Plant With Purpose, a Christian nonprofit organization, reverses deforestation and poverty around the world by transforming the lives of the rural poor.

**PROGRAM LAUNCH IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

In 2015, Plant With Purpose launched its seventh country program in the Democratic Republic of the Congo—a country that faces extreme poverty and environmental degradation. The two-year pilot program aims to equip families in South Kivu to transform their lives. A baseline study of the project area, the Kakumba watershed, shared that 86 percent of families have no income outside of their family farm. However, the land is not producing enough. On average, families eat 1.3 meals a day and 95 percent report going at least one full day without eating during the month of the study. Project manager Birori Dieudonne is providing strong leadership with the program surpassing annual goals in the first quarter of operations.

**DEAR FRIENDS OF PLANT WITH PURPOSE,**

This was another banner year for Plant With Purpose. The Plant For Tomorrow expansion campaign launched with significant commitments toward the $3.5 million goal, which will allow us to double our impact by partnering with 200,000 individuals by 2017. Campaign funds enabled us to start a program in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Good progress was made in investigating the launch of an eighth program in Ethiopia. Both countries rank among the poorest and most environmentally degraded in the world.

Another highlight from 2015 is that the equity of our Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) reached more than $1.6 million. Savings-led microfinance has been integrated into all our programs. VSLA members invest back into their communities as they receive the interest on their growing funds. Momentum from this model has driven program growth and impact.

An exciting aspect of Plant With Purpose is its downstream benefits. We routinely hear stories of families whose economic situations have improved, allowing parents to send their children to school. In schools where Plant With Purpose provides environmental education, these students become young advocates for our program, teaching their families new skills—something my family witnessed firsthand in Tanzania.

I view every dollar committed to this organization as our best investment in building God’s kingdom. Thank you for your support of Plant With Purpose as we catalyze meaningful transformation in the lives of the rural poor.

**Grace and Peace,**

Jeff Busby
Board Chair
Plant With Purpose has long been providing effective solutions to poverty for those who depend entirely on the land. By assisting poor farmers to restore their land while becoming more prosperous, we have helped them create a virtuous cycle. However, in recent years we have dramatically improved the efficiency with which we are able to do so. In comparing program results from this year to historic data, I was pleasantly surprised that we planted as many trees in 2015 as were cumulatively planted in Plant With Purpose’s first twenty-two years.

In response to this growth in efficiency and effectiveness, we initiated a campaign to significantly expand our work. The Plant For Tomorrow campaign has been phenomenally successful, resulting in pledges for $3.4 million over our current operating budget. This allowed us to launch a new country program in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while working toward doubling our reach in existing countries.

The extraordinary number of trees planted is an indicator of growth but reflects the across-the-board advances in all program areas.

Possibly the most significant contributor to this change was switching to Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) as our primary tool for economic development. These groups do not rely on outside capital like traditional microfinance, but mobilize the savings of people who once thought they were too poor to save.

After years of proven success in our program in Tanzania, we implemented VSLAs in all country programs. Five years later, 838 savings groups have more than $1.6 million in equity, providing capital for those who need loans, while offering an impressive rate of return for members who invest their savings.

VSLAs are working so well that people occasionally ask if they have replaced our emphasis on agriculture and reforestation. On the contrary, these weekly meetings provide the perfect platform for training in sustainable agriculture, which makes farming degraded land more viable and profitable. Farmers in the Dominican Republic who have partnered with us for two or more years report an average increase in farm production of 80 percent. Farmers in Tanzania are doubling vegetable production within just a few months.

A virtuous cycle is created as profits from farms are invested into savings groups, while loans and savings are invested back into farms. One woman in Tanzania reported her farm income grew from $200 a year to more than $4,000 as a result of improved farming practices and financial investment.

Tree planting often takes place as partnering farmers reinvigorate their land and increase crop yields through agroforestry. Countless Haitian farmers have told me, “We know we need trees, but we also need to eat and to cook.” Agroforestry allows them to do both. However, once the immediate pressure of survival is eased, people become interested in the rehabilitation of land beyond their immediate farms. Today entire watersheds in Haiti are being restored through tree planting.

Partnering families are exercising creativity and stewardship on their farms. Through savings groups, people discover they have agency and can change their futures. These economic and environmental successes reinforce efforts to share God’s love and renew the faith of those we serve.

Bible study and church outreach help newly empowered people discover purpose and vocation. They embrace their identity in Christ, who calls them to steward their land and serve their communities. The results are remarkable. Stories of generosity and self-sacrifice on behalf of neighbors, friends, and family speak of changed lives.

