

**Terra21 Foundation**

## **Annual Report 2016**



*Participants in a workcamp organised by Service Civil International Bangladesh (supported by the Gaia Microgrants fund) learn how to plant saplings to counter river erosion in a particularly affected community (© SCI)*

## Welcome to Terra21 Foundation

Dear Reader,

In the third year of our existence, several of the projects set up in the past years continued as planned which gave us time to further research our two focus areas (peacebuilding and enhancing resilience to a changing climate) and to develop new partnerships in Bangladesh and the Philippines which we are very excited about. We now feel increasingly confident about our strategy and geographic focus on a number of Asian countries particularly exposed to climate change (while keeping the option open to support innovative peacebuilding approaches also in other regions).

Our appreciation goes to our partner organisations for their commitment and work in often difficult local environments and to our friends and peers that have provided inputs and critical feedback during 2016!

The team of Terra21 Foundation  
Zürich, 11 January 2017

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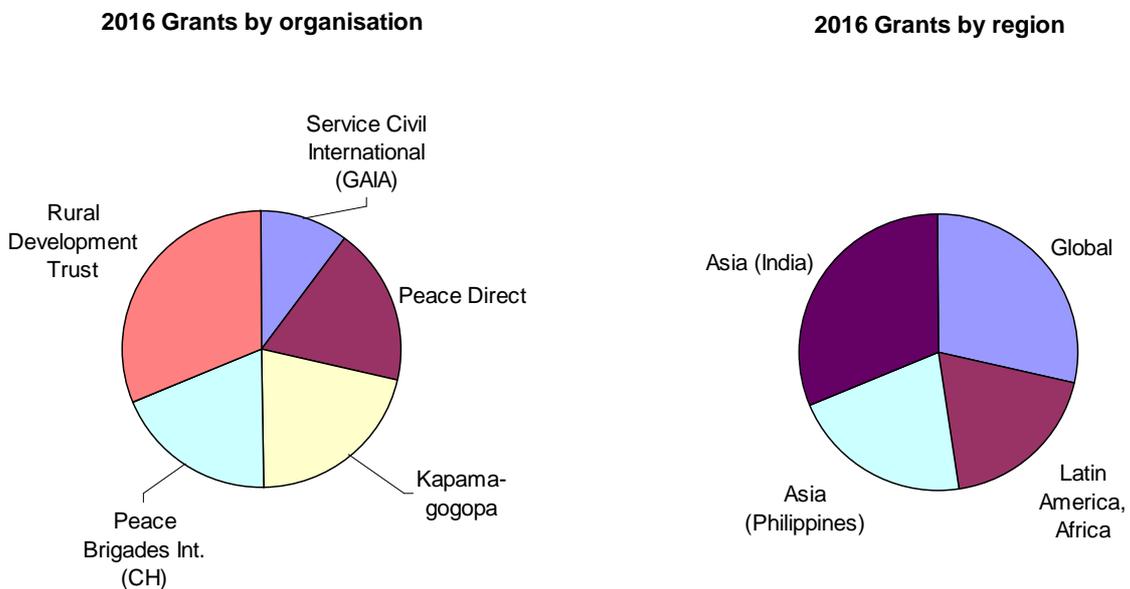
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## 2016 in a nutshell

At Terra21 Foundation, 2016 was a year characterised by the **continuity** of projects and partnerships set up during the past years, as well as the **development of new partnerships** that are planned to become operative in the next year. In the next sections we briefly describe existing and planned projects.

The trip undertaken by Terra21's Advisory Board to India and Sri Lanka in Dec. 2015 and January 2016 helped us better understand local realities and challenges, and assess the performance of our partner organisations. In India, we saw from first hand how poor rural populations are often forced to migrate to cities as a result of severe drought, storms and water shortages. Climate change could end up dramatically increasing migration to slums in urban and sub-urban areas. There, a new set of climate vulnerabilities related to precarious shelter and sanitary conditions will need to be addressed in the coming years (the Chennai floods that happened briefly before our arrival in India reminded us of the urgency of this). We have therefore decided to dedicate more of our research and funding to supporting projects aimed at strengthening the resilience of urban populations in the coming years (see the planned partnership with Habitat for Humanity Bangladesh described further below).

