



OAK FOUNDATION Annual Report 2023



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Our history



Since its establishment in 1983, Oak Foundation has made grants to not-for-profit organisations in more than 40 countries around the world.

The resources of Oak Foundation originated from an interest in the Duty Free Shoppers business which Alan Parker helped to build.

Today, the Foundation comprises a group of philanthropic organisations based in various countries around the world.

Oak Foundation was formally established in 1983. Early grants were made in Denmark to organisations supporting single mothers and torture victims, and in Zimbabwe to groups supporting vulnerable children and families, primarily at community levels. Grants continued to be made annually in several countries until a new phase began in the early 1990s, when annual grant-making increased, and staff were hired to run substantive programmes.

Since then Oak has been growing steadily and today we have seven global programmes and four country programmes. Our seven main programmes are: Environment, Housing and Homelessness, International Human Rights, Issues Affecting Women, Prevent Child

Sexual Abuse, Learning Differences, and Special Interest. Our four country programmes are: Brazil, Oak Foundation Denmark, India, and Zimbabwe.

Oak Foundation has its main administrative office in Geneva, Switzerland, and a presence in five other countries: Denmark, India, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Zimbabwe.

You can find out more about Oak Foundation on our website: www.oakfnd.org.

Letter from the Trustees

This was a special year for us, as it marked 40 years since our grant-making began. More than 700 of our partners joined us on a global call in November to celebrate with us. It was great to see so many of our partners online and to sense their enthusiasm for the work they do.

It was also another busy year for Oak Foundation and our partners. In 2023, we provided 438 programme grants to 409 organisations in 40 countries for a total USD 474 million.

In response to feedback from our recent Grantee Perception Survey, we committed to: (1) continue to provide longer and larger grants, with an emphasis on core support, when possible; (2) right-size our grant-making process to reduce the burden on our partners, so that we can focus on impact; (3) communicate better to ensure our partners understand our grant-making strategies and where they fit into broader efforts; (4) ensure that we are responsive to our partners' needs and the context in which they operate; and (5) continue to provide responsive capacity-building support. One improvement we made this year included the launch of an improved grant-making system, which went live on 29 November. We hope that the new system will make the grant-making process easier for our partners.

We delight in sharing our annual report every year as it showcases the significant accomplishments of our partners around the world. Their work inspires us daily, and we hope you experience the hope and joy we do while reading about their efforts. Some of the highlights include:

Our **Environment Programme's** partners in Southern Africa are helping to preserve biodiversity while also supporting the people and communities who depend on the natural resources of the African landscape to survive. This is an exciting new line of work being advanced through the Institute for Poverty, Land, and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

Across the UK and the US, our **Housing and Homelessness Programme's** partners support policies to ensure that good-quality housing is available to people on low incomes, and to promote secure, safe, and stable housing rentals for people in neighbourhoods of their choice.

Our **International Human Rights Programme's** partners are working to ensure that people have access to high-quality, reliable information on social media platforms around the world, holding technology companies to account as appropriate.

Our **Issues Affecting Women Programme's** partners in Moldova are deeply committed to reducing gender-based violence and building public awareness of intimate partner violence.

Our **Learning Differences Programme's** partners are leading the movement to promote inclusive education all around the world, so that every student benefits from engaging educational opportunities, regardless of learning differences, race, income, or other issues that might undermine their access to high-quality education.

The partners of Oak's **Prevent Child Sexual Abuse Programme** are making progress in ensuring that survivors of child sexual abuse can seek justice without an expiration date. Oak's partners are focused on ending Statutes of Limitation, which are time-limits that can prove catastrophic when applied to child sexual abuse cases.

Our **Special Interest Programme** invests in addressing a panoply of issues that touch people's lives around the world. This includes the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, which seeks to protect, conserve, and restore wildlife and habitat. Also in North Carolina, Code the Dream offers free, intensive training in software development to young people from diverse, low-income backgrounds. In the UK, the Kew Royal Botanic Gardens has established the world's biggest wild plant seed

conservation programme to protect our rarest and most threatened plants. In Europe, Cancer Support Switzerland provides emotional support to people with a cancer diagnosis at every stage of their illness, as well as to their loved ones and caregivers.

Brazil Programme partners envision more humane and effective approaches to dealing with narcotic abuse in the country. This includes efforts to bring together communities, therapeutic institutions, rights defenders, politicians, and the police, to work together to produce local, national, and regional policies based on humanity, rights, and dignity.

Oak Foundation Denmark turned 20 in 2023. We threw a party at our office in Copenhagen to celebrate; it was great to see so many of our partners. Alongside this, we have highlighted the efforts of our partners to support children seeking asylum in Denmark.

Our **India Programme** supports efforts to help tea workers in the West Bengal region to access benefits such as healthcare, housing maintenance, and pensions.

Our **Zimbabwe Programme** section showcases Foundations for Farming, which teaches families how to use simple, climate-smart methods that regenerate soil and feed their families. We also support KidzCan, which helps improve children's cancer survival rates in a loving and caring environment.

We hope you appreciate this glimpse into the efforts of our partners. We look forward to continuing our collaboration to forge a more positive future.

The Parker family

Our grant-making in 2023

Through our grant-making, we support others to make the world a safer, fairer, and more sustainable place to live

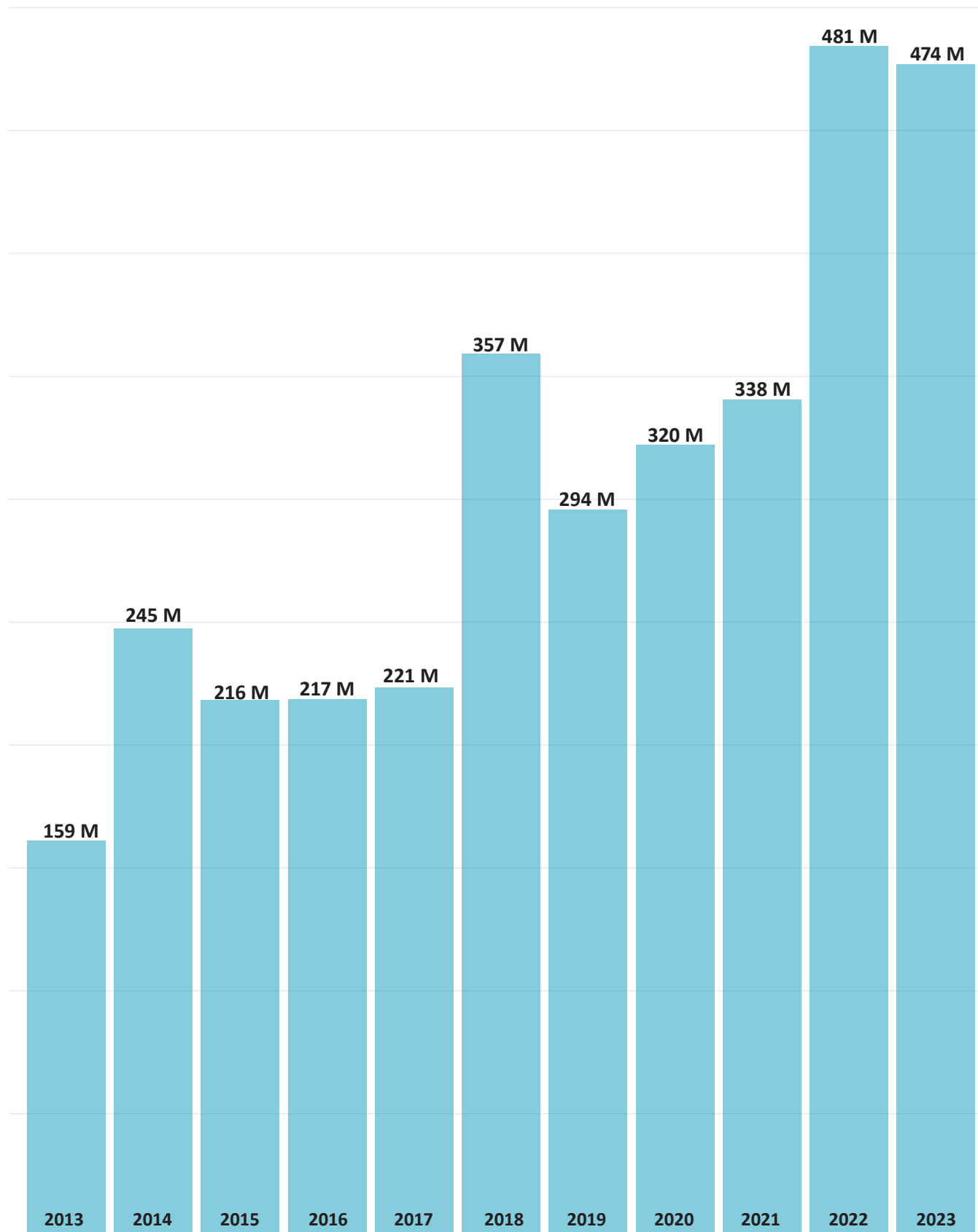
In 2023, Oak Foundation made grants totalling USD 474 million to organisations worldwide. This figure includes 438 programme grants and 576 discretionary grants totalling USD 15 million, which Oak Trustees, Advisors, and staff made to organisations that ignite their passions. Oak's programmes made grants to 409 organisations based in 40 countries. The work of these organisations is carried out around the world. Excluding discretionaries, grant size varied from approximately USD 25,000 to USD 22 million, with an average of USD 1 million.

474
Total
grant-making
in USD millions

438
programme
grants

40
countries

Total grant-making 2013-2023 in USD millions



Supporting our partners beyond funding

Alongside our grant-making, we strive to be a purposeful, collaborative partner, working with our grantee partners to provide additional support if needed. This includes both organisational development support, which helps strengthen the areas our partners consider necessary to deliver their missions, and child safeguarding support, which helps our partners protect children. We also have a monitoring and evaluation team that helps us better understand how we can improve our grant-making, and a communications team that ensures transparency around our grant-making, and elevates the great work of our partners. Read on to find out more.

Organisational strengthening & effectiveness

Oak Foundation is committed to supporting our partners to become stronger and more effective. This includes organisational development grants, and direct capacity-strengthening support, so that our partners are able to address organisational challenges in the best ways they see fit.

The Organisational Development Fund (OD Fund) provides financial support for capacity strengthening. Swiss Philanthropy Foundation, which is managing the fund on behalf of Oak, supported 30 Oak partners with OD Fund grants of between USD 5,000 and USD 30,000. Grants supported capacity-strengthening and child-safeguarding services, amounting to USD 427,200 in total. The capacities that partners most asked for support in were leadership and child safeguarding training. Other OD grants focused on helping to build communication capacities, as well as fundraising, governance, and diversity, equity, and inclusion

efforts. Grants were allocated to organisations based in the US, Zimbabwe, UK, Ethiopia, South Africa, and Uganda.

In 2023, we also provided capacity-strengthening help in strategic communications. Through a grant to Spitfire Strategies, 20 partners were able to participate in a year-long programme to develop their communication strategies and incorporate new communication skills. The programme consisted of two in-person trainings and mentoring from communications experts throughout the year. During these activities, participants were able to work on their elevator pitch, identify key audiences, and craft messaging tactics. Partners also received personalised support to work on their communication strategies or coach their staff. This programme helped them to develop critical communication capabilities, and gave them an opportunity for peer-to-peer learning.

In 2023, we asked interested partners in Zimbabwe to participate in a facilitated self-assessment process, with the aim of providing tailored support to meet their needs. Local experts carried out the process, giving our partners the tools they need to help build sustainability within their organisations. For many, this was the first time they had an opportunity to reflect holistically on their organisations, or had the time to think about their development needs.

Following the results of the assessment, our partners designed a plan that stated clear organisational strengthening goals for the short, medium, and long term. The objectives of some related to fundraising, staff training, staff wellbeing, and board governance, while other organisations developed new strategies entirely. This was a valuable opportunity for us to

support our partners in mapping out their individual needs, and develop plans that can be implemented with Oak's financial support and expertise. Congratulations to our partners who embarked on this journey – we are eager to hear about your results in the near future!

At Oak, we believe that support for organisational strengthening projects is essential for the sustainability of our partners. We want our support to be more than just funding. If you are an Oak Foundation partner, please speak to your programme officer to find out more about the support you can receive.

Child safeguarding

We are determined to put children first in all that we do. In the interest of protecting all children everywhere, we ask our partners to do the same. For us, this also means working internally on our policies and collaborating with our partners around the issue.

We regularly train our own staff on safeguarding at Oak, both within and beyond the foundation. This type of training helps us to continue accompanying our partners on their safeguarding journeys as best as we can, offering support and resources.

In November, we welcomed Alice Gentile as the new Adviser for Safeguarding and Organisational Development. Alice will be in touch with many of you to introduce herself if she hasn't already. In the meantime, if you are a partner of Oak Foundation, please speak to your programme officer to find out more about the support you can receive.