It is my privilege to share some of these stories with you in the pages of this report. This transformation is only possible because of supporters like you.

Thank you for your partnership and investment in Plant With Purpose.

Sincerely,

Scott C. Sabin
Executive Director
"I used to be the poorest of the poor," Isaya Mangowi explains. For years, life was a struggle for Isaya and his wife Eva—smallholder farmers in the village of Masia Mamba, Tanzania. The Mangowi’s land once looked like a desert—arid and unproductive from bearing the brunt of deforestation and soil erosion. Given the condition of their farm, the couple had few crops to sell for income, let alone food for their family. They lived in a small, dilapidated wooden home and worried how they would provide for their five children.

Today, Isaya is full of hope and vision for the future. He proudly declares, “I have joy. Now, I’m running my life smoothly.” Transformation took root as Isaya and Eva partnered with Plant With Purpose. Isaya began planting trees, which added nutrients to the land and protected the soil from harsh rain. Their property is now a thriving agroforestry farm, densely planted with banana, coffee, and many types of vegetables. Fruit and timber trees provide shade, keeping the area cool and refreshing year round.

Isaya and Eva applied the sustainable agriculture techniques taught by Plant With Purpose. Their crops became fruitful, offering an abundant, healthy diet for their children. Isaya celebrates a 75 percent increase in income from their farming activities. To manage the funds from their farm, the couple joined the “Nuru” Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA). Group-administered loans were used to purchase seeds, send their children to school, and improve their home. A beautiful cinderblock home stands as evidence of Isaya and Eva’s diligence and faithfulness in saving their money.

The Mangowi family is a testament to the transformation taking place everyday in Plant With Purpose communities. Partnering families find hope and purpose in the reminder that God has entrusted them to care for creation. As an act of obedience to God’s command to steward the earth, Isaya generously gives away tree seedlings from his nursery. He also invests in the local school by teaching students how to plant trees and take care of the environment.

The Mangowis are planting for tomorrow. Isaya’s vision for the future is comprised of three goals: “To make my family’s life smooth by increasing my income, to treat my land well and get a good return from the crops, and to make the world more beautiful by planting trees to take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.”
# A Three-Part Approach

Plant With Purpose is providing solutions to the root causes of rural poverty and creating holistic transformation. Our three-part approach of environmental restoration, economic empowerment, and spiritual renewal is healing both lives and land in some of the poorest places in the world.

## Environmental Restoration

Environmental Restoration is apparent on Isaya’s farm. It once stood dry and barren. He shares, “We have seen many changes to the environment. My land now looks like a forested garden. We get everything we need from our property including corn, sweet potatoes, bananas, and eggs.”

Across Plant With Purpose programs, 3.28 million trees were planted in 2015, bringing the total program count to 15.5 million trees since 1984. Trees anchor topsoil, improve soil health, and help the land absorb water. More than 25,000 farming families implemented sustainable agriculture to revitalize their land and increase crop production.

## Economic Empowerment

The “Nuru” Village Savings and Loan Association offers a financial tool for Isaya to manage his money. Isaya is experiencing Economic Empowerment through this community bank that provides a safe place to save his income and obtain loans. Isaya reports, “I’m running my life smoothly now thanks to Plant With Purpose.”

Combined, Plant With Purpose’s country programs have 838 VSLAs with 21,227 members and a total member equity of $1.6 million USD. This represents increased savings and access to credit. Village Savings and Loan Associations provide a strong platform for all aspects of the program.

## Spiritual Renewal

Isaya’s faith is growing as he experiences Spiritual Renewal. Plant With Purpose teaches the importance of taking care of creation as instructed in the Bible. Isaya’s daily action of planting trees and caring for his farm are acts of worship. He shares, “God created the earth. It is a command to take care of creation.”

Plant With Purpose partners with 349 local churches that are receiving training and support to increase their congregations’ knowledge of God. These churches are encouraged to actively live out the Gospel to address real needs within their communities, disciple local believers, and engage in environmental stewardship.
Plant With Purpose partners with churches to help families realize hope and purpose found in God’s love. This investment in spiritual renewal inspires communities to live generously, restore God’s creation, and grow in their relationship with God. As individuals’ faith mature, Bible reflection and prayers are offered during group meetings.

**INSPIRING LOVE**
Plant With Purpose participants report helping neighbors 20 percent more frequently than nonparticipants.

**ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION**
Families respond in faith by planting trees, protecting water sources, building soil conservation barriers, caring for plants and animals, and many other forms of environmental restoration.

