7 stories of courage to inspire you in 2017

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*As 2016 comes to a close, **we are celebrating the resolve and ingenuity of visionary leaders** all over the world who are daring to create local solutions for a more just and sustainable world for us all. As we look towards 2017 and beyond, we are drawing inspiration from our partners who rise up each and every day. Here are seven stories of courage to embolden you and carry us into the new year:*

1. Standing with visionary leaders

With your support this past year, effective and locally-based organizations around the world have had the resources to continue their vital work. One shining example is Institute for Young Women Development, a vibrant feminist organization in Zimbabwe. The **young women leaders of IYWD are powerful agents for lasting, transformative change**--the kind of change that ensures that every woman can determine their future.

2. Unleashing grassroots climate solutions

Imagine if we supported hundreds--and even thousands--of grassroots climate solutions around the world to thrive, lead, and link together? The global climate movement has so much to learn from **solutions developed by the very people whose daily lives are impacted most**. That's why this year we helped launch a unique collaborative fund to reach grassroots organizations and social movements in over 100 countries around the world!

3. Resisting environmental racism in the US and globally

2016 was a powerful year for grassroots organizing around the world. The Black Lives Matter Network, a new IDEX partner this year, traveled to Standing Rock in September and their members have been supporting the efforts in North Dakota ever since. Their goal? To deliver supplies and support the tribes protesting the pipeline's construction. The delegation to Standing Rock highlights the **growing solidarity between Black Lives Matter and Native American activist movements** in their common resistance to environmental racism.

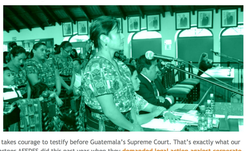
4. Going up against Big Ag

GM corn to replace Indigenous varieties? Not if our partners can help it. This year we launched a special fund to support the efforts of the Collective Action of Maize--an alliance of over fifty farmers, activists, and environmental organizations in Mexico. The Collective is **fighting on behalf of countless small-scale farmers who depend on non-imported, Indigenous varieties of maize**. The fund also supports our partners' vital work with community agroecology and initiatives that conserve resources while developing sustainable livelihoods.

5. Shutting down the expansion of Durban's port

This past August, our partner the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA) in South Africa won a huge battle with Transnet, the state-owned rail transport company, in a bid to expand the port of Durban. They **halted the expansion of the largest port on the African continent, which would have displaced tens of thousands of South Durban residents** and endangered the health of many people, including children, who already contend with environmental toxins. In the face of increasing threats of environmental damage, SDCEA continues to show us the immense power in mobilizing for our planet and communities.

6. Testifying before Guatemala's Supreme Court



It takes courage to testify before Guatemala's Supreme Court. That's exactly what our partner AFEDES did this past year when they **demanded legal action against corporate theft of Mayan designs**. With your support, IDEX has been providing flexible, long-term grants to AFEDES. This type of nimble funding, put directly in the hands of grassroots groups like AFEDES, frees up local leaders to address the most pressing issues in their communities.

7. Rebuilding a broken economic system

This past year we launched an investment fund from scratch and it's NOT business as usual. **Instead of imposing terms and models designed by investors, we're flipping** around this traditional approach: The Buen Vivir Fund is built on effective lending practices already in use by IDEX partners. Our partners are showing us the way in building alternative economies that work for the people and the planet.

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It takes courage to stand behind the small, yet formidable pockets of people power coming together around the world.

IDEX needs YOU to support the brave and visionary leaders like these who are creating grassroots solutions to our shared global challenges.

Your gift unleashes courage! Give to IDEX and become a part of these changing currents!

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