

## Global Seed Savers Transitions to Full Philippine Operations, Marks New Chapter as Filipino-Led Organization

*– From international partnership to Filipino-led mission –*

**MANILA, Philippines – April 8, 2026** – Global Seed Savers, a nonprofit organization that has partnered with Filipino farmers for over 16 years to preserve heirloom seeds, protect agricultural biodiversity, and strengthen local food systems, today announced that it will transition all operations to the Philippines. The move positions Global Seed Savers as a fully Filipino-led and Filipino-based organization – a milestone that reflects the strength, readiness, and maturity of its local team and partnerships.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Hal Atienza and the Philippines board of directors, Global Seed Savers will continue its mission to foster sustainable communities and drive seed sovereignty. All programs, partnerships, and community initiatives will continue without interruption.

As part of this transition, founder and CEO Sherry Manning will step down from the organization, having spent more than 16 years building Global Seed Savers from a small initiative into a nationally recognized force for seed sovereignty. Manning will continue to support the organization as an advisor and financial donor.

### **A Track Record of Impact**

Founded in 2010, Global Seed Savers has built deep relationships with farming communities across the Philippines. The organization’s key initiatives include:

- **Seed School**, which has trained over 5,000 local farmers in seed-saving techniques
- **Community Seed Libraries** that enable communities to bank and share seeds locally, with six libraries established across the Philippines
- **Heirloom seed preservation and exchange** through farmer partners and networks
- **A seed inventory tracking system** to monitor distribution, germination, and exchange among communities
- **Partnerships with farmers and indigenous groups** to protect seeds and sustain traditional farming practices

### **A New Chapter Built on Strong Foundations**

“For more than 16 years, Filipino farmers have been at the heart of everything Global Seed Savers does,” said Hal Atienza, executive director of Global Seed Savers. “Now, the leadership of this organization fully reflects that reality. We will continue to train farmers, protect heirloom seeds, and strengthen the communities that sustain us – and we will do it from right here, alongside the people we serve.”

“Building Global Seed Savers has been the privilege of my lifetime,” said Sherry Manning, founder of Global Seed Savers. “What started as a small initiative in 2010 has grown into something far bigger than any one person – it belongs to the farmers, the communities, and the team in the Philippines who have made this work possible. I am proud of what we have built together, and I have complete confidence in Hal and the team to carry this mission forward.”

### **Experienced Leadership**

Hal Atienza, who joined Global Seed Savers in 2023 as executive director, will continue to lead the organization. Atienza brings more than 30 years of experience in social development and NGO

leadership, with a deep focus on building resilient communities through social accountability and participatory governance. Under his leadership, along with the support of the Philippines board of directors, Global Seed Savers will focus on deepening partnerships with small and family-owned farms and expanding community-based programming.

#### **Continuity of Mission and Support**

Existing partnerships with farmers, indigenous communities, local governments, and donors remain fully in place. U.S.-based donors and foundations remain committed supporters of Global Seed Savers, and the organization is actively strengthening its Philippine donor and partnership base. The U.S. office will close on July 31, 2026, with a small group of board members remaining available to oversee final governance matters. Manning will continue as an advisor and financial supporter.

#### **About Global Seed Savers**

Global Seed Savers is a nonprofit organization that partners with small and family-owned farms in the Philippines to preserve heirloom seeds, protect agricultural biodiversity, and empower communities. Founded in 2010, the organization has trained over 5,000 farmers through its Seed School program, established six community seed libraries, and built a network of farming partners committed to seed sovereignty and food security. Global Seed Savers is based in the Philippines and supported by donors and foundations in the Philippines and the United States.

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