Please see page 49 of this report for our Organisational Strengthening and Child Safeguarding grants.

Monitoring, evaluation & learning

At Oak Foundation, we strive to maximise the impact of our grant-making and work with our partners to achieve the changes we want to see in the world. Collecting, consolidating, analysing, and seeing evidence of the impact we contribute to, understanding what works or does not, and embedding reflective practice in our routines are essential to achieving this and to guiding our strategic decision making.

During 2023, our programmes continued to create spaces for reflection and learning – both internally and with our partners. We're also working to improve our ability to collect and use data on the results achieved.

When needed, Oak's programmes commission external reviews and evaluations to better understand the rapidly changing context and to find realistic solutions that match reality.

We have been exploring the most effective ways to learn together with our partners, for example by engaging locally based learning partners to work with us in our learning journey. Internally, we continue to improve our reporting approaches and tracking systems, so we can understand whether we are making progress, without increasing the reporting burden on our partners. We believe in engaging and collaborating with other actors in the philanthropic field to stay abreast of best practices when it comes to monitoring, evaluation, and learning. We also seek to promote equitable and trust-based approaches that shift power to our partners and the communities they work with. In 2023, we welcomed our new adviser for impact, Silvia Guizzardi.

Throughout the year, she has continued to work with other funders and re-granters to streamline reporting requirements and share best practices, based on what we are hearing from our partners. We value our partners' feedback and ideas, and we believe it will make us better funders.

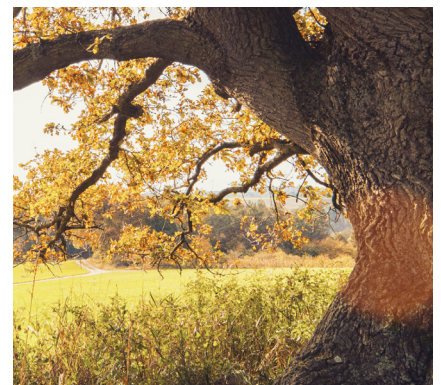
Communications

Our communications team plays a central role in Oak's operations. In addition to our twice-yearly Oak-wide newsletters, our annual report, and our social media channels, the stories page on our website aims to bring to life the work of our grantee partners and their efforts to make the world a fairer, safer, and more sustainable place.

In November, we organised our first global partner call so that we could jointly celebrate 40 years of Oak's grant-making. Over 700 of our partners attended. We provided an overview of Oak's history and shared our current aspirations. It was a great occasion, and we were so pleased to see so many of you on the call. Outside of this, we know that good communication helps ensure transparency around our grant-making and elevates the voices of those who are the least heard. It is our honour to be able to raise the voices of the people that benefit from the great work of our partners being carried out around the world.

Oak values communications as a vehicle for social change and provides funding for communication initiatives within our programmes. We also support organisational-strengthening work that seeks to expand global and local efforts to improve communications. Please contact your programme officer if you are an Oak partner and would like to

hear more. We love to hear success stories from our partners so please reach out to the Communications team at commdept@oakfnd.org and we will be happy to share. We are also open to feedback – so please let us know if you think we can improve our communications.



Celebrating 40 years of Oak

This was a special year for all of us at Oak Foundation, because we celebrated 40 years since our first grant. We were delighted to have celebrated with many of our partners for our first ever foundation-wide online gathering in November. On the call, Oak's Trustees, leadership, and programme representatives shared the history of our foundation and our aspirations for the future. At the core of our celebration was gratitude towards our partners for their great work.

Over four decades, our initial *ad hoc* grant-making has developed into seven global programmes and four country programmes, all of which reflect the individual passions of the Trustees. Over the years, they have adapted their grant-making to respond to the needs of communities. Our grant-making has also grown steadily over the years. In 2023, it reached USD 474 million. Today, nearly 95 full time staff, based in various countries around the world, ensure the smooth running of the foundation and supervise its impactful grant-making globally.

“If you've been as lucky as we've been in business, we have an obligation to help those who are in difficult situations. It is the right thing to do and we're doing it.”

Alan Parker, Trustee

The sheer scope of our partners' engagement is astounding. We are contributing to stronger communities and a healthier planet by: protecting children from sexual violence; advancing more sustainable ways to fuel and feed the world; protecting biodiversity and regenerating landscapes; supporting the rights of all people, especially the most marginalised; contributing to robust women's movements; strengthening policies to ensure housing for everyone; and making sure that no child with learning differences gets left behind. In addition, through special interest grants, Oak Trustees have supported everything from music and the arts to demining, cancer research, humanitarian relief, racial justice, and even restoring oysterbeds in New York harbour.



Caption: Inauguration of The Rehabilitation Counsel for Torture Victims in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 15 May, 1994.

All of our work is grounded in Oak Foundation's values. We pursue rights-based approaches, equality, and deep partnership with the organisations we fund. We support civil society as a pillar of democracy and justice, and nurture innovation and visionary leadership within it. We value diversity both within Oak and among our partners; we seek to be inclusive, flexible, and engage with different points of view. We believe that the best grant-making reflects both careful due diligence and the willingness to take risks. We also see it as critical to respect and acknowledge the contribution of others, promote social justice, achieve high impact, learn continuously from both success and failure, and be authentic.

A deep desire to help those who are furthest from opportunity in this world is at the base of Oak Foundation and all that we do. Alan Parker, Oak Foundation's founding Trustee, has said, "If you've been as lucky as we've been in business, we have an obligation to help those who are in difficult situations. It is the right thing to do and we're doing it." These words reflect the motivation behind the work of the whole family.

One of our earliest and longest-standing partners is *Mødrehjælpen*, or Mothers' Aid. Since 1983, Oak Foundation has supported Mothers' Aid in its mission to stand by pregnant women and families in vulnerable positions by providing social, financial, educational, and health-related support. *Mødrehjælpen* continues to do great work. In 2022, it provided support to 11,578 pregnant women, parents, and children. 2023 was also a special year for Oak Foundation Denmark, which celebrated its 20th anniversary since being founded by Jette Parker, who is originally Danish, in 2003. You can read about the celebration on page 54.

Oak began grant-making in Zimbabwe back in the 1980s, in response to the devastating impact of HIV and AIDS on families and communities. Alan Parker, who grew up in Zimbabwe, was deeply concerned about this issue. Many children were left orphaned or in the care of their grandparents, and there was widespread poverty across the country. Oak began supporting organisations that were working to help communities respond to the crisis. We set up our first office in Harare in 1989. We are still supporting many of the same organisations today, and we have also increased and diversified our grant-making to support entrepreneurship and help communities thrive.

In the 1990s, Oak's grant-making ramped up to the point that programmes and professional staff were needed. Three of our six current theme-based programmes were set up in 1998, and professional staff were brought in to run the programmes. One of the first programmes was our Prevent Child Sexual Abuse Programme, because our Trustees believe that child sexual abuse is preventable and we have an obligation to contribute to solutions. This includes supporting organisations seeking accountability for institutional abuse, and insisting that technology platforms be designed to keep children safe. Indeed, our partners have found solutions to prevent child sexual abuse that can be deployed on a global scale. For example, one of our partners No Means No Worldwide created a self-defence programme for adolescents proven to combat sexual violence in multiple countries. In communities where No Means No has been implemented, evaluations have shown a 47 per cent decrease, on average, in the incidences of rape.

Our Environment Programme was also launched in 1998, with an initial focus on both marine conservation, especially in Belize, and climate change. The programme's latest strategy, implemented in 2021, focuses on three systems that we believe present the greatest transformative opportunities: energy, food, and nature. The programme seeks to place people at the heart of everything it does. We are deeply committed to working with partners seeking to safeguard our future by restoring our connection to nature and transforming the ways we fuel and feed the world.

"I cannot stand to think of any woman suffering alone, a prisoner in her own home with no one to turn to."

Jette Parker, Trustee

Our Issues Affecting Women Programme also began in 1998, based on the belief that all women and girls should be safe, free, and have an equal chance to thrive. Initial grant-making supported people working to address domestic violence, the trafficking of women, and the challenges faced by widows and single mothers. At the time, Jette Parker said, "I cannot stand to think of any woman suffering alone, a prisoner in her own home with no one to turn to." Over time, the strategy evolved to support strong and vibrant movements, built and led by women, that are transforming lives and communities across the world. Oak invests in the people, organisations, and networks that build these movements. Grant-making also supports ending violence against women, notably intrafamilial violence, psychological violence, and violence against women in situations of crisis.

The Housing and Homelessness Programme recruited its first programme officer in 2002. Based in London, the programme builds on the Parker family's long-term commitment to support those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity. Over the past 21 years, the programme has funded organisations working to prevent homelessness in three cities in the eastern US, and nationally, as well as throughout the UK. The programme aims to build power within communities impacted by the housing crisis, and remains committed to achieving far-reaching change. Its vision is to contribute to a society where more people live in decent homes and fewer people experience homelessness and housing insecurity. Underlying our grant-making is the belief that the voices of those who have personally experienced homelessness can influence decision-making and help design more appropriate services and supports.

In 2003, Oak launched its International Human Rights Programme (IHRP) to further longstanding support for victims of torture and state violence. The programme funds efforts that ensure: justice for victims of international crimes; detention as a last resort; zero tolerance for torture; full dignity for LGBTQI people; and strong human rights movements. Recently, we have developed a new area of work in support of a healthy information sphere. The programme works at the global, regional, and national levels to support the full expression of individual rights.

The Learning Differences Programme started in 2009 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, to support students with learning differences, particularly dyslexia and ADHD, to achieve success within US public schools, and to help them transition to college and other post-secondary opportunities. Today, the programme supports organisations working to build a world where schools unlock the creativity and power of every young person, and equip them to shape more just and equitable communities. The strategy we adopted five years ago focuses on students with learning differences who are furthest from opportunity due to racism and poverty.

In 2008, we hired our first programme officer to specifically support the Trustees' Special Interest grant-making. Through this programme, Trustees support inspiring leaders, organisations, and projects at local and global levels. Because of Jette's appreciation for the arts, Oak has provided significant support for performing arts, including opera, classical music, ballet, and other forms of dance. This support has enabled artists to have the freedom, artistic opportunity, and expertise to create new performances within large and small dance companies, for people around the world to enjoy.

In recent years, Oak's funding through the Special Interest Programme has been broad and far-reaching. Grants have supported organisations: helping to rebuild tortoise populations in the Galapagos; preventing punitive prison sentences for children in the US; preserving the Hawaiian coastline; repairing the organ in Winchester Cathedral in the UK; teaching women how to do construction work in India and the US; and protecting forestland in some of the driest, hottest regions of Spain.

Trustees established the India Programme in 2011 to support marginalised communities in West Bengal, in particular workers in the informal sector, Indigenous communities, and adult and child migrants, whose needs have been neglected for decades. The programme is particularly focused on the tea gardens of North Bengal and the Sundarbans coastal region, which face a range of climate-related and other challenges. We support communities to improve their livelihoods and build resilience.

In 2014, the first member of the third generation of the Parker family joined the board of Trustees, marking the next stage in the foundation's evolution. Soon after, in 2016, we launched the Wildlife, Conservation, and Trade Sub-programme, which supports organisations working to ensure that people, wildlife, and wild places can thrive, and live together in harmony. The sub-programme primarily funds in Southern Africa and Southeast Asia, to help promote biodiversity and counter the illegal wildlife trade.

The Brazil Programme was established in 2015 with a focus on supporting grassroots initiatives in Recife. In 2020, we redefined our strategic and geographic priorities. We are proud to support dynamic movements and organisations that work on important issues, such as: land justice and socio-environmental rights; disinformation and polarisation; and drug policy.

We launched our most recent sub-programme supporting Regenerative Landscapes in 2023. Our initial focus is on Southern Africa, where we support organisations working to restore thousands of hectares of degraded landscapes and ecosystems for the benefit of both people and biodiversity.

We hope this article has given you a flavour of the depth and diversity of Oak's grant-making over the years. In the coming decade, Oak will continue to evolve, as the remaining members of the third generation of Trustees come onboard and pursue their own passions through grant-making. We are thankful to our partners for their great efforts to make the world a better place. We are excited to contemplate what the next four decades might bring!



© Adam Carnegie

Environment

Safeguarding our future by restoring our connection to nature, and changing the ways we feed and fuel our world

In 2023, our Environment Programme expanded with the onboarding of a new Trustee and a new sub-programme, called Regenerative Landscapes, which seeks to: restore wild places, such as savannahs and forests; protect wildlife; and support the communities that call these places home. We hired a new programme officer, based in Zimbabwe, to manage the portfolio. We are excited to see how this sector of work will grow.

By regenerating the earth, our food systems, and the communities that depend on them, can thrive. Together with our partners, other funders, and business and political leaders, we believe that we can revive the planet's health for the future. That is why we continue to support our partners in their efforts to build a thriving and healthy future for all people and wildlife.

