

existence is resistance

annual report 2023



Photo credit: Calla Evans

resistance calls on us all

In 2023, conflict, persecution, climate disasters and human rights violations brought the world's total displaced population to a record 114 million people. Throughout this year, that number will balloon to an estimated 130 million.

One hundred and thirty million people. The numbers are daunting. From Sudan to Gaza, to Burma and beyond, more than three times the population of Canada is leaving everything they know behind, just in order to survive – our counterparts among them.

How do we support long-term, social justice work in such unstable and volatile times?

We do it together. We soften our edges to form bonds, but steel our resolve and build backbone. Through solidarity, we replenish our humanity and focus on the possible.

In our annual report, you'll read about our counterparts struggling through current conflicts and others

working under the long shadows of a violent past. You'll meet people whose existence has been jeopardized and learn how their resistance to injustice continues despite dire circumstances.

Starkly put, their existence *is* resistance.

Inter Pares exists precisely because such resistance calls on us all to witness, materially support and speak up for a fuller view of humanity.

The times we're in challenge us to be our best and to override the paralysis of overwhelm. We keep moving, supporting our counterparts, so they can survive to resist another day. We invite courage, growth and responsibility

to guide us. Together, we can make Inter Pares the strongest it can be for the world it exists to transform.

In you, our Inter Pares community, we have a treasure, a gift built from foundations laid nearly 50 years ago. This community of solidarity is an example of what is good that generations of staff, counterparts, donors and supporters have nurtured.

Thank you for moving forward with us.

Amanda Dale
Chairperson,
Inter Pares Board of Directors



IN FOCUS

survival is resistance:

supporting counterparts
during times of war

In April 2023, Sudan's military clashed with paramilitary forces in the capital, Khartoum. The ensuing war has displaced more than 9 million people so far. Thousands have lost their homes, loved ones and lives.



Photo credit: Rita Morbia/Inter Pares

“This is happening to our people, to our families,” says Ilham Ibrahim, executive director of the Sudanese Organization for Research and Development (SORD), Inter Pares’ counterpart of 20 years.

SORD is a vital voice in Sudan’s feminist scene. Before the war, they coordinated a range of programs, including providing legal aid to women navigating Sudan’s misogynist family law system. But 2023 saw the organization pivot into emergency response, focusing on food distribution and support for displaced women.

“I see how people are suffering and I know I can’t meet this demand, but we have no other option than to continue.”

Ilham Ibrahim,
executive director of SORD

Organizing in exile has been a battle of its own for another of our Sudanese counterparts. SWRC (pronounced “source”) is an advocacy and training hub for feminist youth activists in Khartoum. Today, its members are scattered across Sudan, eastern Africa and beyond – so SWRC is building a secure space online to continue engaging refugee youth.

As the war grinds on, Inter Pares donors have allowed us to send our Sudanese counterparts crucial financial support to help them adapt their work.

“There’s a lot of uncertainty about the future,” says Ilham. “It’s very hard to organize because no one knows the dynamics of this war and what will happen after.”



Photo courtesy of Ilham Ibrahim

Whatever happens, the survival of local feminist civil society organizations is imperative to ensure Sudanese people themselves lead future social justice work in Sudan. **We will support our counterparts’ survival as the war rages on – so one day soon, their resistance can flourish again.** When they can resume their long-term feminist legal work, youth movement building and advocacy for gender justice, participatory democracy and sustainable peace, we’ll be right there with them.

by the numbers

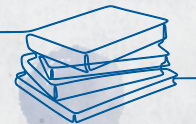
2023

Inter Pares supports activist struggles in partnership with organizations around the world. Here are a few results of our collective work from 2023.



We supported more than **40 counterparts** in Burma. They organized **901 trainings and community meetings** on health, human rights, women's rights and gender justice, the environment, peace and sustainable development for nearly **30,000 participants**.

