EARTH INTERWOVEN
SHARED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
SUMMER 2026
FORMERLY PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

(Top) Farmers participate in the "Soil Foodweb" activity at Agroecology Workshop in July.

(Left) Sisters of St. Antoine with youth working in Fatima House garden.

(Above Right) Community tree distribution.

Traditions of Compassion, Cooperation, and Resilience Grow

This summer, Earth Interwoven and our partners are witnessing once again the change that's possible when people work together for the good of earth and each other. In Haiti, *Konbit Vanyan Kapab* Agroecology for Food Sovereignty (FAFSI) farmers work cooperatively in traditional work groups called *konbits* with the goal to revitalize traditions of working together to take care of each other and the land as a way to rebuild local food systems.

Smallholder farmers around the globe face growing pressure from changing climate, violence, and ecosystem loss from large-scale agriculture and industrial activities. The UN reports that nearly 1.4 million Haitians have been displaced by violence; many flee to rural areas of the country. FAFSI partner communities in Haiti have provided refuge for thousands of displaced persons in the last two years. This places enormous strain on food, shelter, and other resources. Crises come in many forms; providing safe harbor for those in need is nothing new to FAFSI konbits and their communities in Haiti.

A *konbit* is a traditional Haitian form of cooperative work through which individuals share knowledge, labor, and talents to achieve a common community goal or to help each other with work or assistance in times of need. Alur Indigenous farmers from Uganda have a similar tradition called *oyii*. The compassion, cooperation, and resilience demonstrated by konbits in Haiti and oyiis in Uganda is rooted in an understanding of the interconnectedness of life and the values of caring and sharing. Here are just a few examples of konbit and oyii knowledge and values at work this summer.

Intergenerational Sharing

In Haiti, young interns from the Environment and Traditional Foods Internship, experienced FAFSI farmers, and 15 farmers who entered FAFSI this summer self-organized into konbits to help each other plant agroecology trials. **These konbits have since gone on to help 50 additional farmers test agroecology on their farms in and around Layaye.** In Fondwa, Haiti, University of Fondwa students and local farmers are assisting the Sisters of St. Antoine in the design and start-

Compassion, Cooperation, and Resilience continued on back

HAITI

CALL TO ACTION! Yes, Your Voice Makes a Difference

Last month, we were reminded again of the spiraling violence that Haitians must endure: on August 23, heavily-armed gangs attacked the town of Kenscoff near Port-Au-Prince. At least 47 people were killed, including 22 who were executed in a church where they had sought safety. Another 52 people were abducted and remain missing.

Illegal Flow of Guns and Ammunition into Country

Fueling much of these deteriorating conditions is the illegal flow of guns and ammunition into the country. Over 90% of the weapons in control of gangs continue to originate, illegally, from the U.S. This is not only devastating to the citizens and government of Haiti, but it also represents a threat to regional stability and ultimately the security of U.S. interests in the region. The U.S. has done little to implement policies to stem the flow of guns to Haiti.

End of Temporary Protection Status: What It Means

The U.S. Department of State continues to maintain a Level 4 advisory, which means "do not travel to Haiti," due to the risk of crime, kidnapping, terrorism, and unrest. Nearly one of ten Haitians—1.4 million—have been displaced as a result of guns, gangs, and escalating violence and fear. More than half the country —5.83 million people—are experiencing acute food insecurity, requiring emergency humanitarian assistance. Despite full knowledge of these conditions, the U.S. has put an end to temporary protected status for Haitian immigrants living in the U.S. and is stepping up deportation. Approximately 350,000 individuals—most of whom are well-ingrained, essential, taxpaying contributors to local U.S. economies —are facing imminent deportation and danger.

Your Voice Matters continued on back

Compassion, Cooperation, and Resilience cont. from front

up of a Farm-to-School farm in Leogane, which provides food for Fatima House Orphanage. They've also worked with Fatima House youth in starting a garden.

In Uganda, youth are increasingly involved in FAFSI activities after school and during the summer, helping FAFSI oyii's plant trees and even participating in Agroecology Workshops with their parents. One youth, 15-year-old Oscar Oyiirwoth, took the initiative to plant 70 trees on his parents' land.