In this year's annual report, we have focused on the Wildlife, Conservation, and Trade Sub-programme. Recognising the need to preserve biodiversity and support the many communities who depend solely on the natural resources of the African landscape to survive, we support the Institute for Poverty, Land, and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, to run a course on Living Landscapes. This course teaches people based in Africa and working on conservation issues how to conserve nature and biodiversity in a way that includes the local people as stewards of the land. This is an exciting new line of work. We hope you enjoy reading about it as much as we do.

Living Landscapes: rethinking biodiversity in Southern Africa

Dawn is breaking on the Den Staat Farm in Limpopo, South Africa, and research associate Maud Sebelebele rises early. She gets ready to help the local farm workers with their daily chores. This morning, her job is to assist with cattle herding.

Maud is a resident research associate with the Institute for Poverty, Land, and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. As part of her research, she lives alongside the farm workers on Den Staat Farm, taking part in their daily activities. Work like this helps her gain a deep understanding of what life is like for the inhabitants of the farm.

Den Staat Farm is home for many communities who depend solely on the natural resources of the landscape to survive. Community activities include subsistence fishing, commercial agriculture, hunting, and farming. The farm is situated on the border with Zimbabwe, right next to the Mapungubwe National Park in South Africa. The park has fenced off large areas of land in a bid to protect nature and preserve biodiversity. However, this has also meant sealing off the land from the local communities living there, as they can no longer access it easily.

The team at PLAAS thinks there's another way to conserve nature and biodiversity, a way that includes the local people. To this end, PLAAS seeks to find and promote methods that do not displace local people from the lands they rely on for their livelihoods, wellbeing, and spiritual connection. "Conservation should recognise people as part of

the natural world they inhabit, as stewards of that land," says Moenieba Isaacs, a professor at the institute. "When communities are allowed to live with and in nature, we have their eyes to protect, watch, and care for it."

The short course that Maud is taking is called Living Landscapes in Action. It seeks to help the conservation sector become inclusive, just, and sustainable, by teaching students how to transform conservation ideas, practices, and networks. Moenieba and a group of fellow academics developed the Living Landscapes project, which seeks to address the limitations of existing models to solve the biodiversity extinction crisis, and research the challenges created by traditional conservation approaches that attempt to promote biodiversity by separating people and wildlife.

PLAAS also uses data and narratives from its findings to educate and support the next generation of conservationists. Students explore themes such as rights, gender, livelihoods, violence, law, and biodiversity, all set within the context of Southern Africa. The course promotes the concept that communities and nature can flourish side-by-side.

One of the strengths of the course is that the students taking part already work in conservation areas where they can make a difference, such as biodiversity conservation, natural resource management, and governance (land, water, and the ocean). They come with a wide range of expertise – from government agencies, conservation organisations,



Captions:

Page 13: Art by Adam Carnegie, commissioned by PLAAS.

Above and page 15: Students from the Institute for Poverty, Land, and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa.



climate justice, and not-for-profit organisations. This means they bring experience with them, which they can share with the group. They can also apply what they learn in their jobs and organisations.

The Living Landscapes project focuses on three diverse landscapes in Southern Africa, where students build relationships with community members and engage in methods to understand their connection with nature. The first is the Mapungubwe Living Landscape project, as mentioned above, where Maud is based and where she is building strong relationships with communities.

"Conservation should recognise people as part of the natural world they inhabit, of stewards of that land."

Moenieba Isaacs

The second is in the townships of Mitchells Plain, Manenberg, and Khayelitsha, and the small town of Macassar, all in Cape Town. These areas are situated next to the wetlands, which are home to a rich biodiversity of plants that grow in abundance on the dunes and shelter many wildlife species, such as migratory birds. Students live and work directly with the local communities and find solutions that work for both people and nature. The third is iSimangaliso Wetland Park, a huge protected area along the coast of South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal Province, where local communities rely heavily on fishing for food and livelihoods.

The PLAAS course syllabus and approach encourages dialogue with practitioners working directly within conservation. Students gather firsthand accounts of people living in conservation areas who rely on natural resources for their livelihoods. "There's a genuine need for this kind of research and these short courses to challenge entrenched views about conservation," says 2023 alumnus Antonio Stuurman, regional coordinator at the Namibia University of Science and Technology.

And it's clear that this is just the beginning. PLAAS welcomed 39 conservation professionals in 2022 and 2023 from all over Southern Africa. This represents a growing movement that combines long-term care for biodiversity while considering the needs of local communities.

From the foundations of the first course, a network of young conservationists from across Southern Africa has grown. Known as Mazingira Yethu, the name combines two local languages – Kiswahili and isiZulu – to mean 'our environment'. Since graduating, the group continues the conversations and debates started during the course via monthly virtual meetings. These provide the space for: reflecting; sharing opportunities; informing about publications and events; discussing challenges; exploring ways to influence policy; and collaborating across countries and provinces.

Looking to the future, that sense of community will be vital in supporting researchers and activists in their conservation work. "I really enjoyed how the course moved from looking at conservation and what it means for local communities, to a question of 'what now?'," says Wenzile Giyose, communal biodiversity stewardship facilitator at SANParks, South Africa. "I'm excited to try and implement those lessons and influence my programme of work."

Oak supports PLAAS with the Living Landscapes course as part of our Wildlife, Conservation, and Trade Sub-programme. This sub-programme falls under our Environment Programme, which recognises that wild places are a natural system that protects the wildlife and supports the communities that call them home. Our grant-making supports the rich biodiversity of living landscapes in Southern Africa and Southeast Asia, where productive, resilient rural networks of people can help deter over-exploitation, and safeguard wildlife and wild places. We support local and regional projects that put people at the heart of conservation – especially women, youth, farmers, and herders, and other traditional leadership. [Please check out our website to find out more!](#)

Grants

350.org

USD 2,500,000 (2 years)

To provide core support to 350.org for its work to support global climate movements and accelerating the transition to clean energy.

ABALOBI

USD 390,000 (3 years)

To support small-scale fisheries to be thriving, equitable, climate-change resilient, and sustainable fishing communities globally.

Agricultural Partnerships Trust

USD 329,716 (2 years)

To help implement participatory regenerative agriculture in Zimbabwe.

As You Sow

USD 500,000 (3 years)

To work with global consumer goods, retail, and fast-food companies to ensure they reduce single-use plastic, increase recyclability, and transition to reuse and refill alternatives.

Associação Kwaedza

Simukai Manica (AKSM)

USD 299,990 (2 years)
To enable AKSM to support 5,000 smallholder farmers in Manica district of Mozambique to adopt good agricultural practices, improve productivity, and regenerate their landscapes.

AWFISHNET

USD 500,000 (4 years)

To provide core support to AWFISHNET, a continental network of women who process and trade fish in Africa.

China Dialogue Trust

USD 795,181 (3 years)

To establish Dialogue Earth to promote constructive dialogue on climate change and environment through high-quality journalism on social and environmental impact in the global south countries.

Climate Action

Network International

USD 1,000,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to Climate Action Network, a global network of civil society organisations working to address climate change.

Climate Bonds Initiative

USD 200,000 (1 year)

To grow the green bond market globally, especially across Southeast Asia, to raise money for climate and environmental projects.

Dasra

USD 351,805 (3 years)

To provide support to the ClimateRISE Alliance, a collaborative platform of Indian civil society organisations working at the intersections of climate action, resilience, and development.

Digital Green

USD 300,000 (2 years)

To provide core support to Digital Green to increase the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices among small-scale farmers in the Indian states of Odisha and Jharkhand, with a focus on equitable gender participation.

EAGLE Network

USD 770,000 (2 years)

To protect elephants, apes, lions, and other threatened species in key African countries from large-scale poaching driven by trafficking networks.

Earthlore Foundation

USD 290,342 (2 years)

To strengthen rural community resilience and biodiversity through traditional seed and community governance in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Ecology Trust (The)

USD 2,000,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to the Ecology Trust and its initiative, LEAF, which works to protect the tropical forests of the Leuser Ecosystem in Sumatra, Indonesia.

Energy Foundation (The)

USD 3,000,000 (3 years)

To promote people's prosperity and the wellbeing of rural communities through accelerated clean energy development and green growth.

Environmental Defense Inc

USD 1,500,000 (3 years)

To support Environmental Defense Inc in its work to implement a collaborative sustainable fisheries and marine biodiversity conservation strategy in Asia.

Environmental Investigation Agency (UK)

USD 240,964 (3 years)

To provide core support to the Environmental Investigation Agency for research and investigations that expose environmental crimes through investigations.

Environmental Law

Alliance Worldwide

USD 600,000 (2 years)

To build and support a network of public interest environmental lawyers around the world working to protect marine and coastal ecosystems and the communities that depend upon those ecosystems for food and livelihood.

Environmental Law Institute

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To support the Environmental Law Institute to develop a new five-year strategic plan.

European Climate Foundation

USD 300,000 (1 year)

To accelerate a people-centred, socially just transition to a net zero world.

European Climate Foundation

USD 600,000 (2 years)

To support Carbon Brief to provide clear, data-driven articles and graphics to help improve the understanding of food and climate change.

Frankfurt Zoological Society - US

USD 424,440 (1 year)

To explore partnership opportunities for conservation work in Mozambique especially in the Marromeu National Reserve and the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area.

Friends of Lake Turkana

USD 634,500 (2 years)

To provide core support to the Friends of Lake Turkana in the Kenyan Rift Valley, in northern Kenya, to help it put Indigenous people and frontline community leadership at the heart of the global clean energy transition.

Friends of the Earth Europe

USD 389,406 (2 years)

To support and strengthen local communities supporting more sustainable agriculture practices.

Fundo Socioambiental CASA

USD 473,810 (3 years)

To provide support to Fundo Socioambiental in its work to strengthen the artisanal fishing sector in the north and northeast of Brazil.

Gorongosa Restoration Project Inc

USD 1,000,000 (1 year)

To provide support to the Gorongosa Restoration Project, which has worked with the Government of Mozambique for the past 20 years to restore wildlife to the Gorongosa National Park.

Greater Kruger Environmental

Protection Foundation

USD 1,193,747 (2 years)

To provide support to the Greater Kruger Environmental Protection Foundation, which works to protect rhinos in South Africa.

Green Living Movement Zambia

USD 270,000 (2 years)

To provide support to Green Living Movement Zambia to help 300 rural households adapt regenerative agroecological practices and achieve enhanced food and nutrition security.

Greenpeace East Asia

USD 300,096 (2 years)

To support public and social acceptance of net-zero development through amplifying voices of local beneficiaries.

Greenpeace Fund, Inc

USD 990,000 (3 years)

To organise and mobilise millions of people around the world to accelerate a just transition away from single-use plastics.

Hot or Cool Institute

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To encourage philanthropic action to tackle overconsumption as a driver of climate change globally.

International Funders for

Indigenous Peoples

USD 100,000 (3 years)

To increase visibility around the work of Indigenous Peoples in the philanthropic sector, and help increase opportunities for grant-making around the world.

International Sustainable

Energy Foundation

USD 1,995,000 (2 years)

To support the International Sustainable Energy Foundation in its efforts to fit in with India's plan to successfully transition to a low-carbon economy.

Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB)

USD 400,000 (3 years)

To support the IHRB in its efforts to ensure that Indigenous and local communities around the world are consistently at the table with energy corporations, investors, and regulators in the field of wind energy.

Instituto Clima e Sociedade

USD 2,000,000 (3 years)

To support diverse climate movements in Brazil.

Instituto Climalfo

USD 700,000 (2 years)

To provide core support to Climalfo, Brazil's leading climate justice-focused strategic communications organisation.

KR Foundation

USD 2,500,000 (2 years)

To provide support to KR Foundation to help scale up its work on the energy and food systems.

Mlinda Charitable Trust India

USD 260,764 (3 years)

To promote local entrepreneurship with the use of solar panels in at least 1,000 villages in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha in India.

Multiplier

USD 900,000 (2 years)

To help strengthen fisheries governance and labour rights, especially among distant water fishing nations.

Nudge Lifeskills Foundation

USD 400,093 (2 years)

To promote sustainable agricultural practices among small-scale farmers' organisations and networks in India.

Rangelands Regeneration

USD 349,979 (2 years)

To support Rangelands Regeneration to develop and manage a community wildlife conservancy in Beitbridge West, Zimbabwe.

Regenerative Space NPC

USD 297,000 (2 years)

To support the development of a self-sustaining nature-based green economy in the Overberg District, Western Cape, South Africa.

RESOLVE, Inc.

USD 1,000,000 (2 years)

To reduce plastic use and support the implementation of standards for reuse and refill models instead.

Rhizome Insights

USD 2,410,904 (3 years)

To provide core support to Rhizome Insights, which gives technical support to environmental investigation not-for-profit organisations and community-based conservation groups.

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.