The following graphs show the allocation of grants to different organisations and geographies in 2016 (N.B. what the graphs don't show is the ongoing partnership with Service Civil Sri Lanka because the underlying grant was disbursed already in 2015):



As part of our networking and research, our managing director participated in the Build Peace Conference (Zürich, 9-11 Sept. 2016), a platform for collaboration among peacebuilders, technologists, artists and researchers, giving us interesting insights into ways in which modern technology and the internet can support the work of peacebuilders on the ground. It was also an opportunity to meet potential new partner organisations, including the founder and executive director of Kapamagopoda (see later in this report).

The Advisory Board met three times during 2016: in February to review interim reports and assessments of partner organisations, in May to review Terra21's strategy and in November to prepare the planning for 2017.

### **Mission, strategy and approach of Terra21 Foundation**

Terra21 was founded in May of 2014 by Swiss individuals wanting to support civil society's role in the following areas:

- Peacebuilding and post-conflict reconciliation
- Strengthening local communities' resilience to climate change.

Both areas represent huge challenges for the future of the world. They are complex and challenging issues, and maybe that is the reason why the private philanthropic sector shies away from them. By sharing its experience, Terra21 hopes to encourage other foundations and philanthropic actors to become more active in these underserved thematic areas.

With its limited means, Terra21 wants to support and give visibility to organisations working with affected communities on these issues. We believe that local organisations have the power to find their own solutions to conflict and to the consequences of changing weather patterns. Our mission is to support them in making this happen.

Terra21 Foundation chooses its partners and projects according to their vision, sound management practices, effectiveness and scalability of their approaches, transparency and experience (without excluding organisations with little track-record). Partner organisations must be strictly neutral with regard to religion, race and ethnicity, which is also a core value of Terra21. We support organisations that not only contribute directly to our mission, but also to better awareness for the issues at stake and to capacity building at the local and international level.

Terra21's geographic focus is mainly on countries from the Global South. In the Peacebuilding area we look at particularly innovative and effective partner organisations globally. We choose them because we believe that the approaches they are using can be scaled and applied also in other conflict areas across the world. In the Resilience for Climate Change area we have decided to focus on the South and South-East Asia region because this allows us to deepen our understanding of the local challenges, actors and solutions in a region particularly hit by climate change.

Volunteer work is at the core of all our partner organisations. Over the years, they have developed sophisticated approaches to volunteerism with the goal of not only helping local communities, but also enabling volunteers become 'messengers of peace' when they return to their daily lives. Partner organisations such as Service Civil International and Peace Brigades International are particularly sophisticated in this respect.

A problem that all our partner organizations encounter is the fact that most donors earmark their funding to projects and are not willing to cover core costs (for baseline items such as salaries, rent, travel etc.) or giving organizations a certain flexibility in deciding which projects they want to fund (unconstrained funding). Aware of this fact, Terra21 does not shy back from unconstrained and core funding, which amounted to about 25% of our total financial support during 2016. Another problem encountered by our partner organisations is the short duration and 'administrative-heavy' character of many of their donor relationships. At Terra21 we therefore try to provide multiple year support and follow a pragmatic and unbureaucratic approach in working with our partners.

## Continuation of existing partnerships

In the **Peacebuilding focus area** we continued to support the following existing partner organisations:

Peace Direct: Terra21 continued supporting *Tomorrow's Peacebuilders* (<http://www.peacedirect.org/tp>), the global awards for local peacebuilding organisations organised by Peace Direct. Awarded annually, they offer international recognition, funding and organizational support for grassroots peace activists in conflict-affected countries worldwide. More specifically, Terra21 funded one of three awards dedicated to Inter-religious Peacebuilding which this year was won by Adamawa Peacemakers Initiative (API). API is a coalition of local faith leaders, business leaders, and civil society that promotes peace and tolerance in Boko Haram affected North-Eastern Nigeria.