**INCORPORATING YIELDS**
Plant With Purpose families have more diverse farms with 40 percent more crop diversity than nonparticipants, helping to protect biodiversity and build healthy soil. By applying sustainable agriculture techniques, farmers grow more, eat better, increase incomes, and heal the environment. This led to an 80 percent increase in crop yields according to a 2015 study.

**REVITALIZING FORESTS**
Plant With Purpose participants are planting 2.3 times more trees than the nonparticipants and are 83 percent more likely to plant indigenous tree species. Even though forest cover is decreasing globally, Plant With Purpose communities are seeing a positive change as measured by Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI)—a remote sensing tool that uses satellite imagery.

**NEW INCOME SOURCES**
Plant With Purpose participants are diversifying their income with 27 percent more sources of income than nonparticipants. The impact here is even greater for women. Female participants are 40 percent more likely to earn revenue from small businesses and 2.5 times more likely to earn income from their crops beyond what is used to feed their families.

**SAVING FOR THE FUTURE**
Partnering families are establishing financial security. With each year involved in the program, assets increase. Families are becoming resilient when faced with financial shocks, climate change, and unexpected disasters.

**IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE**
The longer families partner with Plant With Purpose, the more likely they are to own assets like cattle and larger plots of land. In addition, parents are investing in education. Partnering families in Tanzania, for example, are 2.5 times more likely to send their daughters to secondary school than nonparticipating households.

**ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**
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**SAVING FOR THE FUTURE**
Plant With Purpose participants are twice as likely to save and have six-months of emergency reserves than nonparticipants. Revenue from increased yields and additional income sources is invested in Village Savings and Loan Associations.

**IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE**
The longer families partner with Plant With Purpose, the more likely they are to own assets like cattle and larger plots of land. In addition, parents are investing in education. Partnering families in Tanzania, for example, are 2.5 times more likely to send their daughters to secondary school than nonparticipating households.
Plant With Purpose values excellence and efficiency. In order to strategically focus program resources and staff time to achieve maximum impact, progress is measured through surveys, participatory workshops, remote sensing tools, yield studies, and external analysis.

Partnering families are experiencing hope. Greater financial stability allows parents to send their children to school, improve living conditions, receive medical attention, and dream of a better tomorrow.

Trees restore land by anchoring topsoil, increasing organic matter, and helping the soil absorb water. Fruit trees provide a source of food and income as farmers harvest the produce for consumption and to sell at market.

Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) are establishing financial security by providing a safe place for community members to save their hard-earned cash while offering access to loans.
Andrés plans to replace his family’s wooden home with a cinderblock house. He desires his children to hold professional careers. Because of Plant With Purpose, Andrés is accomplishing his goals. Partnering farmers are experiencing a 55 percent increase in gross income on a per hectare basis according to a 2015 yield study. The study concluded that participating farmers apply an increasing number of sustainable farming techniques over time, including compost, green manures, and soil conservation barriers, at a more frequent rate than the nonparticipating farmers. These applied techniques improve soil quality and ultimately produce higher yields.

Cacao farmers like Andrés (pictured) are seeing a 77 percent increase in cacao production in contrast to the comparison group. This increase in yield means an increase in income. Not only are these cacao trees beneficial to Andrés’ economic wellbeing but they are also restoring the environment. Andrés sees himself as a protector of his community’s streams and land. “Genesis 3:19 says, ‘For you are dust, and to dust you shall return,’ so by taking care of the land, we are taking care of ourselves,” says Andrés.

As a member of the “Progressing” savings group, Mr. Cheo (pictured) is improving his life. He shares, “This group has liberated us from slavery. We were forced to turn to ‘loan sharks’ who charged high interest. Now we are free and use our own savings. We own the interest rate!” To earn additional income, Mr. Cheo started a small grocery store out of his home. A cement foundation has been poured next door—symbolizing the expansion of his business and financial freedom. In the Dominican Republic, 100 percent of partnering households are VSLA members (2014 Impact Evaluation).
Jesumene Pierre, a VSLA member and farmer, shares, “Plant With Purpose is a model of empowerment.” Jesumene has seen great improvements on her farm yet the most encouraging transformation is her faith. She explains, “Plant With Purpose is the first institution to come to Fonds-Verrettes and teach us about God. They gave me a Creole Bible. Before, I couldn’t understand the Bible readings in church because they were in French. Thanks to Plant With Purpose, I now read, understand, and practice the Word in my life.”