USD 2,000,000 (5 years)

To provide core support for the ICCA Consortium in its work to promote appropriate recognition and support for territories and areas governed and conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities ("territories of life").

Rocky Mountain Institute

USD 500,000 (2 years)

To support Indian cities to enhance urban heat resilience and mainstream efficient and affordable cooling solutions for all.

Securing America's Future Energy

USD 1,000,000 (4 years)

To establish a European Institute for Energy Security to define and strengthen commitments to climate action and a safer, fairer, and cleaner energy future.

Social Change Nest CIC (The)

USD 757,229 (3 years)

To provide core support to Uplift, a UK-based not-for-profit organisation that works towards a rapid and just transition away from oil and gas in the UK.

Southern Africa Trust

USD 2,250,000 (3 years)

To contribute to the mitigation of the adverse impacts of climate change and secure a just transition for the most marginalised on the African continent.

Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions

USD 350,000 (2 years)

To support the Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions to establish the Blue Food Futures Program, which aims to build a global, transdisciplinary blue food community of practice.

Sunrise Project (The)

USD 6,000,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to the Sunrise Project in its efforts to build and harness the power of investors and corporations to drive faster, systemic change on climate.

Sustain

USD 360,755 (2 years)

To support Sustain in its work to increase the momentum for healthy, sustainable, and just food environments.

Sustainable Agricultural Technology

USD 350,000 (1 year)

To improve food security and climate resilience of farmers in the Malipati region neighbouring Gonarezhou National Park in the arid southeast Lowveld of Zimbabwe.

Sustainable Markets Foundation

USD 700,000 (2 years)

To support global efforts to define a just transition away from fossil fuels towards a cleaner, safer, and healthier future for all.

Swayam Sikshan Prayog

USD 315,294 (3 years)

To contribute to the Indian Government's efforts to advance natural farming practices.

Swiss Philanthropy Foundation

USD 1,000,000 (1 year)

To provide support through a fund hosted by Swiss Philanthropy Foundation to organisations working to address the most pressing environmental challenges of our time.

TINTA - The Invisible Thread

USD 263,083 (1 year)

To support TINTA (The Invisible Thread), a global facilitation platform to reinforce Indigenous peoples and local communities' organisations.

Transitiecoalitie Voedsel (The)

USD 600,000 (2 years)

To provide support to the Transitiecoalitie Voedsel, a food transition coalition in the Netherlands working towards a healthier, more sustainable, and just food system.

Trygg Mat Tracking

USD 750,000 (3 years)

To provide technical support to port states in Africa to help them implement the FAO Port State Measures Agreement, the first binding international agreement targeting illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing practices.

University of British Columbia

USD 200,000 (2 years)

To increase the visibility of the Sea Around Us research on small-scale fisheries.

War on Want

USD 150,000 (1 year)

To provide support to War on Want for its Global Green New Deal programme, which aims to deliver climate justice by protecting both people and the planet.

Wildlife Crime Prevention

USD 3,300,000 (3 years)

To support conservation efforts in Zambia and Lower Zambezi.

Wildlife Crime Prevention

USD 1,499,709 (3 years)

To strengthen fisheries management, wildlife conservation, and community engagement, and to counter wildlife crime in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area.

World Resources Institute (WRI)

USD 5,500,000 (3 years)

To strengthen WRI and its local partners in their work to create a low-carbon economy in Asia through people-centered systems transformation.

Zero Waste Europe

USD 1,000,000 (3 years)

To support Zero Waste Europe and its Rethink Plastic alliance coalition partners to find solutions to the plastics crisis.

Zimbabwe Women's Bureau

USD 240,000 (2 years)

To provide support to the Zimbabwe Women's Bureau for its work to improve the capacity of 100 rural women farmers to adopt conservation agriculture practices in order to restore degraded landscapes.



Housing and Homelessness

Supporting organisations to end homelessness and create housing opportunities

We believe that homelessness is preventable and that genuinely affordable and suitable housing must be within reach for everyone. To this end, we fund not-for-profit organisations that are ambitious in their strategies to address structural inequalities – from testing new approaches to scaling up what works.

Our grant-making strategy sits within the wider context of the structural causes of homelessness and housing insecurity, which include poverty, inequality, and discrimination. Housing strategies could increase housing opportunity for everyone, yet homelessness persists and

the organisations addressing these issues, with people experiencing the problem, need more resources to achieve lasting change.

In this year's annual report, we highlight the efforts of our partners in the UK and the US to respond to the housing emergency and to secure the right to a home for everyone.

In 2023 Paul Wishart stepped in as acting director of the Housing and Homelessness Programme. We thank him for his efforts and hard work across the year.

Responding to the UK and US housing emergency

Kamilah Newton is a 28-year-old single mother of two. She lives in New York City, and has been fighting unfair eviction orders and inadequate housing conditions for years. On a low wage, she has found it challenging to secure proper housing over the years, and between 2016 and 2022, she had to enter the NY shelter system twice. “[Housing] has always presented enormous challenges for me in a single-parent household, struggling through poverty and undergrad studies,” she said, in a public testimony at the Unlock NYC Serial Discriminators List press conference in October 2023.

Across the US, the main form of housing available to people on low incomes is private rented accommodation. The US Government issues housing vouchers that cover part of the rent, but in cities such as New York City, Philadelphia, and Boston, it can be difficult for people to find affordable homes in the private rented sector despite this. NY rents are notoriously high, and in recent years, this has been compounded by the cost-of-living crisis. Kamilah is only one of many thousands of people who repeatedly had their applications refused by landlords. “Landlords who discriminate against voucher holders extend their search by months or even years. By disrupting their journey to safe, permanent housing, these practices often keep families in unsafe living conditions, shelters, or on the brink of eviction,” says Ashley Eberhart, head of product from Unlock NYC. This not-for-profit organisation works to make the apartment search process in New York transparent, fair, and free from discrimination for everyone.

In 2022, Kamilah was forced to enter the shelter system for the second time in two years, along with her 9-year-old autistic son and her 3-year-old daughter who needs special education. Despite this challenging situation, Kamilah didn’t give up. Every time a landlord refused her dossier, she reported them to Unlock NYC.

One particular management company had been getting away with discrimination against holders of housing vouchers for a long time. Unlock NYC forwarded Kamilah’s report to the NYC Commission on Human Rights, which sent a strongly worded email. Kamilah was promptly given a viewing and then a lease for an apartment for her and her children. Not long after, she was accepted into Fordham Law School in Manhattan. “I believe that we will set a new standard,” she says, “and empower voucher holders everywhere, while condemning and deterring voucher discrimination once and for all.”

US landlords are required by law to accept housing vouchers, but in large cities in particular, they often turn away people who use housing vouchers. Unlock NYC uses technology to challenge this form of discrimination. It develops free mobile tools for prospective tenants that allow them to record phone calls and create a paper trail if landlords illegally turn them away for using housing vouchers. Unlock NYC then uses the data it collects to understand trends and support the development of policies that protect tenants. In 2023, Unlock NYC published a list detailing landlords who were allegedly repeatedly refusing rented accommodation to people with housing vouchers.

“Across the UK and US, our partners continue to work to lessen the impacts of the housing emergency – their achievements are inspiring.”

Paul Wishart

The Public Interest Law Center does similar work in Philadelphia to secure safe and stable housing rentals for people in neighbourhoods of their choice by litigating on their behalf. In 2022, in partnership with the Housing Equality Center of Pennsylvania, it successfully settled a case against a landlord with over 70 properties. “As a result of the lawsuit, the landlord changed his policy to accept housing vouchers across all his properties in all neighbourhoods,” says Sari Bernstein, housing attorney at the Public Interest Law Center.

Oak supports organisations using other approaches to ensure that more people in the US get access to safe and secure homes. For example, the New York City Fund to End Youth and Family Homelessness makes direct cash payments to young people experiencing homelessness. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, an American think tank that analyses the impact of federal and state government budget policies, looks for alternatives to housing vouchers that could support tenants. And, not-for-profit organisation Greater Boston Legal Services has filed a lawsuit seeking to improve access to housing for those on low incomes, and from communities impacted by racial injustice. It established that a national tenant screening provider used an algorithm that disproportionately gave

We support organisations that work to ensure that more people in the US and UK get access to safe and secure homes.



Caption: Unlock NYC supports voucher holders in their housing search in New York to ensure it is free from discrimination for everyone. The photo above features Nailah Abdul-Mubdi, a community organiser at Neighbors Together and Unlock NYC Leadership Collective alumna.

low scores to Black and Hispanic rental applicants who use housing vouchers to pay the majority of their rent.

United Kingdom

Even for people who have a home, it can be difficult to persuade landlords and local authorities to maintain properties or make them accessible for communities with specific accessibility and affordability needs. In the UK, Inclusion London is a not-for-profit disability equality organisation run by and for Disabled people. It campaigns on a range of issues including campaigns for accessible and affordable housing and wider housing policy changes. Since 2021, it has developed a housing network that brings Deaf and Disabled people's organisations together to understand housing issues and deliver housing law training and briefings on adapting homes for Deaf and Disabled people.

The Housing Network now has a place on the housing panel of the Greater London Authority (GLA), which is the regional authority for the city. This is significant, as the panel is made up of organisations from across London who meet with GLA decision-makers. Inclusion London is now raising the profile of disability-specific housing

issues at a strategic level, and working with other housing campaigners in London.

Another organisation advocating for local authorities to improve their policies and practices is Friends, Families, and Travellers. This is the Traveller-led not-for-profit organisation working to support Gypsies, Roma people, and Travellers in the UK, providing a national helpline as well as local service delivery programmes. A key accommodation issue is the lack of site pitches, which means members of nomadic communities have little choice for where to stop to rest. As a result, families are at risk of not only eviction but falling foul of new laws. This makes it difficult to access water and sanitation, education, and healthcare. Friends, Families, and Travellers looks at how local authorities can improve policy and practice to address systemic exclusion.

In 2023, the organisation won an eight-year long challenge to rescind a discriminatory definition of 'Traveller' in planning processes. This success means that many more Gypsies and Travellers will hopefully be included in local authority accommodation needs assessments.

Oak's partners use various tactics to change and challenge the existing housing system so that it works better for tenants. As outlined above, these tactics include: creating technology that supports tenants to gain their rights; campaigning for policy change; and using strategic litigation. "Across the UK and US, our partners continue to work to lessen the impacts of the housing emergency for people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity," says Paul Wishart, acting director of the Housing and Homelessness Programme. "Their achievements, particularly in the last year, are inspiring."

This work falls under our Housing and Homelessness Programme, which supports organisations that use their understanding of individual problems that people experience, to expose and change faults in systems. [You can find more about the programme and its strategy overview on our website.](#)

Grants

Act, Build, Change.

USD 135,542 (10 months)

To support five partner organisations of Act, Build, Change to co-create a transformative proposal that aims to end the use of temporary accommodation.

Association of Community Organisations for Reform Now Ltd (dba as ACORN)

USD 963,855 (4 years)

To provide core support to ACORN in its efforts to strengthen the people most affected by the housing crisis in the UK.

Become

USD 903,614 (4 years)

To provide core support to Become to support its efforts to reduce homelessness among young people who leave care homes in the UK.

Caring in Bristol

USD 1,100,000 (5 years)

To expand Caring in Bristol's homelessness prevention work across the city of Bristol.

Center for Community Change

USD 800,000 (5 years)

To support Community Change in the US to pursue housing justice through campaigns that increase the power of resident organising networks and create deep alignment with broader social justice groups.

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

USD 500,000 (3 years)

To support the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities to research, develop, and promote equitable strategies to significantly increase rental assistance in the US.

Clarifi

USD 1,300,000 (3 years)

To improve and build on Clarifi's Restore Repair Renew programme in Philadelphia.

Common Wealth

USD 300,761 (2 years)

To support a programme of research and advocacy dedicated to expanding the supply of genuinely affordable housing in the United Kingdom.

Community Service Society of New York

USD 610,000 (3 years)

To provide support to the Community Service Society of New York in its efforts to explore options to increase social housing so that low-income New Yorkers are stably housed.

Corporation for Supportive Housing

USD 600,000 (3 years)

To enable Corporation for Supportive Housing to advocate for policy changes that increase access to supportive and affordable housing for people who have been involved in the justice system in Illinois and Oregon.

Cwmpas

USD 800,000 (4 years)

To increase the number of people taking control of their own lives through community-led, affordable housing across Wales.

First Housing Aid & Support Services

USD 905,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to First Housing Aid in its efforts to establish a housing advice team that provides specialist housing advice and casework services across Northern Ireland.

Fund for the City of New York

USD 400,000 (4 years)

To provide core support to Unlock NYC to enable it to continue to help New Yorkers with rental assistance vouchers to protect their rights to a home.

Germantown Residents for Economic Alternatives Together

USD 100,000 (2 years)

To help build a neighbourhood group that will organise around creating affordable housing and respond to the housing needs of a community in north Philadelphia, US.