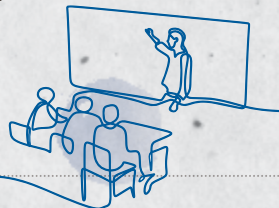
Despite El Salvador's restrictions on sexual education in schools, Colectiva Feminista continued their comprehensive sex-ed work with sympathetic educators. They trained **35 teachers** who called this their "hidden curriculum."



In the lead up to Guatemala's 2023 elections, Red de Organizaciones de Mujeres de Ixcán visited **eight communities** and connected with nearly **400 people** to promote women's participation in the vote.



Fondo Lunaria trained **50 LGBTQI+ leaders** in Colombia. In Guatemala, Asociación Lambda provided sexuality, human rights or digital security training to **36 queer and trans people** in rural and Indigenous communities.





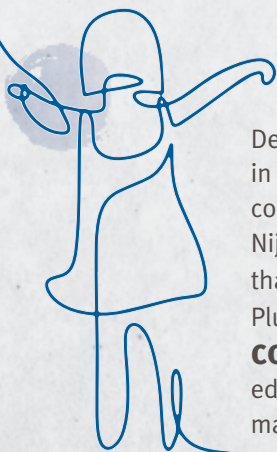
In the Philippines,
Likhaan's network of
youth volunteer

health promoters expanded to more
than **300 people**. Volunteers organized
community education sessions, distributed
condoms and provided basic sexual health info
and clinic referrals to their peers.

Counterparts in West Africa – Inades Formation (Burkina Faso,
Togo and Côte d'Ivoire), Tiniguena (Guinea-Bissau) and ENDA
Pronat (Senegal) – trained nearly **8,000 rural people,
small-scale farmers and fishers** in biodiversity-
benefitting climate solutions and sustainable farming techniques.



In Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Togo
and Côte d'Ivoire, we supported
reforesting **41 hectares
of mangroves**.



Despite a law mandating them, many schools
in Bangladesh do not have sexual harassment
complaint committees. By the end of 2023,
Nijera Kori had successfully pressured more
than **400 schools** to establish them.
Plus, Nijera Kori's own **76 youth-led
committees** continued to denounce and
educate against sexual harassment and child
marriage in their communities.

In Peru, Centro de Desarrollo
Andino (SISAY) supported **126 survivors of
forced sterilization** to start small-scale
farming projects to help feed their families and
earn income. SISAY collected testimonies from
35 of these women to shed light on the
horrors they endured and highlight their activism.



IN FOCUS

advocacy is resistance:

navigating anti-LGBTQI+
violence in post-war
Guatemala

In 2023, Guatemala witnessed 33 murders of LGBTQI+ individuals. Our Guatemalan counterpart Asociación Lambda documented this surge in violence against the LGBTQI+ community, shedding light on an issue often overlooked.



Photo credit: Asociación Lambda

Longstanding racial, colonial and gender hierarchies have deep roots in the country, reaching a high point during Guatemala's civil war between 1960 and 1996. While widely underreported until recently, the armed conflict further endangered queer and trans people. Little progress has been made in ensuring justice for these crimes or addressing anti-LGBTQI+ violence in post-war Guatemala.

Since the 2010s, the LGBTQI+ movement has engaged in relentless activism to carve out spaces of acceptance for their diverse identities. But the government still resists these efforts, upholding the systemic discrimination and socio-political exclusion of the LGBTQI+ community. More recently, the 2023 electoral process saw right-wing

candidates exploiting anti-LGBTQI+ sentiments for political gain, aggravating the violence.

Addressing today's anti-LGBTQI+ violence requires confronting the past through an intersectional and systemic approach. Peace offers an opportunity to acknowledge past atrocities, but true reconciliation comes from addressing the underlying causes of poverty, violence and discrimination.

With Inter Pares' support, Asociación Lambda is at the forefront of the fight for LGBTQI+ justice. Their work takes an intersectional approach to memory building, advocacy and capacity training with LGBTQI+ groups in different regions. They reach beyond Guatemala City to engage rural and Indigenous communities, affirming queers and trans existence.



“Specific groups have specific needs.”