The most recent impact evaluation shares that participating households in Haiti are 20 percent more likely to send their daughters to secondary school compared to nonparticipating households. This represents 228 girls receiving an education—an indicator of financial stability.

Partnerships with 27 schools are engaging students in environmental restoration projects such as grafting trees, composting, and managing waste. “When we work with school children, it is not only to demonstrate to the kids, it is also so they can go home and influence their parents. It is another form of sustainable development,” shares Plant With Purpose staff member Edvard Joseph. An informal survey suggests that 80 percent of the students at Henry Christophe School taught their parents composting following lessons at school. This technique reduces household costs while restoring soil.

Students are learning the importance of saving through Village Savings and Loan Associations. These youth VSLAs model adult groups and are completely self-managed. As savings accumulate, loans are withdrawn. These young entrepreneurs have used loans to purchase seeds for planting, buy candy to resell to classmates, and provide capital for parents’ businesses.
Political instability continues to impact Burundi. Most of the conflict remains isolated in the capital city of Bujumbura allowing Plant With Purpose’s program to continue reaching rural communities. However, two of the 267 savings groups temporarily closed as members fled, joining the more than 180,000 refugees.

Since spring, Village Savings and Loan Associations have seen a substantial increase in savings rates. Partnering farmers are saving substantially more of their income from harvests than they have historically. Many groups raised their VSLA share price to enable higher savings rates. This trend toward increased savings indicates a desire to accumulate cash reserves.

Elias Nahimana became a member of the Twiyunge savings group in January. As trust was established, Elias increased the amount he saved. A loan was borrowed to purchase a goat, an asset that will continue to give through birth of offspring and production of milk. Elias plans to compost the waste from his goat to fertilize his fields.

Cash reserves and increased assets are providing stability during this period of political uncertainty.

In April 2015, Burundi’s president’s decision to seek a third term led to demonstrations and violence. The situation continues to bring outbreaks of conflict, interruption of services, and a deteriorating economic outlook. Despite the political crisis, Plant With Purpose fieldwork continues. Staff have proven to be resilient and creative in dealing with unforeseen obstacles. A high priority has been set on staff safety.

Program focus has shifted from large-group “Theology of Work” seminars, to small-group tree planting efforts. The program has become an important source of hope, strength, and stability.
Tanzania’s forest cover is in decline at a deforestation rate of 1.1 percent (NEMC).

Plant With Purpose partnering farmers are reversing this trend. Pasilida Tarimu’s goal is to plant a forest on her property. Her steep hillside farm stood bare when she began partnering with Plant With Purpose in 2007. She plants 600 trees a year—some now stand 30 feet tall. Pasilida (pictured) is combating deforestation and sees the local impact these trees are having in streams flowing year-round and birds returning to the area.

As Pasilida and fellow farmers’ trees grow, Plant With Purpose is monitoring their success by utilizing a tool called Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI). NDVI tracks changes in plant cover via satellite images from NASA. Analysis shows a 0.5 percent annual increase in vegetation coverage sustained over a six-year period (globally, there is a .08 percent decline in forest coverage). The locations where there is an increase in vegetation coverage specifically correlate to Plant With Purpose partnering communities.

Partnering farmers are working hard to restore the environment with positive results.

REDEMPITIVE AGRICULTURE

Tanzania’s economy is highly dependent on agriculture with 80 percent of the population working as farmers (IFAD). Plant With Purpose’s workshops on “Redemptive Agriculture” connect partnering farmers with teachings from the Bible that validate their profession and offer encouragement that they are walking in obedience by caring for creation. Robert Mtey (pictured) proudly shares that his entire family knows the Lord. He gives goats to his local church for celebrations—a version of tithing and a reflection of his maturing Christian faith.

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Hunger is a daily reality for families in rural Mexico. UNICEF states that 1.5 million children under the age of five suffer from chronic malnutrition. That number increases to one out of three children in remote areas. Basilia Ramos Diaz, a young mother and partnering farmer, shares that many of the vegetables they planted were unfamiliar. “We never ate vegetables like this before because we couldn’t afford them. Plant With Purpose showed us how to prepare salads and cook vegetable soup using zucchinis from our garden.” Not only is nutrition improving, but household resilience is increasing as families harvest seeds and reduce the need to purchase commercially produced seeds.

In addition to her garden, Basilia (pictured) built a chicken coop and can attest to how the chickens are improving her daughter’s diet. Plant With Purpose provided instruction for 107 chicken projects including the construction of coops and care for the animals.

Families in Poblete are now thriving. A group member shares, “We have heard of other programs like this but none of them would equip us so well.”