Peace Brigades International <http://www.peacebrigades.org/>  
We continued to support this organisation in providing protection, support and recognition to local human rights defenders who work in areas of repression and conflict (currently in Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico and Nepal). International volunteers are trained to accompany the local human rights defenders which reduces the risk of them being attacked or being treated unfairly in courts. Terra21's grant was allocated both to supporting PBI Switzerland's efforts at recruiting and training additional volunteers, as well as supporting the new PBI program in Kenya working with local police officers and human rights defenders in informal settlements in the city Nairobi.

Service Civil International Sri Lanka <https://www.facebook.com/scisrilanka/>  
This is the local branch of Service Civil International, one of the oldest and largest peacebuilding organisations worldwide, dedicated to promoting a culture of peace by organising volunteer workcamps and other activities in support of local communities. The Sri Lanka branch is active in the former war-torn Northern and North-Eastern parts of Sri Lanka. By organising volunteer workcamps (attended by volunteers with diverse ethnic and religious background from all parts of Sri Lanka) and other activities, SCI-Sri Lanka contributes to healing the wounds of war and fostering a culture of peace in the country. Terra21 funded two additional workcamps and four long-term volunteers teaching sinhala language to tamil and muslim communities in the Kilinochchi and Muthur regions, a simple but very effective way to improve communication and mutual understanding between the various ethnic groups.



*On 8 December 2016, Peace Direct announced the 2016 winners of the Tomorrow's Peacebuilders awards at the Frontline Club in London. With the contributions of three inspiring local peacebuilders and a professional storyteller, the event explored the power of storytelling and its role in building peace (© Peace Direct)*

In the **Resilience to Climate Change focus area** the following partnerships were continued:

**Rural Development Trust** <http://rdtfvf.org>

Founded in 1969, RDT aims at combating extreme poverty in one of the most drought-prone areas of India through the implementation of a comprehensive development programme based on six pillars: water management, education, health, housing, women's empowerment and support of people with disabilities. This programme currently covers the basic needs of over 2.5 million people in more than 3,000 towns and villages in Anantapur and Kurnool districts. In 2015, Terra21 had co-financed the restoration of a large water dam and reservoir in Durgam village aimed at storing water and recharging underground wells and aquifers - a measure that crucially increases the farmers' resilience to climate change induced drought events. After visiting the completed project in 2015 and meeting the local farmers and RDT personell, the Terra21 Board decided to continue the support by funding a similar water structure in the village of Nagireddipalli during 2016-17. In 2016, Terra21 funding also went to installing drip irrigation systems for a total of 15 hectares of arable land in the village of Narasanayanakunta, a measure that substantially increases water efficiency and therefore resilience to drought events.

**Service Civil International** <http://www.sci.ngo/climate-justice-campaign/>

For the third year, Terra21 funded SCI's Gaia Microgrants program which provides small grants to local SCI branches organising volunteer workcamps and other activities to increase awareness about climate change and the importance of sustainable lifestyles, and to provide practical help to local communities impacted by climate change. The uncomplicated funding

support provided by Gaia has been a powerful catalyser for new innovative approaches to volunteering in this field. Of the eight projects supported by Gaia, 6 of them were by organisations from the Global South (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nigeria, Mauritius, South Africa), the rest from Europe. About 400 international and local volunteers participated in a very diverse range of activities during 2016, including planting trees against soil erosion, setting up family gardens, training on organic and permaculture farming, initiatives to reduce food waste etc.

### **Development of new partnerships**

In both our focus areas, Peacebuilding and Resilience to Climate Change, we engaged in research and building new partnerships during 2016 that will allow us to support longer-term projects in line with our strategy in the coming years. We present these new partnerships only briefly here and will describe them in more detail in future annual reports once funded projects become fully operative.