Director Carlos Valdés
Asociación Lambda

Lambda views the results of the 2023 elections as a new opening for the LGBTQI+ movement to expand. Despite political tensions and violence, Lambda navigates the complex terrain of post-conflict Guatemala, adapting their programming to ensure participants' safety.

The resilience of the LGBTQI+ community, bolstered by organizations like Lambda, fuels their efforts to create a just and inclusive post-conflict society for all.

planning is resistance:

Indigenous people in Burma envision a self-determined future

Burma and Haida Gwaii are worlds apart but neighbours in the struggle for self-determination. So, in June 2023, when Indigenous representatives from across Burma visited the islands off the coast of British Columbia to meet with members of the Haida Nation, the connection was immediate.



“They faced a similar genocide like the ethnic people in Burma have been through,” says Paul Sein Twa, who joined this learning exchange with Inter Pares support. He works with the Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN), an ethnic organization we partner with in southeastern Burma.

Paul Sein Twa from Burma speaks with Hereditary Chief Gaahlaay Lonnie Young on Haida Gwaii.

Photo credit: Emilee Gilpin/Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative



Paul is Karen, and like many ethnic people in Burma, uses “ethnic” and “Indigenous” interchangeably to describe himself. “We had similar experiences under colonization, including the banning of cultural practices and Indigenous identity.”

They talked about barriers each group has had to assert their rights under colonial powers and the different approaches each has taken to overcome them. **The Haida Nation’s many-pronged activism – establishing their own museum, natural resource co-management, constitutional and legal sovereignty work – has given Paul ideas for KESAN’s future.**

“One of the nation’s pillars is cultural resurgence. They brought back their totem poles, ceremonies, singing, dancing,



Photo courtesy of Paul Sein Twa

way of life, hunting... and integrated it into their children’s education,” Paul explains.

“In the past, we thought more about the political aspects and human rights, and focused less on culture, the environment and our Indigenous peoples’ knowledge.”

For many of the visitors, this was their first exposure to a federal system of government – something they have been striving toward for many years.

And while the military junta in Burma continues its brutal campaign against the people, Paul and others persist in their resistance by planning for that peaceful, federal, self-determined future.

This learning exchange was organized by an Indigenous peoples’ network in Burma, with support from a multi-donor fund. Our program in Burma is undertaken in partnership with the Government of Canada.

Inter Pares – which means among equals – believes in solidarity, not charity, as our approach to international cooperation. We work with courageous activists and inspiring organizations throughout the world to build peace, advance justice and globalize equality.

In 2023, we collaborated with more than 70 social justice organizations.

AMERICAS

Canada
Colombia
El Salvador
Guatemala
Mexico
Peru

AFRICA

Burkina Faso
Côte d'Ivoire
Guinea-Bissau
Senegal
Sudan
Togo

ASIA

Bangladesh
Burma
India
Philippines
Thailand



We put feminism into practice



Issues of equality are important elements of our political analysis. We value ways of working that promote collaboration, foster good processes and encourage the agency of those with less power.

We believe in the strength of women

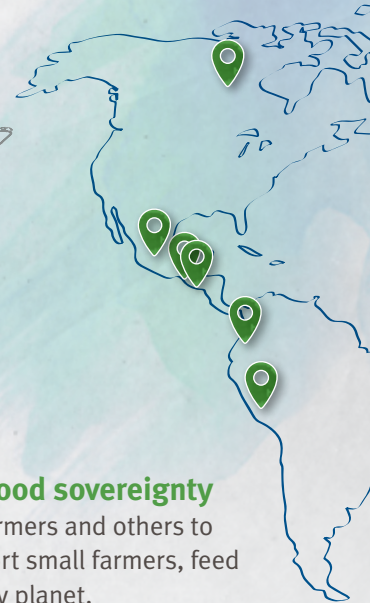


We promote women's leadership, economic well-being, health and autonomy.



We promote food sovereignty

We work with farmers and others to promote food systems that support small farmers, feed communities and ensure a healthy planet.