Govan Law Centre

USD 1,506,024 (5 years)

To provide core support to Govan Law Centre, based in Scotland, the UK, which works from a legal perspective to tackle disadvantage and poverty.

Groundswell UK

USD 481,928 (4 years)

To support Groundswell UK in its efforts to ensure that people with a history of homelessness are provided with the tools they need to move themselves out of homelessness.



Habinteg Housing Association
USD 425,000 (3 years)
To support Habinteg's efforts to secure policy change to increase the availability of homes to meet the needs of disabled and older people in England and Wales.

Harrow Law Centre
USD 589,157 (4 years)
To provide core support to Harrow Law Centre, which provides housing advice and representation for people who live in Harrow, London.

Hyams Foundation
USD 1,750,000 (5 years)
To support Hyams Foundation in its work to expand Community Land Trusts across Massachusetts, the US, and its efforts to support grassroots organising to increase permanently affordable housing.

Justfix.nyc
USD 540,000 (3 years)
To support, improve, and maintain the Who Owns What tool, a database that brings transparency and accountability to housing in New York City.

Justice Collaborations
USD 1,500,000 (3 years)
To increase access to legal advice for people seeking asylum in the UK, and to help bring about systemic change in the immigration system.

Justice in Aging
(formerly National Senior Citizens Law Center)
USD 1,000,000 (5 years)
To provide core support to combat housing insecurity and homelessness among low-income older adults in the US.

Legal Clinic for the Disabled
USD 330,000 (3 years)
To prevent homelessness by helping people avoid eviction and improving the supply of rental housing in Philadelphia, the US.

Living Rent
USD 462,651 (4 years)
To build the capacity of Living Rent, and strengthen its ability to organise for change across Scotland.

MASS ALLIANCE OF HUD TENANTS
USD 100,000 (2 years)
To organise subsidised housing throughout Massachusetts, and defend tenants against eviction and poor disrepair.

National Coalition for the Homeless
USD 1,000,000 (4 years)
To provide core support to the National Coalition for the Homeless, which works to prevent homelessness in the US.

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
USD 1,200,000 (4 years)
To provide core support to the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty to allow the organisation to scale up current campaigns to decriminalise homelessness and promote housing in the US.

New Economics Foundation
USD 5,000,000 (3 years)
To create a UK-based coalition of organisations and people with lived experience of homelessness that will work to address debt and high-cost credit.

New Horizon Youth Centre
USD 746,988 (5 years)
To provide core support to New Horizon Youth Centre, which works to prevent homelessness and support advocacy across London and the UK.

New Venture Fund
USD 1,500,000 (3 years)
To provide support to organisations in the US who work to create greater housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness.

Outside Project (The)
USD 300,000 (3 years)
To support The Outside Project, based in London, the UK in its work to support LGBTQI people who are experiencing homelessness.

Partners for Dignity and Rights
USD 430,000 (3 years)
To support Partners for Dignity and Rights, based in the US, to support the organising and activism of community land trusts, tenants, people who are homeless, and public/subsidised housing residents.

Rebuilding Together Philadelphia
USD 1,000,000 (3 years)
To support Rebuilding Together Philadelphia in its efforts to create safe, healthy and energy-efficient homes for low-income homeowners and renters.

Shelter Cymru (Welsh Housing Aid Ltd)
USD 903,070 (5 years)
To provide core funding to Shelter Cymru, for its work to develop an inclusive, independent, national private renters' coalition across Wales.

SIFA Fireside
USD 696,424 (5 years)
To support single adults who experience homelessness in Birmingham, UK.

Solace
USD 999,999 (3 years)
To support survivors of domestic abuse in London who are also experiencing homelessness.

Southwark Law Centre
USD 800,000 (4 years)
To support people in the UK affected by the housing crisis and large-scale redevelopment threatening their local community.

United Tenants of Albany
USD 100,000 (2 years)
To support the development of a city-wide tenants' association in Albany, the US.

Urban Resources Development Corporation
USD 100,000 (2 years)
To enable more elderly people in Philadelphia to make the most of home repair opportunities.

VOCAL-NY
USD 750,000 (3 years)
To provide core support to the Housing Justice for All coalition to strengthen tenant organisations across New York State, with the aim of winning new renters' rights, defining and expanding social housing, and developing its internal infrastructure.

VOCAL-NY
USD 1,600,000 (4 years)
To provide general support to VOCAL-NY, a grassroots membership organisation based in New York City that builds the collective voice of people who live on low-incomes and are experiencing homelessness to create healthy and just communities.

Wallich-Clifford Community (dba The Wallich)
USD 722,892 (3 years)
To provide core support to The Wallich, a homeless charity in Wales that supports more than 7,000 people experiencing homelessness per year.

Welsh Refugee Council
USD 500,000 (3 years)
To provide core support to the Welsh Refugee Council to support refugees and asylum seekers across Wales to access and maintain housing.

Women in Prison
USD 100,000 (2 years)
To provide support to Women in Prison, a UK-based charity that works to meet the housing needs of women affected by the criminal justice system.

Women's Lunch Place
USD 402,338 (3 years)
To develop a project focused on housing that encourages better mental health and recovery support for women in Boston, US.



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International Human Rights

Protecting and promoting the human rights of all people

Since 1948 the global community has developed an extensive body of international law and principles to protect human rights. But the development and implementation of these standards has always faced opposition. There remains a gulf between human rights rhetoric and the lived experience of so many people. We seek to close that gap.

We provide core, project, and seed funding in multi-year grants to organisations that work on five key priorities. We support efforts that ensure: (1) justice for victims of international crimes; (2) detention as a last resort and zero-tolerance for torture; (3) full dignity for LGBTQI

people; (4) a healthy information sphere; and (5) strong human rights movements.

The story on the following pages illustrates the work of our partners to stop the proliferation of disinformation through social media platforms around the world. We believe that everyone has a right to reliable, trustworthy, and accurate information. But developments in information technology, including the algorithmic curation of news, are amplifying conspiracy theories and hate speech, and enabling malign interference in electoral processes. Disinformation is a threat to democracy globally.

Helping to build a healthy information sphere

According to a UNESCO survey¹ published in September 2023, in almost every country, people go to social media for their main source of news. Yet, despite their high use of social media, more than 85 per cent of people are worried about the impact of online disinformation, and 87 per cent believe it has already harmed their country's politics.

Indeed, disinformation, generated through algorithmic manipulation, bias, hate speech, and misleading information, has exploded on social media sites in recent years. "Disinformation is threatening the very basis of a rights-based order, which is leading to an erosion of trust in the democratic world," says Patricia Melendez, programme officer for Oak's International Human Rights Programme (IHRP). "This is why the IHRP supports organisations working to build a healthy information sphere."

Establishing the disinformation knowledge base

The International Panel on the Information Environment (IPIE) was officially launched in May 2023. In its short existence, it has already come to occupy a unique space as the only authoritative global body that studies research on the information environment. The IPIE works with hundreds of affiliate researchers across the world, in ten languages, to provide an impartial and independent assessment of the information sphere. "This kind of validation provides policy makers with the information and analysis they need to make informed decisions," says IPIE chair Dr Phil Howard.

Global content regulation is in its infancy, and legislation such as the European Union's landmark Digital Services Act, while an advance, has failed to close significant gaps. According to the IPIE survey, two-thirds of researchers said that the failure to hold social media companies to account over inadequate content moderation was a significant hurdle, while a third of researchers globally highlighted social media companies as one of the most serious threats to healthy public discourse.

This is why the IPIE intends to establish a panel made up of researchers, activists, and policy makers, to inform discussions going forward. "This will help maximise the work of regulators in holding the high tech giants to account," says Phil.

Making disinformation unprofitable

Advertising is key to internet business models, so we also support organisations working to reduce the commercial incentives that drive disinformation. The Global Disinformation Index (GDI) serves governments, not-for-profit organisations, online platforms, and media through its neutral, independent, transparent index of a website's risk of disinforming readers. "All internet stakeholders need to be aware of who is monetising harmful content," says GDI co-founder, Clare Melford.

This is why GDI uses cutting-edge artificial intelligence (AI), combined with thorough analyses of journalistic practice, to best serve and inform advertisers, the ad tech industry, search and social media companies, and researchers.

One of the GDI's key tools is the Dynamic Exclusion List. Licensed to online ad agencies, brand safety companies, and other corporations, this tool enables them to make informed decisions about where to place ads, thus avoiding harming their brands.

As of June 2023, the GDI had assessed more than 700,000 websites, in over 40 languages and 150 countries. There are currently 3,300 websites on the Dynamic Exclusion List and, according to Clare, they have lost an estimated USD 200 million per annum in ad revenues. This is a drop of 80 per cent since GDI began commercial licensing in 2020. "We don't claim total credit for this," says Clare. "Many other organisations have played a part. But the dramatic fall in ad revenues on the most disinforming websites shows that, given the choice, advertisers choose quality. Following the money works."

Looking to the future, GDI is already using advanced AI technology to detect disinformation at an even greater scale. GDI sees itself as part of a free market solution to the problem of disinforming content that provides evidence-based data to help companies with their risk assessments, just like credit ratings agencies in the financial sector.

"Our vision is that one day, GDI will be joined by a thriving marketplace of other source-rating organisations, to give tech companies a choice, as we work together to fight the war against disinformation," says Clare.

We support organisations that work to stop the proliferation of disinformation.



Holding tech giants to account

In many developing countries, big tech companies do not treat their employees in line with legal standards. We are supporting organisations that seek to secure an open, transparent, and accountable digital information sphere.

Foxglove is a not-for-profit organisation that works to make technology fair for everyone. “It is a myth that social media platforms were created by well-meaning tech billionaires in their garages or in their dorm rooms,” says Foxglove director, Martha Dark. “They were created by an army of badly paid staff, outsourced and toiling in appalling conditions, often in impoverished parts of the world.”

Kenya is the main hub for Facebook and TikTok’s content moderation operations for east and southern Africa. These social media moderators are the internet’s essential workers, as, without them, social media would be flooded with toxic content and disinformation that would render them unusable. In March 2023, Foxglove supported an initial 43 Facebook content moderators in Kenya to sue the social media site’s parent company Meta, and two outsourcing companies, for unlawful redundancy. That number has since grown to 185, more than two thirds of the 260 moderators who were laid off in total.

As well as seeking safe and fair working conditions for hundreds

of content moderators, Foxglove supports their access to proper mental healthcare. “This is sadly necessary,” says Martha, “given the traumas of having to view disturbing material such as beheadings and child abuse for nine hours per day.”

“Oak’s International Human Rights Programme supports organisations working to build a healthy information sphere.”

Patricia Melendez

Foxglove also supports 184 content moderators in Kenya who were sacked by Sama, Facebook’s outsourcing company. The case has gone well so far – in May 2023, a judge made an interim ruling that the workers were unlawfully sacked, that Facebook had to pay withheld salaries, and Facebook was the ‘true employer’ of the workers, despite its outsourcing model.

In a landmark case supported by Foxglove, the son of an Ethiopian professor from the Tigray region in the north of the country, filed a lawsuit against Meta. He alleged that his father was gunned down in November 2021 because Facebook’s algorithm prioritised hateful and inciteful content against his father.

Foxglove is seeking structural changes to Facebook’s business model, and demands that it implement measures to stem the flow of disinformation in the context of the war in Ethiopia. During the Capitol Hill riots in 2021, Facebook changed the algorithms in a matter of hours, demonstrating what is possible. Foxglove is also calling for Facebook to employ moderators who speak the required languages to ensure the platform is safe for users and workers.

2024: a year of challenges

At Oak, we believe that everyone has a right to reliable, trustworthy, and accurate information. But developments in information technology, including the algorithmic curation of news, are amplifying conspiracy theories and hate speech, and enabling malign interference in electoral processes. In 2024, up to two billion voters will go to the polls in the EU, India, Indonesia, Mexico, the UK, and the US, so a lot is at stake in terms of producing real harms and undermining trust in democratic institutions.

This is why our International Human Rights Programme supports the IPIE, the Global Disinformation Index, and Foxglove. “The IHRP’s new partnerships have provided a solid empirical basis on which to make a tangible difference, and have pointed the way forward with some creative and innovative initiatives,” says Adrian Arena, director of Oak’s IHRP. [If you want to know more about the IHRP’s strategy, please go to our website.](#)

References: Please see page 65 of this report.

Grants

Association of the Bar of the City of New York Fund, Inc.

USD 500,000 (1 year)

To provide core support to the Vance Center.

Australian Centre for International Justice

USD 289,094 (3 years)

To provide core support to pursue international justice, including universal jurisdiction, Magnitsky sanction designation, and other accountability strategies.

Burma Human Rights Network

USD 250,000 (4 years)

To enable the Burma Human Rights Network to monitor, document and report on human rights violations in Myanmar, focusing on those impacting minority Muslim communities.

