

Field notes for transformation

“People are hungering for change. We have an obligation to our grandchildren and their grandchildren to harness this moment.”

KELLE LOUAILLIER
PRESIDENT

Harnessing the hunger for change, rebuilding democracy

Dear Friend,

I’m thankful for our genuine conversations this spring as we’ve watched the presidential elections unfold. Through the discord and ugliness, what strikes me most is how badly people want—no, need—change. Our democracy has failed too many people, and we are all paying the price.

Our shared vision of how we can rebuild democracy by holding transnational corporations accountable has kept me going this season. And it has pushed me to ask more from all of us.

As we’ve discussed, transnational corporations are at the root of so many of today’s problems. Driven by a singular focus on profit at any cost, these monoliths both exploit and exacerbate today’s inequality, injustice, and suffering.

We see this everywhere: from climate policies that ignore the justifiable demands of communities that have done the least to create climate change but are experiencing the worst effects; to poverty wages that leave working families scrambling just to put food on the table; to privatized water systems that rob low-income communities and communities of color of their human right to water.

We cannot achieve real change without changing the conditions that allow so many people to be pushed to the margins. We need our democracy to reflect who we are—all of us. We need it to embody this country’s foundational values of equality and fairness.

Democracy-building in action

Corporate Accountability International’s work is, at its heart, about rebuilding democracy. We take power away from transnational corporations and put it back into the hands of people, where it belongs. We empower democratic institutions to exercise their authority over abusive transnational corporations.

And because our strategies prioritize and bring forward the voices and concerns of those most affected by corporate abuse, we build democracy both in how we carry out the work and in the results.

In the past few months the democracy-building work you’ve made possible—from the very local to the state to the international level—has looked something like this: A diverse coalition rallying in the bitter January cold to successfully protect public water in Wisconsin; late-night strategy sessions with climate justice



Close to 100 women took to the streets in Lagos, Nigeria to demand the government keep their water in public hands. Millions of people are seeking ways to be part of the solution that brings about a more just and equitable world.

Photo Credit: Environmental Rights Action.



groups from the Global South; a medical student of color in Houston speaking out about the devastating health effects of McDonald's presence in her hospital; nearly 100 women in Lagos, Nigeria arriving at the governor's offices to demand he reject water privatization. And so much more.

And from Lagos to Wisconsin, we are winning. The collective power of those who get involved in our organizing and campaigns—people who look like the population of the world, not the population of corporate boardrooms—is manifesting real change. You are helping make our systems more just and equitable.

We owe it to future generations

But not nearly enough people know about this work—yet. More than 90 percent of people in the U.S. want to reduce the influence of money in political elections. They want a society that works for everyone, not just a tiny fraction of the population. We need them to know us and join us.

People are hungering for change. We have a tremendous opportunity today to advance our democracy-building work. Even more than that, I am convinced we have an obligation to our grandchildren and their grandchildren to harness this moment.

Are you with me?

Imagine millions of people like you leveraging their connections and investing resources in this work; hundreds of millions more showing up and speaking up at the World Bank meetings, at U.N. treaty negotiations, and at the homes and offices of corporate decision-makers. I see it: change—transformative, systemic, effective. Now is our moment.

The challenge before us is how to reach and bring together all those who have been failed by the system, all those who see the injustice of the system, and all those hungry to be part of the solution.

You and I, we eagerly rise to each challenge as it occurs. This is no different. I look forward to speaking with you in the coming months about this moment of opportunity, and how it can bring us closer to achieving our shared vision of transformational change together. Thank you for your leadership and inspiration.

In the name of true democracy,

KELLE LOUAILLIER | PRESIDENT