We engage in peacebuilding and reconciliation

We enable grassroots participation in peacebuilding efforts, and support those who challenge the power structures that lead to violence, displacement, poverty and corruption.



We support refugees, migrants and displaced people

We provide political, humanitarian and financial assistance to refugees, displaced people and those who support them, through documenting abuses, providing health services, building livelihoods, and promoting peace and democracy.



We promote fair economies

We collaborate in the promotion of fair trade agreements, support communities affected by resource extraction, and help rural communities develop management plans to protect resources and livelihoods.



We advocate for strong, public healthcare systems

Health is a political issue fundamental to social justice. We promote an approach that addresses the nexus of health, poverty, equality and social conditions. We advocate for integrated, accessible and publicly funded healthcare systems.



celebrating our donor community



Photo credit: Graham Powell

Donating is more than a financial transaction: it is a political act. In 2023, our donor community continued to build upon Inter Pares' foundations laid nearly 50 years ago. They showed us over and over that solidarity, feminism and justice are what they hold dear.

“Years ago, I was attracted to the idea of women in the Global South finding creative ways to support themselves, their families and their communities. Inter Pares seemed a good fit and I have not been disappointed. Not only is the agency involved in areas like Burma and Sudan, but there are usually some successes – good news in these troubled times.”

Maggie Siggins



Here is what they said inspires them to give to Inter Pares.



Photo courtesy of Charlene Senn

Last year saw different iterations of conflict rise across regions. Our community of supporters strengthened their commitment to peace and social justice through their donations to Inter Pares, supporting our counterparts and activists around the world.



“Inter Pares is a vibrant organization with a strong core and the wisdom and passion needed to keep evolving to make the largest difference possible. They put intersectional feminist principles into practice both in the organization’s daily functioning as well as their work globally to support social justice and women’s equality.”

Charlene Senn



In 2023:

We welcomed **175 new donors** into the Inter Pares community.



A total of **3,610 donors** gave **\$1,909,430.**



IN FOCUS

solidarity is resistance:

adapting to a crisis in Burkina Faso

Since 2016, the security situation in Burkina Faso has rapidly deteriorated as clashes between government forces and armed groups have intensified.



Photo credit: Inades-Formation Burkina Faso

In 2023, conflict-related violence killed nearly 7,600 people as armed groups deliberately targeted civilians, including farmers.

Through it all, Inter Pares' counterpart, Inades-Formation Burkina Faso, continues their essential work with rural communities. They support farmers, particularly women, through training in agroecology – agriculture that works with nature to produce food in Earth-friendly ways. This training, alongside ongoing community sessions about gender equality, supports these communities to have more agency and control over their lives and livelihoods.

As the conflict and ongoing threat of violence makes traveling to certain areas of the country difficult, Inades-Formation has found ways to overcome this barrier.

To cut down the need for travel, Inades-Formation provides agroecological training to local community members in hard-to-reach areas. The training enables them to serve as resources to their fellow farmers.

“We’ve relied heavily on these individuals,” says Isidore Della, national director of Inades-Formation. Thanks to the efforts of trained local farmers, our counterpart can continue to build capacity in farming communities from afar.



Photo credit: Inades-Formation Burkina Faso

“They’re on the ground, they’re local and they can get the job done without too much risk.”

Inades-Formation also facilitates field trips for women farmers to visit model farms practicing agroecology. These trips are valuable opportunities for the farmers to learn about sustainable farming techniques that they can then implement in their own fields.

While these efforts aim to strengthen food security and promote sustainable farming practices in Burkina Faso, lack of access to water and the arid climate of the region remain major challenges.

Through it all, we are committed to supporting Inades-Formation so they can continue promoting food sovereignty and women farmers’ agency in Burkina Faso.

In partnership with the Government of Canada.

addressing injustices

Alongside our counterparts, we're tackling inequalities from many angles. Here are some key moments from our work in 2023.

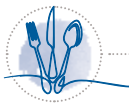


Health

📍 On Parliament Hill, a Canadian Health Coalition rally – that we endorsed – demanded the Government of **CANADA** strengthen a public approach to healthcare rather than further entrench privatization.