Civitas Maxima

USD 1,578,947 (5 years)

To gather evidence on serious crimes and pursue accountability on behalf of victims of grave human rights violations, both nationally and internationally.

DOC Society Ltd

USD 907,500 (3 years)

To manage a film fund which will allow for the production of social justice documentaries and other storytelling.

European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

USD 450,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to ECRE, a secretariat and network of over 110 not-for-profit organisations in 40 European countries.

Financial Investigations for Non-Profit Design Ltd

USD 249,398 (3 years)

To support investigations into the financial affairs of perpetrators and facilitators of human rights abuses, war crimes, and environmental harm around the world.

Foxglove

USD 361,446 (3 years)

To provide core support to help make the use of technology fair around the world.

Freedom House Inc

USD 1,820,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to Freedom House, which works to defend and expand freedom and human rights globally, with a focus on protecting and strengthening democratic governance.

Friends of the Earth Europe

USD 441,529 (1 year)

To strengthen accountability and access to justice for corporate human rights violations and environmental harm.

Global Detention Project

USD 250,000 (2 years)

To provide support to the Global Detention Project, which works to ensure that asylum seekers, undocumented migrants, and refugees around the world are treated with dignity and respect when in official custody.

Global Disinformation Index

USD 903,614 (3 years)

To provide core support to expand technological solutions that address online disinformation.

Global Justice Center

USD 450,000 (3 years)

To ensure justice and accountability for gender-based mass atrocities in Myanmar including through international legal processes, advocacy, and awareness-raising.

Global Witness

USD 1,409,639 (3 years)

To help reduce harm to people and the environment being caused by companies globally by ensuring the adoption, implementation, and enforcement of strong due diligence laws and policies in the EU.

Guernica Centre for International Justice (The)

USD 715,000 (3 years)

To support international accountability strategies to tackle impunity in nine selected jurisdictions.

Heartland Alliance

USD 1,000,000 (3 years)

To promote the human rights of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, particularly those deprived of their liberty in immigration detention, through support to the National Immigration Justice Center, a programme of Heartland Alliance.

Human Dignity Trust

USD 60,241 (6 months)

To support the development and delivery of a global convening aimed at bringing together civil society groups, lawyers, lawmakers, and other stakeholders working to advance the decriminalisation of LGBTQI people.

Instituto Pro Bono

USD 198,162 (3 years)

To support the development of a pro bono legal sector in Brazil.

Instituto Vladimir Herzog

USD 607,374 (3 years)

To promote human rights education within the education curriculum, and encourage public appreciation of the value of investigative journalism and the watchdog role of independent media in Brazil.

International Trans Fund

USD 500,000 (3 years)

To mobilise and facilitate sustainable resources for strong, trans-led movements and collective action, and address and eliminate funding gaps impacting trans groups across the globe.

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

USD 250,000 (1 year)

To assist FIDH member organisations to document international crimes and engage in strategic and innovative litigation through its member resourced litigation action group.

International Legal Foundation

USD 1,050,000 (3 years)

To provide criminal legal services in Myanmar and to assist in the strengthening of fundraising and communications capacities.

National Council for Civil Liberties (Liberty)

USD 783,133 (3 years)

To provide core support to Liberty to promote and build support for human rights among the public and policy makers in the UK.

NEO Philanthropy

USD 1,500,000 (3 years)

To support the work of the Four Freedoms Fund, including grant-making, convening, and strategising to build a more effective and connected US immigrant rights field.

Network of European Foundations

USD 750,000 (3 years)

To create a community of civil society organisations in Europe with the capacity to engage and secure impact on policy around artificial intelligence in the public interest.

Open Briefing

USD 1,506,024 (5 years)

To protect human rights and civic activists globally from attacks and reprisals encountered in the course of their work.

Open For Business

USD 421,294 (3 years)

To provide support to Open For Business, which works to engage businesses and civil society organisations in promoting LGBTQI rights.

Open Rights Group

USD 437,349 (3 years)

To empower the refugee and migrants' rights sector in the UK to work and campaign against the increasing collection of personal data, data sharing, and new technologies driving immigration controls.

OutRight International

USD 2,500,000 (5 years)

To bolster the resilience of the global LGBTQI movement and better equip organisations around the world to lead social change for LGBTQI people.

Panorama Global

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To support Stroika in its work to connect and provide resources to those in need and help the organisation's continued growth and development.

Post Bellum

USD 100,000 (6 months)

To provide core support to Post Bellum, a leading European memorialisation not-for-profit organisation in the Czech Republic that collects oral testimonies and educates the general public on the country's totalitarian past.

Privacy International

USD 1,138,554 (3 years)

To demand meaningful protections and safeguards for privacy and against surveillance and data exploitation around the world.

Redress

USD 783,133 (3 years)

To provide core support to Redress in its work to pursue avenues of international justice including universal jurisdiction, Magnitsky sanctions, and innovative means of securing reparations for victims of abuses.

Reporters Without Borders

USD 1,562,500 (3 years)

To provide core support to Reporters Without Borders, which works to secure accountability for those who kill, silence, or assault journalists, and seek to limit press freedom.

Root Cause

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To use AI, data, and communications responsibly to support forward-thinking organisations.

Schell Center for International Human Rights, Yale University

USD 600,000 (3 years)

To support the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar.

Swiss Philanthropy Foundation

USD 487,400 (2 years)

To provide support through a fund hosted by Swiss Philanthropy Foundation to organisations working to support pilot projects that provide alternatives to detention in Europe, and to assist the Institute on Statelessness & Inclusion initiative on a collaborative leadership platform for leaders with lived experience of statelessness in the Asia-Pacific region.

TRIAL International

USD 1,757,237 (5 years)

To provide support to TRIAL International, based in Switzerland, which works to challenge the impunity of individuals and corporate actors involved in gross human rights violations.

University of Oxford - Master and Scholars of Balliol College

USD 1,500,000 (2 years)

To support the mission of the International Panel on the Information Environment (IPIE) which is to improve the global information environment by providing policy makers, industry, and civil society with independent scientific assessments.





Issues Affecting Women

Supporting vibrant movements led by women that are transforming lives and communities

Oak's Issues Affecting Women Programme recognises that unequal power relations are created and encouraged by legal, political, economic, and cultural systems, but we also believe in their capacity to change. This is why we support women's efforts to create this change – to build, lead, and grow strong, vibrant, and influential movements in order to achieve equity and justice.

We envision a world where women have the capacity, resources, and opportunity to be safe and free, and to enjoy their human rights. To this end, we: support women-

led rights-based services that address violence against women; provide long-term support as an act of solidarity; and connect organisations and movements together, to help them develop knowledge and skills, and to plan, organise, and mobilise.

We have been supporting partners working on domestic violence issues in Moldova for 12 years. Our partners work to reduce gender-based violence and build public awareness of the situation. In this year's annual report, our story is about the successes of our partners in Moldova.

Putting a stop to domestic violence in Moldova

In 2021, the Moldovan Parliament ratified the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence. This was a major victory for women's rights, and much of this success can be attributed to the organised women's movements in Moldova.

When the Issues Affecting Women Programme (IAWP) first visited Moldova in 2011, Moldova was known as a country of origin for thousands of women and girls who were victims of human trafficking across Western Europe and the Middle East.

"We initially decided to visit Moldova to understand more about the human trafficking issue," says programme officer, Medina Haeri. "However, on speaking with the anti-trafficking organisations working in the country, it soon became clear that there was a key driver behind the high rates of trafficking – domestic violence."

A 2011 report published by the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova revealed that 6 out of 10 women in Moldova aged 15 or older had experienced physical, psychological, or sexual violence from an intimate partner over their lifetimes. To compound the problem, legal protection in place for the thousands of women fleeing domestic violence situations in Moldova was weak and unevenly enforced. In addition, the country's only dedicated domestic violence shelter in Chisinau, the capital, was on the verge of closing down due to a lack of funding.

"When we dug deeper, we realised that there were very few services providing specialised support to survivors," says Katharina Samara-Wickrama, director of the IAWP. In addition, there was no coordination or collective advocacy demanding better protections for the women and girls experiencing high levels of violence.

"Social change of such depth and complexity cannot be made by a single organisation...we have to be connected."

Veronica Teleuca

It was against this backdrop that Oak decided to fund a group of small but determined women's rights groups working on the issue of violence to come together to try to address the issue. In 2012, 12 women's groups and organisations in Moldova formed the National Coalition for a Life without Violence. This was the first-ever network focused specifically on reducing gender-based violence and building public awareness of the situation. Together, the coalition set out to improve services for women and their children, and to advocate for greater protection from violence through national commitments, funding, and legislation.

This was a tall order, given the challenging context. The executive director of the coalition, Veronica Teleuca remembers those early



Caption: The photos throughout the Issues Affecting Women section of the report illustrate our partners' work in Moldova to create a society where gender-based violence is not considered normal or justified.

21 not-for-profit organisations in Moldova are collaborating to provide survivors of domestic violence with shelter and rehabilitation.



years as a difficult period: “The first members of the coalition had zero history of working together. We had to build trust and jointly define our mission, values, and principles. Over time, we started to understand that social change of such depth and complexity cannot be made by a single organisation, and that we have to be connected. We needed to build a movement.”

Maria Scorodinschi, from the town of Drochia in the north of Moldova, is just one of many women involved in the movement. Having experienced domestic violence herself, she supports and inspires other women survivors to seek help. She told the coalition: “I talk to women about domestic violence, about their rights – after hearing my story, they trusted me, told me their stories, and reached out to the police or support organisations.”

The coalition has since grown to a network of 21 not-for-profit organisations. Together, they collaborate to provide survivors of gender-based and domestic violence with shelter and rehabilitation, legal and psychological support, and economic empowerment services. This support helps survivors rebuild their lives and create a more hopeful future for themselves and their children.

Oleasa, a teacher based in Chisinau and a survivor, received help from Casa Marioarei, a member of the coalition that provides psychological,

social, legal, and medical assistance, as well as shelter to women and children survivors of domestic violence. She says, “In other ways, I am free now – optimistic, confident, strong, courageous, and with many, many ideas.”

A major milestone for Life Without Violence came in 2021, when its efforts helped lead to the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the Moldovan Parliament on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The convention was a major victory for women’s rights. It requires the government to adopt or improve legislation on matters such as rape, sexual harassment, oppression, and forced marriage. It will become the basis for Moldova’s national strategy to combat violence against women. “The Moldovan ratification of the Istanbul Convention is truly a remarkable feat and the work of the coalition to make that happen cannot be overstated,” says Katharina. “These organisations and activists have transformed Moldova from a country with virtually no domestic violence infrastructure to a model for the region.”

Indeed, Moldova has become an inspiration for activists across Europe working towards greater state recognition and accountability for combatting domestic violence. Thanks to the work of the coalition, there are more services, and better standards and support for women and their children facing domestic violence

across the country, and violence is considered a topic of high importance in society. For example, the national helpline – The Trust Line for Women and Girls – was originally set up and run by a coalition member, and is now a state-run public service. In addition, the coalition is now an active member of the WAVE Network, which includes over 170 European women’s organisations working towards the prevention and protection of women and children from violence.

“Despite our difficult mission, we are united. We believe in equal rights for all,” says Veronica Teleuca. “The trust we’ve built through years of working together has created a powerful force for change. We’re proud that we have continued to provide better services for women and families in Moldova. And by continuing to raise awareness of gender-based violence, we can create a society where it is not considered normal or justified – in the home, or anywhere else.”

Oak Foundation supports the National Coalition for a Life without Violence, as well as nine of its member organisations through our Issues Affecting Women Programme (IAWP). We believe that all women and girls should be safe, free, and have an equal chance to thrive. We find inspiration and hope in strong and vibrant movements, built and led by women, which are transforming lives and communities across the world. [Read more about IAWP’s strategy on our website.](#)

Grants

Aide aux Victimes de Violence en Couple (AVVEC)

USD 631,579 (5 years)

To provide core support to AVVEC in its work to enable intimate partner violence survivors access to quality advice and support in Geneva, Switzerland.

Alliance F

USD 450,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to defend the interests of women in Switzerland at a political level in efforts to stop all forms of discrimination against women.

Association des Mediatrices Interculturelles (AMIC)

USD 347,368 (3 years)

To provide core support to AMIC, a Swiss organisation that supports migrant and refugee families in their social and economic integration in Geneva, Switzerland.

Association for Community Relations

USD 3,437,500 (3 years)

To strengthen organisations that are working to end violence against women in Moldova.

Association for Progressive Communications

USD 1,650,000 (5 years)

To provide core support to the Association for Progressive Communication's Women's Rights Programme, which works to strengthen the confidence, skills, and resources of women's movements to influence the internet.

Association ViolenceQueFaire

USD 526,316 (5 years)

To provide core support to Association Violence Que Faire in its work to prevent and address domestic violence.