Partnering churches in Mexico hosted 85 festivals and workshops that invest in community members’ faith. Deepening relationships between neighbors as they work together to improve their lives is a part of the spiritual fruit Plant With Purpose sees. Pastor Diogenes Morales from San Isidro Trementina celebrates Psalms 133:1, “How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity.” Feliciana, a woman from Pastor Morales’ congregation shares, “God is first in our community. We are united because of Him.”
Living in the community of Pang Dang Nok are people from the Palaung tribe, ethnic minorities from Myanmar who have few rights in northern Thailand. Plant With Purpose walks alongside vulnerable communities offering tools and training for families to find stability in their new homeland.

Rom Lamai (pictured) is a 35-year-old mother raising and selling pigs to support her two children. Before working with Plant With Purpose, Mrs. Lamai’s pigs were weak and diseased. In the two years since partnering with Plant With Purpose, she has gained a better understanding of raising healthy pigs and even shares her knowledge with neighbors. In the limited space around her house she plants fruit trees including bananas whose leafy greens provide feed for her pigs. Income from her livestock is creating financial stability.

Like most mothers, Mrs. Lamai desires her teenagers to receive a quality education. One day she hopes to purchase farmland for her family. By accumulating assets, such as pigs, Mrs. Lamai is working toward her dreams and a better future in Thailand.

**ACCUMULATING ASSETS**

Plant With Purpose continues to empower vulnerable people by strategically expanding into a new watershed where communities of ethnic minorities live. Leaders receive training in agroforestry and forest management, activities which help reduce threats by restoring the environment. Improvements to the land also increase these communities’ standing with local governments and the possibility of gaining official recognition. Partnering families are gaining a more secure future as well as the ability to produce more food, find financial stability, and grow in their knowledge and love of God.

**PROGRAM EXPANSION**

Living in the community of Pang Dang Nok are people from the Palaung tribe, ethnic minorities from Myanmar who have few rights in northern Thailand. Plant With Purpose walks alongside vulnerable communities offering tools and training for families to find stability in their new homeland.

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**THAILAND**

LED BY BUNSAK THONGDI
DIRECTOR, UPLAND HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (UHDP)

**FAMILIES BENEFITING IN 24 COMMUNITIES**

1,641

**TREES PLANTED**

10,223

**VSLAS WITH 211 MEMBERS AND TOTAL MEMBER EQUITY OF $13,033 USD**

13

**CHURCH PARTNERSHIPS**

19

**ETHNIC MINORITY CITIZENSHIP CASES RESOLVED**

939

**NATIONAL STAFF MEMBERS**

14
In 2015, Plant With Purpose raised $3.4 million in pledges and funds for the $3.5 million Plant For Tomorrow expansion campaign. The goal of the campaign is to double Plant With Purpose’s impact by 2017 through reaching 200,000 people, 200 new villages, and launching 2 new country programs — the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
- Jeff Busby, Chair
- Cindy Outlaw, Treasurer
- John Steel, Secretary
- Rick Burnette
- Murray Decker
- Jim Geisz
- Craig Goodwin
- Jeff Kahler
- Eric Kaiser
- Scott Sabin
- J.K. Shea
- Nick Wiik
- Tony Wilson

**EXECUTIVE STAFF**
- Scott Sabin
  Executive Director
- Kristen Kreitzer
  Finance and Administration Director
- John Mitchell
  Field Operations Director
- Robert Morikawa
  Technical Director
- Doug Satre
  Development Director

**FINANCIAL TRENDS**

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## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

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### ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Plant With Purpose strives to uphold the highest standards of financial stewardship. In 2015, Plant With Purpose earned GuideStar’s highest Gold Level rating and met the rigorous qualifications for accreditation by ECFA. The 2015 Plant With Purpose Independent Auditor’s Report has been prepared by RBTK LLP Certified Public Accountants. The full report can be accessed at: plantwithpurpose.org/financials.

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### SUPPORTING PLANT WITH PURPOSE

**DR. JOHN PERKINS**

CO-FOUNDER OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

FOUNDER OF THE JOHN AND VERA MAE PERKINS FOUNDATION

“I have admired and prayed for your work for the last 20 years, and I am so much in support of all that you are doing. I love the work being done and I believe that Plant With Purpose is worthy of everyone’s encouragement and financial support.”
Don’t be afraid, O land. Be glad now and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things. Don’t be afraid, you animals of the field, for the wilderness pastures will soon be green. The trees will again be filled with fruit; fig trees and grapevines will be loaded down once more.

- Joel 2:21-22