Photo credit: Inter Pares



Food sovereignty

📍 To mark International Women's Day, we hosted a conversation about the challenges rural farming women face – and the ways they are breaking those barriers down. Joining us were Jenn Pfenning (National Farmers Union, **CANADA**), Mariamé Ouattara (gender expert, **BURKINA FASO**) and Debiya Ifra Sow (Enda Pronat, **SENEGAL**). In **INDIA**, our counterpart Tamil Nadu Women's Collective marked the day with a celebration of women farmers and their work to promote food sovereignty through growing millet.



📍 We mourned the loss of Periyapatna Venkatasubbaiah Satheesh, founder and director of Deccan Development Society, our counterpart in **INDIA** since the early 1990s. He was a passionate promoter of food sovereignty that centred women farmers' knowledge.



Photo credit: Inter Pares



Photo credit: Jessica Orellana/Inter Pares



Photo credit: Rita Morbia/Inter Pares



Peace and democracy

For more than a year, Inter Pares advocated for the re-forming of a **BURMA** parliamentary friendship group in **CANADA**. 2023 finally saw its relaunch. With input from civil society, including Inter Pares, this non-partisan group of MPs and senators created a petition calling on Canada to take specific actions related to Burma.



Women's rights and gender justice

When an international human rights court heard the case of a woman who was denied an abortion in **EL SALVADOR** despite her high-risk pregnancy, Colectiva Feminista staged events with live coverage of the hearing for nearly 1,000 people. The events included space for reflection on the dire consequences of the country's complete abortion ban. Colectiva held a separate public event prior to the hearing with the Canadian ambassador and Inter Pares staff.



Economic justice

Inter Pares hosted a talk about the political and economic roots of the conflict in **SUDAN**. With feminist activist Reem Abbas and writer Magdi El-Gizouli, we discussed where the parties to the conflict get their resources and explored ways to break these cycles of resourcing.

CANADA'S tax system is working against the federal government's efforts to meet climate commitments and combat inequality, counterpart Canadians for Tax Fairness showed in a 2023 report. Policy recommendations include implementing a wealth tax and eliminating fossil fuel subsidies.

the
Inter Pares
team



community building is resistance: hiring at Inter Pares

Equity and justice are integral to our organizational DNA, guiding every aspect of our work, including how we build our team. We believe having diverse perspectives around the table fosters creativity and enhances our ability to tackle complex social issues. Our non-hierarchical structure and consensus decision-making help ensure that **every voice is valued in our hiring process**.

Finding a new co-manager starts much like any hiring: a stack of CVs, a handful of interviews and a writing test. But once the hiring committee selects a final candidate the process becomes unique to Inter Pares.

At this point, we invite the selected candidate to “the rounds,” where they meet with all co-managers for discussions on their skills,

commitment to social justice and mutual alignment with feminist and decolonial values. This process helps us make a collective decision and gives the candidate an opportunity to meet the team.

The interview process is reciprocal. As we assess candidates, we encourage them to assess us to ensure Inter Pares is a place where they’ll thrive.

We compensate candidates who reach the interview stage at an hourly rate equivalent to what our co-managers make. This includes the time they spend interviewing, taking the written test and participating in the rounds, regardless of the hiring decision.

Advancing social justice worldwide starts right here in our office. Our hiring process reflects our dedication to this.