Reforestation and Biodiversity

Because trees are an integral part of agroecology systems, each FAFSI community is provided help starting a community tree nursery. **Each nursery produces 2,500–7,000 trees annually.** Trees that are not used by farmers in agroecology systems are distributed to appreciative community members wanting to plant trees around their homes and community spaces. Our partners in Layaye shared how excited residents felt about how FAFSI is regenerating local forests and the benefit forests have on health and well-being. **Residents report how much cooler their properties are not only for their families, but also for their farm animals.** They are excited about the increased diversity of birds in the area and that there is less need to water their gardens. A diverse bird population is a sign of a healthy ecosystem. They also provide services, such as pest control and seed dispersal.

Expanding Opportunities for Farmer to Transition to Agroecology

In the spirit of konbit cooperation and sharing, Haitian farmers and local and international organizations have partnered to help farmers from four communities in the Sud Department of Haiti. Earth Interwoven, Pittsburgh-based Haiti H2O, *Legliz* MEBSH, Ecole Gamaliel Communautaire in Deslandes (EGD), and farmers from Deslandes facilitated a five-day FAFSI Agroecology Workshop with 17 farmers, four elders and five Haiti H2O staff. Farmers completed individual farm design and budgets for their agroecology trials. Community tree nurseries are being constructed and farmers have started planting in one of the communities. In Uganda, 30 farmers in their second year of FAFSI have helped another 263 farmers transition to agroecology practices.

Thank you for Supporting Inclusive, Community-led Development

On behalf of E.I. and our partners, we thank you for standing with the rural communities of Haiti and Uganda. Your support makes community-led work of E.I. our community-based partner organizations, and the many konbits and oyiis possible.

You are a partner in contributing to life-changing projects including:

- providing education, housing, improved nutrition for children, stability, and hope;
- creating job experience for young adults in agroecology, soil science, reforestation, and communications;
- restoring forests and biodiversity, strengthening of local food systems;
- greater access to healthy foods in markets, as well as food relief efforts;
- local ecosystems that are more resilient to drought and storms caused by climate change.

The konbit and oyii model of organizing and resilience in the face of crisis is inspiring. We hope it inspires and motivates you.

We are indebted to you more than you know for your continuing belief in our work. **Please consider a donation so that these and other community-led initiatives continue to transform communities and offer hope for a brighter, more sustainable future.**

(Top) Food basket distribution to displaced families in Layaye, organized by the Sisters of St. Antoine.

(Bottom) Summer camp for 277 children in Layaye, many who are displaced.

We would love your perspective. You are always welcome to contact Earth Interwoven executive director Michael Neumann, (651-260-9787 or mneumann@earthinterwoven.org) for a conversation on these topics or to share your ideas for raising awareness of the work in Haiti and Uganda.

HAITI

Your Voice Matters

continued from front

Those being returned to Haiti face the threat of horrific violence. They must seek shelter, food, and a way to make a living in a country where there are little to no options. The decision to terminate temporary status for Haitians is not only inhumane, it is against U.S. interests as poverty and instability in Haiti make it more vulnerable to internal violence as well as potentially more receptive to influence by U.S. adversaries. Funds sent back to families in Haiti from Haitians working in the U.S. and other countries make up approximately one-fourth of Haiti's GDP. Deportation creates cruel hardships for those families who depend on these remittances to live, especially those who have been displaced.

Your Voice Has Power. Please Join in Taking Action!

Our community-based partners have urged Earth Interwoven and its friends and allies (you!) to speak up about the inaction on the part of the U.S. to stop the flow of guns to Haiti and the dangers those deported face upon their return to Haiti. Earth Interwoven implores you to take action!

Two Ways to Take Action:

1. **Call or write your legislators** and let them know you stand with Haitian immigrants and the people of Haiti. Demand that the deportation of Haitian immigrants be stopped and TPS is reinstated.
2. **Urge your representatives in congress to pass the ARMAS Act of 2025 – H.R.6736, S.3508. This legislation could come to a vote soon, so now is the time to act.** Passage would strengthen oversight of American gun exports, help keep guns out of hands of criminal gangs, limit promotion of small arm sales globally, and provide congressional oversight of certain arms exports regulated by the State Department. Quixote Center has provided a letter template and simple way to send the letter to your legislators by clicking on their Take Action link at **https://quixote.org/action#/26**

EARTH INTERWOVEN Shared Community Development

PO Box 11278 | Pittsburgh, PA 15238
651-260-9787 | earthinterwoven.org