 2019

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EU-Mercosur trade deal will intensify the climate crisis from agriculture, 26 November 2019

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*Back cover: Spanish peppers hang at the Mercado de la Boqueria in Barcelona*





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