Financial statements

Statement of financial position as at December 31, 2023

	2023	2022
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 4,013,662	\$ 4,429,225
Short-term investments	1,302,118	225,000
Accounts receivable	213,661	165,454
Program advances	4,513,308	1,424,985
Prepaid expenses	79,925	23,894
INVESTMENTS	3,863,485	4,775,556
CAPITAL ASSETS	513,215	496,349
	14,499,374	11,540,463
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	73,404	50,562
Deferred revenue	7,439,532	4,620,979
	7,512,936	4,671,541
CEBA LOAN PAYABLE	-	40,000
YEARS OF SERVICE BENEFITS PAYABLE	169,682	176,540
	7,682,618	4,888,081
FUND BALANCES		
Unrestricted (deficit)	(12,312)	14,805
Invested in capital assets	513,215	496,349
Reserve Fund	1,039,654	1,034,306
Margaret Fleming McKay Legacy Fund	5,276,199	5,106,922
	6,816,756	6,652,382
	\$ 14,499,374	\$ 11,540,463

Statement of operations for the year ended December 31, 2023

				2023	2022
	General Operations	Reserve Fund	Margaret Fleming McKay Legacy Fund	Total	Total
REVENUE					
Donations	\$ 1,859,430	-	\$ 50,000	\$ 1,909,430	\$ 1,839,513
Global Affairs Canada					
Buil-Mo	812,973	-	-	812,973	1,563,479
ACTIF Colombia	150,694	-	-	150,694	149,050
SCSM Burma	3,181,009	-	-	3,181,009	2,857,942
COVID Philippines	-	-	-	-	113,008
WLA West Africa	1,087,974	-	-	1,087,974	724,491
ACF-AO West Africa	2,001,576	-	-	2,001,576	-
PSOP Sudan	43,304	-	-	43,304	596,156
Interest and other	481	5,348	119,277	125,106	67,623
	9,137,441	5,348	169,277	9,312,066	7,911,262
EXPENSE					
Program					
Projects	6,464,389	-	-	6,464,389	5,303,027
Operations	1,793,180	-	-	1,793,180	1,709,773
	8,257,569	-	-	8,257,569	7,012,800
Administration	292,898	-	-	292,898	272,149
Fundraising	597,225	-	-	597,225	565,609
	9,147,692	-	-	9,147,692	7,850,558
NET REVENUE (EXPENSE) FOR THE YEAR	\$ (10,251)	\$ 5,348	\$ 169,277	\$ 164,374	\$ 60,704

Inter Pares expenses in 2023

71% program projects

Funds sent to counterparts working in Africa, Asia, Canada and Latin America

20% program operations

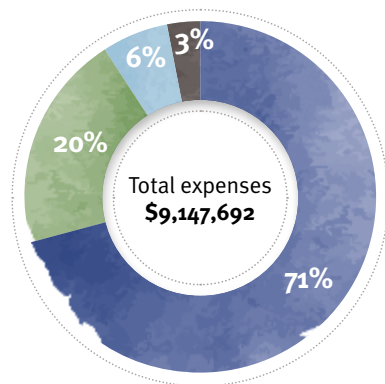
Monitoring programs, management, program staff salaries

6% fundraising

Receipting, online donation systems, printing costs, bank charges, donor stewardship, fundraising staff salaries

3% administration

Office costs, governance, financial management, finance staff salaries



About us

Inter Pares draws on almost 50 years of experience and a worldwide activist network to challenge inequality in Canada and abroad. Known for our progressive and innovative approach to international cooperation, Inter Pares supports people's struggles to build societies that are fair for all by using the power of solidarity. We collaborate with more than 70 counterparts and, together, identify the root causes of injustice and act for sustainable social change.

Our team in 2023

Fernande Abanda
Hugues Alla
Ashley Armstrong
Bharat Bishwakarma
David Bruer
Eric Chaurette
Kath Clark
Sofia Descalzi

Mariétou Diallo
Mitch Donovan
Rasha Hilal Al-Baiyatti
Lorraine Hudson
Thelma Grundisch
Amani Khalfan
Lise-Anne Léveillé
Samantha McGavin

Rita Morbia
Maélie Morrisette
Marie José Morrisette
Nasya Razavi
Nikki Richard
Jessica Stevens
Jean Symes
Juan Camilo Suárez Colmenares
Rebecca Wolsak

Board of Directors in 2023

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Beth Jordan

Mireille Landry
Patricia LaRue
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Deepa Mattoo
Karen Moir

Esperanza Moreno
Shree Mulay
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Jeannie Samuel
Holly Solomon
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