Through the Peace Direct network we evaluated a number of organisations active in the field of **conflict prevention in Asia** that use volunteer work as a means of reducing tensions between ethnical and religious groups (an approach that Terra21 is exploring also through its other partners in the area). We deepened our discussions with Kapamagogopa Inc. (KI, <http://www.ki-volunteer.org/>), an NGO active in the Mindanao region in the Southern Philippines and, after meeting KI's founder and executive director in Zurich, decided to provide funding for KI's volunteer program. We look forward to supporting the work of KI and will rely on the support of Peace Direct in monitoring the organisation and providing capacity building support.

For decades the Philippines have been victim to a bloody armed struggle between the government and Muslim separatists seeking an independent state in southern parts of the country. At least 150'000 people have been killed and, since 2000, three million people have been forced to flee their homes. The violence has left a legacy of suspicion and mistrust between Christian and Muslim communities. KI places Muslim volunteers into Christian communities and with Christian organisations, trying to break the cycle of mistrust and suspicion. By empowering Muslim volunteers to apply their talents in other communities, KI bridges the deep-rooted religious divides between them. Volunteers help facilitate community discussions on engaging the security sector in the ceasefire, help build the capacity of women and former combatants through training workshops and strengthen local youth organisations.



*A Kapamagogopa volunteer helping to organise a community of women affected by conflict in the Mindanao region. The women are encouraged to support each other in healing the wounds of the conflict, in getting engaged in the peace process, and in developing sources of livelihood for their families (©Kapamagogopa, Peace Direct).*

Our research aimed at better understanding **climate vulnerabilities of urban slum dwellers in the Asia regions** and at mapping NGOs active in the field brought us in touch with Habitat for Humanity (HFH) Bangladesh (<http://www.habitatbangladesh.org/>).

Bangladesh, a low-lying country of 160 million, is one of the most climate-change affected countries in the world. HFH Bangladesh works with partners and volunteers to provide decent homes as a way out of poverty. Responding to disasters such as cyclones or storms has enabled Habitat to help Bangladeshi families rebuild more resilient homes, as well as improving communities' access to clean water and safe sanitation. The organisation is also engaged in providing disaster mitigation and preparedness trainings and support - until now mainly in rural areas, but planning to focus more on urban areas in the coming years.

As part of its strategy, Terra21 has decided to focus on supporting climate disaster mitigation and preparedness (DMP), as opposed to disaster response programs, thereby emphasizing long-term prevention over shorter-term aid (similar to our approach in the peacebuilding area). We were surprised to learn that the development of climate DMP programs for the urban poor is still at an early stage with few NGOs and governments active in the field. We are therefore excited about the prospect of supporting the work of a consortium comprising Habitat for Humanity Bangladesh, Caritas Bangladesh and Caritas Switzerland that will engage in a three-year program aimed at developing and implementing DMP programs in four informal settlements in the cities of Dhaka and Khulna. This project will have a powerful demonstration effect in testing different DMP approaches for the urban poor in view of replicating them in other cities and countries.

### **Organisation of Terra21 Foundation**

To keep its setup and running costs as low as possible, Terra21 has decided to establish itself as an entity under Fondation des Fondateurs, an umbrella foundation established in Switzerland in 2007 ([www.fondateurs.ch](http://www.fondateurs.ch)). Terra21's Advisory Board (current members: Dr. Lukas Knecht and Dr. Ivo Knoepfel) oversees the work of the foundation and advises the Board of Fondation des Fondateurs which formally takes decisions.

Dr. Ivo Knoepfel is in charge of day-to-day management of Terra21. He works pro-bono and also provides office space and all other services needed pro-bono to the foundation. Members of the Advisory Board also work pro-bono. For its services, Fondation des Fondateurs charges Terra21 a fee of 5% of its total grant volume in any given year. 95% of Terra21's funds are therefore directly used in support of its mission.

### **Contact**

We are interested in your feedbacks, suggestions and questions.  
Please write to:

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If you want to support our work through a donation (Terra21 has tax-exempt status in Switzerland), please also contact us by sending an email to the address above.