Astraea Lesbian Foundation For Justice

USD 600,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice in order to increase its capacity to provide small, flexible, and multi-year funding to LGBTQI organisations around the world.

Centre Social Protestant (CSP)

USD 105,263 (1 year)

To provide support to CSP to ensure the sustainability of its services in Switzerland.

décadréE

USD 157,895 (2 years)

To support décadréE in its work to reduce violence against women and LGBTQI individuals, as well as to increase gender equality in Switzerland.

ELAS Social Investment Fund

USD 1,824,800 (2 years)

To provide core support to strengthen the grant-making capacity of ELAS+ in Brazil.

European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence

USD 632,917 (2 years)

To provide core support to the European Network for Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, based in Germany, which works with perpetrators of domestic violence in Europe.

Global Dialogue

USD 4,482,552 (2 years)

To strengthen the not-for-profit women's sector in the UK working to end violence against women.

Global Institute for Women's Leadership

USD 100,000 (2 years)

To support the Global Institute for Women's Leadership and its Changemakers research programme.

Instituto Incube

USD 150,000 (11 months)

To support the organisational development of civil society organisations in Brazil.

Just Associates (JASS)

USD 1,000,000 (5 years)

To provide core support to JASS, a feminist movement building and strengthening network that works to organise the collective power of women in Southeast Asia, Southern Africa, and Mesoamerica on four strategic agendas: bodies, voices, resources, and safety.

Proteus Fund

USD 900,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to Puentes, a communications hub in Latin America that strengthens the narrative power of social justice movements.

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.

USD 7,199,895 (3 years)

To support the Worker Justice and Dignity Fund (WJDF), which administers the Issues Affecting Women Programme's US portfolio of partners combatting trafficking and exploitation.

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.

USD 750,000 (2 years)

To provide core support to Collective Future Fund (CFF), based in the US, for its healing programme for survivors of gender-based violence among its grantee partners.

Semia Italian Women's Fund

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To provide a core support planning grant to Semia Italian Women's Fund to increase its capacity to provide small and flexible grants to grassroots women's groups in Italy.

Stopping Family Violence

USD 352,898 (3 years)

To provide support to Stopping Family Violence, based in Perth, Western Australia, for its work to end family and domestic violence.

Theatre for a Change

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To provide core support to Theatre for a Change, which uses arts, games, and sports to improve the sexual and reproductive health and rights of marginalised women and girls around the world.

Women Win

USD 1,521,500 (3 years)

To support Women Win to provide flexible and long-term funding to four funds: AYNI FIMI Indigenous Women's Fund, Women's Fund in Georgia, Women Fund Tanzania, and Mediterranean Women's Fund.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

USD 1,000,000 (3 years)

To enable WILPF to implement an inclusive grant-making model that accompanies the feminist movement in the Middle East and North Africa to address root causes of inequality, oppression, and conflict.

XOESE, Le Fonds pour les Femmes Francophones

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To provide core support to XOESE, Le Fonds pour les Femmes Francophones to increase its capacity to provide small and flexible financial resources to women-led grassroots groups in 17 French-speaking countries around the world.



Learning Differences

Unlocking the creativity and power of every young person

In the Learning Differences Programme, we believe that together we can build a world in which schools unlock the creativity and power of every young person and equip them to shape more just and equitable communities. We partner with and invest in not-for-profit organisations that improve education for all students, particularly those with learning differences who experience further marginalisation due to racism and poverty.

We partner strategically with and invest in not-for-profit organisations that improve education for students with

learning differences. We believe that every student should benefit from engaging and rigorous educational opportunities, regardless of personal and social identifiers that privilege some students and marginalise others, such as learning differences, race, income, language, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, and religion.

The story on the following pages illustrates the work of our partners leading the movement to promote inclusive education around the world.

Putting inclusion at the heart of education

In Aleksandrovka village, in the remote Chui Oblast region of the Kyrgyz Republic, a group of school children are working excitedly together. The students are of different ages, from grades 4 to 9. In this region of significant internal migration, these students are from different ethnic backgrounds. Yet, they have been brought together around a common task – to select their own research questions, and then collaborate together to find the answers.

Curiosity Minds and learning differences

Aikanysh Zotova is the inspiring teacher behind this work, called ‘Curiosity Minds’, which encourages students to pursue their own interests in societally relevant contexts, thus nurturing a sense of ownership and agency within the group. Curiosity Minds aims to improve holistic learning outcomes for students. It has been made possible through Aikanysh’s involvement with the Schools2030 programme. Both Aikanysh and other teachers have noticed how the success of this project has led to progress in other areas, such as improved reading comprehension, knowledge retention, and self-confidence across all grade levels.

“I had the coolest project ever this year!” says one student. “We learned by asking questions and trying things out. It helped me understand things better and think more carefully.” Curiosity Minds has also successfully involved students with learning

differences. By creating a student-driven, nurturing learning environment, Aikanysh has empowered these students to actively participate and contribute to the project. This approach has boosted their self-confidence and helped improve their academic performance, for example in reading comprehension.

Schools2030 is a key Oak partner leading the movement to promote inclusive education in 10 countries, from Afghanistan to Uganda. Check out the online version of this report to watch a video explaining more about what Schools2030 hopes to achieve. Schools2030 follows a three-step model, supporting teachers to: assess the needs of their students and the quality of their classrooms; innovate, by testing new approaches and learning environments; and showcase their learning and successes at local, national, and international levels.

In its first three years, Schools2030 has amassed a wealth of data and insight. In 2023, it released its first comprehensive report analysing learning differences and inclusion across all 10 partner countries. This report¹ outlines how learning differences are conceptualised, understood, and supported at the school level in policy and practice in each geographical context. “The report provided an opportunity for us to learn from each other,” says Halima Shaaban, the national coordinator for Kenya.



Captions:

Page 32: The Trevor Noah Foundation, based in South Africa, works to ensure that young people are better prepared for further education and work, and that inclusive teaching practices take priority.

Above and page 35: Schools2030 (www.schools2030.org) is leading the movement to promote inclusive education in 10 countries.

The photos featured in this report were taken in Kyrgyz Republic.

The report also describes how 98.9 per cent of children with special educational needs in Portugal are in mainstream schools, providing a thought-provoking model for other countries as they think about inclusive education. As one Lisbon-based teacher observed, “We shouldn’t have labels – they are children in school.”

Inclusive education and leadership for South Africa’s young people

In South Africa, more young people than ever are completing secondary school, but far more learners from high-income backgrounds go on to further education than those from less advantaged communities. This has led to the country having one of the highest levels of education inequality in the world.²

Aiming to improve the prospects of all learners is Teach the Nation, a member of Teach For All, a global network of partners developing collective leadership to ensure all children fulfil their potential. There are now 300 teacher leaders across the country who receive training and ongoing coaching to unlock the best in people. These teachers become powerful role models for their students by being continuous learners themselves. Teacher leader Honey shares her experience: “I work with 90 different personalities and mindsets across grades 10 to 12. My coach supports me professionally and personally. Teach the Nation taught me to be an active leader that takes on challenges and risks.”

Nurturing confident leadership in teachers like Honey is vital to improving the quality of education – but inspiring future leaders is just as important. In his 2016 book *Born a Crime*, South African comedian, host, and humanitarian Trevor Noah reflected on why less advantaged children are missing out: “Kids of today are being told to be the leaders of tomorrow, but they’re not given the tools. We tell people to follow their dreams, but you can only dream of what you can imagine,

and, depending on where you come from, your imagination can be quite limited.”

The Trevor Noah Foundation aims to address this through its programmes, which ensure that young people are better prepared for further education and work. With support from the Learning Differences Programme, the foundation is ensuring that inclusion is a priority in two of its flagship programmes:

- The Khulani Schools Programme, which gives young students equitable and inclusive access to quality education.
- Education Changemakers, which empowers and trains young educators to transform their communities and become leaders.

“We want to influence wider systems to ensure classrooms are inclusive and engaging for all students, particularly those with learning differences.”

Heather Graham

One Changemaker, Clerah Sethole, used the programme to launch ‘Exclusively Inclusive’, which supports teachers, parents, and communities to understand learning differences like dyslexia and ADHD. Her work is helping to dispel stigma, training teachers to identify young learners who need help and providing alternative teaching resources that will support them to thrive. “I love working with children and it breaks my heart to see a child struggling with something that they really want to learn,” Clerah told Daily Maverick. “I want to see every child enjoy going to school and having someone who understands them.”

Big Bad Boo and “the most fun courtroom on the planet”

Animated cartoons by Canadian production company Big Bad Boo are familiar on television and streaming platforms around the world. The studios also create educational programmes with not-for-profit organisations, using media to promote empathy, diversity, inclusion, and global mindedness.

Oak has supported the creation of Judge Jodhi, a series featuring a 12-year-old girl with dyslexia who sets up a mock court to resolve neighbourhood disputes. The episodes focus on inclusion (including gender equality and learning differences), while teaching critical thinking skills. Thanks to a partnership with Glasswing International, educators are teaching the series and its curriculum in public schools in Guatemala.

Oak Foundation’s Learning Differences Programme is supporting its global partners in their efforts to understand and advocate for more inclusive teaching methods that support diverse learners around the world. To this end, we support Schools2030, Trevor Noah Foundation, Teach For All, and Big Bad Boo. “We support work that rethinks the way that learning happens, and prepares adults to engage and support all students, particularly those with learning differences,” says Heather Graham, director of the Learning Differences Programme. “Ultimately, we want to influence wider systems to ensure classrooms are inclusive and engaging for all students.”

The Learning Differences Programme supports organisations working to unlock the potential of all learners, and equip each one to shape more just and equitable communities. We are particularly focused on funding efforts that support students with learning differences who experience further marginalisation due to racism and poverty. [Please read the strategy paper on our website to find out more.](#)

References: Please see page 65 of this report.

Grants

Ability Challenge (The)

USD 500,000 (4 years)

To support The Ability Challenge in its mission to equip more school leaders and other educators to successfully serve marginalised students with learning differences in the US.

Aspen Institute (The) (AYLF)

USD 1,204,621 (3 years)

To support the AYLF to identify, cultivate, and amplify young leaders to engage in the values-based leadership essential for transforming their lives and society for the better.

Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice (CTIPP)

USD 400,000 (3 years)

To support CTIPP to provide a platform for young people, families, and communities to reimagine the systems in which students learn.

CAST Inc.

USD 2,000,000 (4 years)

To provide core support to CAST in its work to transform education design and practice in the US, until learning has no limits.

Chiefs for Change

USD 500,000 (3 years)

To provide core support for Chiefs for Change to launch communities of practice and provide technical assistance to district and state education leaders in the US to better support students with learning differences.

Children's Health Council

USD 750,000 (3 years)

To develop and expand support for K-12 educators through accessible tools and resources that promote inclusive learning environments for students with learning differences and mental health challenges in the US.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

USD 1,500,000 (5 years)

To provide support to CASEL, a US based not-for-profit organisation that seeks to ensure that evidence-based social and emotional learning is an integral part of education.

Council of Chief State School Officers

USD 1,000,000 (4 years)

To provide support to the Advancing Inclusive Principal Leadership initiative at the Council of Chief State School Officers to build state education agencies' capacity in the US.

Digital Promise Global

USD 3,000,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to Digital Promise Global, which works with educators, researchers, technology leaders, and communities on innovations that empower learners, particularly those with learning differences.

DonorsChoose

USD 500,000 (2 years)

To provide teachers in underfunded public schools in the US with resources to support students with learning differences who experience marginalisation due to racism and poverty.

EdNavigator

USD 700,000 (3 years)

To bring high-quality, personalised education support to families of students with learning differences in the US by partnering with paediatricians.

EdTogether

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To support EdTogether, a US-based not-for-profit organisation, to develop an innovative approach to social and emotional learning and mental health support for students with learning differences.

Education Forward DC

USD 750,000 (2 years)

To strengthen school-based mental health supports across public schools in Washington, DC.

Education Reimagined

USD 500,000 (2 years)

To provide project support over two years for Education Reimagined's work to assess, build, and share the effectiveness of Learner-Centred Education models for students with learning differences in the US.



Envision Learning Partners**USD 953,495 (5 years)**

To support Envision Learning Partners to research practices, cultures, and systems that create the conditions for students with learning differences to accelerate their learning and thrive in schools in the US.

Friends of Brooklyn Laboratory Charter Schools, Inc.**USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To provide support to Equity by Design, a project of New York-based Friends of Brooklyn Laboratory Charter Schools, Inc., which works to prepare scholars with the academic foundation, digital literacy, and leadership skills necessary to succeed in college and professional life.

Instruction Partners**USD 1,000,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to Instruction Partners, which works to test, refine, and scale early literacy solutions that improve reading outcomes for students with learning differences across the US.

Lesley University**USD 901,904 (5 years)**

To support Lesley Institute for Trauma Sensitivity, based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in its work to research the impact of trauma on learning for students with learning differences.

National Council on Teacher Quality**USD 1,200,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to the National Council on Teacher Quality to improve teacher preparation, support, and recognition in the US.

New Teacher Center**USD 1,500,001 (4 years)**

To provide support to the New Teacher Center, based in California, to pilot innovative professional teaching that equips teachers and staff to support students with learning differences.

NewSchools Fund**USD 2,000,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to NewSchools Venture Fund, which works to catalyse greater equity and innovation in education to expand pathways to success for all K-12 students in the US.

President & Fellows of Harvard College**USD 1,500,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to deepen the Institute for Success Planning's work in the context of place-based partnerships and to continue to build a national movement toward greater personalisation to support all children and youth.

Public School Forum of North Carolina**USD 99,809 (1 year)**

To provide support to the Public School Forum of North Carolina to implement a programme that supports the social, emotional, and academic growth and mental health of students with learning differences.

Reading League Inc (The)**USD 800,000 (3 years)**

To support The Reading League's work to build more diverse coalitions in the movement for evidence-aligned reading instruction in US public schools.

Relay Graduate School of Education**USD 1,200,000 (4 years)**

To support Relay Graduate School of Education to elevate a focus on inclusive leadership mindsets and skills in programming for new and current school leaders.

Search Institute**USD 749,781 (3 years)**

To support Search Institute to build the capacity of schools and organisations in the US to help students with learning differences.

State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE)**USD 942,923 (3 years)**

To support SCORE to implement evidence-based practices in early reading instruction within teacher preparation programmes in Tennessee.

Teach For America**USD 2,000,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to Teach For America, which works to improve the ability of educators in the US to meet the needs of all students, with a focus on students with learning differences who are furthest from opportunity.

Teacher Preparation Inspections, US (TPI-US)**USD 1,003,999 (3 years)**

To support TPI-US in its work with educator preparation programmes and their partner school districts in North Carolina to design and implement evidence-based reading instruction for new elementary teacher candidates.

Turnaround for Children**USD 800,000 (3 years)**

To support the Center for Whole-Child Education in its efforts to create more equitable learning environments for every young person.

Understood**USD 757,000 (2 years)**

To support Understood and its partners to develop resources that empower students in the US who learn and think differently.

UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti**USD 700,000 (2 years)**

To support the UNICEF Innocenti-Global Office of Research and Foresight to conduct research that assesses the disability-inclusiveness of the education systems in three countries, and synthesise findings across all countries of implementation.

UnidosUS**USD 785,750 (2 years)**

To support UnidosUS to develop a research-based, Spanish-language digital platform to increase access to socioemotional learning and mental health support for Latino students with learning differences in the US.



© Miguel Hurtado

Prevent Child Sexual Abuse

Supporting a safer world where children can thrive

Child sexual abuse is a global public health crisis: data from UNICEF suggests that 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 13 boys have been sexually abused or exploited before reaching the age of 18. The impact is often devastating and long-lasting, affecting mental and physical health, future relationships, and society at large.

Thankfully, we are seeing new openings for change. Survivors and advocates are breaking through the culture of silence to call for justice. Governments and private institutions have begun to accept that they can and

should do more. And researchers and practitioners are showing that scaling evidence-based prevention programmes and initiatives is possible.

Our partners are working to ensure that for survivors of child sexual abuse, justice no longer has an expiration date. We believe that reforming the statute of limitations for child sexual abuse cases will help shift the cost of the abuse from the victims to the ones who caused it. This is the focus of this year's story.

Reforming Statutes of Limitations: justice shouldn't have an expiration date

When Miguel Hurtado was 16, he was sexually abused by a priest at his Catholic youth group. It took Miguel two years to tell his parents. Yet once he came forward, the Church pressured his family into staying silent. Miguel was left to deal with his trauma alone.

By age 22, Miguel finally felt strong enough to take legal action himself. But, it was too late. Lawyers informed him that Spain's statute of limitation for prosecuting child sexual abuse required victims to press charges no more than "three years after maturity". Miguel had missed the deadline by a year.

Worse, he learned that the priest who had abused him had been abusing other children for decades. "If others could've come forward, I may not have been abused," he says. "But statutes of limitation say that no matter how much evidence you have that you have been the victim of a child sexual abuse crime, you cannot prosecute after a certain arbitrary time frame."

Statutes of Limitation (SOL) are legal deadlines implemented in civil and criminal courts around the world. Although they are intended to expedite and curtail excessive litigation, their time limits prove catastrophic when applied to child sexual abuse cases.

Because of the intimacy, secrecy, and shame surrounding child sexual abuse, most survivors take decades – not years – to come to terms with the crimes committed against them. Globally, studies show that the average age of survivors who

speak out is 52. Some 30 per cent of child sexual abuse survivors never disclose their experience at all.¹

By restricting the window in which child sexual abuse victims can take legal action, SOLs result in a perversion of justice: they deny survivors their voice, power, and recourse, while enabling predators and reckless institutions to act with impunity for decades.

"If survivors can't testify, perpetrators can stay off sexual predator registries and continue working with children for years," says Miguel.

For this reason, survivors around the world are working to extend or fully revoke SOLs. Miguel is one of the survivors leading the movement to reform SOLs and protect children worldwide. To this end, he started a change.org campaign to reform the criminal SOLs in Spain. In June 2021, this campaign delivered 567,000 signatures to the Spanish Parliament. As a result, the government amended the criminal code to give survivors of child abuse 17 additional years to sue.

Miguel is also a member of the Brave Movement, a global movement of survivors and allies striving to end childhood sexual violence. He also co-chairs a working group on justice with CHILD USA, a US-based think tank fighting for the civil rights and the prevention of sexual abuse of children. Both organisations are striving to repeal SOLs for child sexual abuse cases worldwide.

Oak supports several partners working to end SOLs, including A Breeze of Hope Foundation,



Captions:

Page 37: Miguel Hurtado protests in front of the Spanish Congress in 2016.

Above 1: Prof. Marci Hamilton at the NYC stands with survivors.

Above 2: Members of the Brave Movement's survivor advocates globally empowered advisory group and movement action team.

Above 3: Brisa De Angulo and her legal team.

References: Please see page 65 of this report.

which works to bring healing and justice to the lives of those affected by childhood sexual violence, and Equality Now, which advocates for the protection and promotion of the human rights of women and girls. Thanks in part to their efforts and the work of many other survivor activists and allies, some 32 countries² have now abolished criminal SOL.

CHILD USA

While the call to abolish SOLs is compelling, changing the law requires empirical evidence and legal arguments. CHILD USA leads the SOL reform movement in the US, and more recently, globally. CHILD USA conducts legal and social science research to provide data and evidence-based solutions for policymakers, governments, legal teams, and activists. Through its data and engagement with lawmakers and survivors, CHILD USA promotes three major SOL reforms for child sexual abuse: 1) elimination of all criminal SOLs; 2) elimination of all civil SOLs; and 3) revival of all expired civil claims through 'revival' laws.

"By reforming the statute of limitations for child sexual abuse cases, we can make a big difference," says Professor Marci Hamilton, founder and CEO of CHILD USA. "We shift the cost of the abuse from the victims to the ones who caused it."

Since CHILD USA's founding in 2016, 123 child sexual abuse SOL bills for both civil and criminal proceedings have been enacted into law in the US. This means that SOL laws have been reformed for future cases in both criminal and civil proceedings. It also means that a longer window of time for bringing civil claims in historic cases has been granted. As a result, perpetrators of child sexual abuse can be held accountable for their actions, even if the crimes took place several decades ago. So far, 18,000 survivors of child sexual abuse have achieved justice through the revival of civil SOLs. Professor Hamilton's writings, along with CHILD USA's team testimony, its social science research, its written materials, and its SOL tracker – that gives weekly updates on SOL reforms – have been instrumental in every effort.

The Brave Movement

The Brave Movement, which also works to abolish SOLs, has teamed up with CHILD USA and its CHILD GLOBAL arm to promote SOL reforms internationally. Since 2022, Miguel Hurtado and Prof Marci Hamilton have been co-chairing the Global Abolishing Statute of Limitations Task Force. Through this, the Brave Movement has been mobilising its survivor-leaders to support ongoing efforts of both national- and global-level stakeholders.

"We shift the cost of the abuse from the victims to the ones who caused it."

**Professor
Marci Hamilton**

In July 2023, CHILD GLOBAL and the Brave Movement issued a report called 'Justice Unleashed: Ending Limitations: Protecting Children', which calls for abolishing SOLs for all child sexual violence and abuse in Europe. Its 'European Statute of Limitations Report Card' documents the tiered system of justice in Europe, where SOLs are so arbitrary that child sexual abuse victims' recourse is sometimes "determined by zip code". The report identifies countries where reforms are most urgently needed and offers blueprints for ways forward. By the end of 2024, there will be a comprehensive report developed covering all the aspects of SOL in Europe.

'Justice Unleashed' is an invaluable tool for advocates and activists. They use it to press for reforms of SOLs in France, Spain, and at the Council of Europe. Activists working with France's Independent Commission on Incest and Sexual Violence Against Children (CIIVISE) have used the report to recommend abolishing criminal SOLs for child rape and sexual assault. In Spain, the report has helped convince the Catalan Parliament to consider passing a bill to abolish criminal SOL

in regard to child sexual offences, punishable by a maximum sentence of five years. If it goes through, people will be able to press charges against perpetrators of sexual violence, even if it happened in their childhood. The task force is currently developing a report of Latin American countries, backed up by a detailed report on the status of SOL. The task force ultimately hopes to expand its SOL dashboards and toolkits for activists in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

A Breeze of Hope Foundation, and Equality Now

In South America, two Oak partners, A Breeze of Hope Foundation and Equality Now, have been at the heart of a groundbreaking court case that stands to improve the legal rights of child sexual abuse victims internationally.

A Breeze of Hope Foundation was founded by Brisa De Angulo, a lawyer and activist, who is also a founder of the Brave Movement. Brisa's journey began when she was 15 and an adult cousin raped her. For many years, Brisa fought to bring her abuser to justice in Bolivia – with no success. Finally, she took the Bolivian judicial system itself to court. Supported by Equality Now and a strong legal team, Brisa filed a case against the state of Bolivia with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

In January 2023, the court issued a landmark ruling in the case. It called for the elimination of SOLs, along with many other reforms required to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse. This ruling has widespread implications. It not only applies to the Bolivian Government and law enforcement, but it sets a legal precedent for the entire region. Advocates in other countries in the jurisdiction can now cite the case's legal principles and arguments in making cases for their own governmental reforms.

Together, Oak's partners are working to ensure that for survivors of child sexual abuse, justice no longer has an expiration date. [You can find out more about our strategy on our website.](#)

Grants

5Rights Foundation

USD 2,000,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to 5Rights Foundation, which works to make it a global norm that providers of digital products and services consider the safety, privacy, and rights of children before rolling them out, and are held accountable by regulators around the world for the impact of their products and services on children.

A Breeze of Hope

USD 780,000 (3 years)

To leverage the judgement in the 'De Angulo Losada vs. Bolivia' case to prevent sexual violence against children and lessen the impunity surrounding this crime.

Ahimsa Collective (The)

USD 601,980 (3 years)

To deepen the way the Ahimsa Collective engages with survivors across all programmes, and to formalise its work with adult survivors of child sexual abuse.

Arpan

USD 601,630 (3 years)

To build evidence about the effectiveness of Arpan's programmes to prevent child sexual abuse, and inform the scaling up of its strategies across India.

Athleten Deutschland e.V.(AD)

USD 250,000 (2 years)

To support AD to work in the interest of sport survivors of abuse in Germany by providing psychological and legal services, developing a survivors' network, and carrying out research, advocacy, and organisational development.

Bank Information Center

USD 1,876,421 (4 years)

To provide support for the Bank Information Center's Sexual Abuse and Exploitation project, so that the World Bank implements measures to prevent and respond to child abuse in its investments.

Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P)

USD 4,543,460 (3 years)

To provide core support to C3P to continue its work to protect children from online child sexual abuse.

Center for Countering Digital Hate Inc (US)

USD 250,000 (2 years)

To provide project funding to the Center for Countering Digital Hate, a not-for-profit organisation that counters the rapid worldwide growth of hate and disinformation online.

Centre for Sport and Human Rights Ltd

USD 2,549,394 (3 years)

To provide support to the Centre for Sport and Human Rights to advance child rights, including child safeguarding and safe child participation in sport in three FIFA World Cup 2026 host cities in Mexico, US, and Canada.

CHILD USA

USD 700,000 (3 years)

To support CHILD USA, in partnership with the Brave Movement, in its efforts to advocate for the implementation of a Global Statutes of Limitation tracker that will help stop child sexual abuse.

ChildFund International

USD 750,000 (1 year)

To support ChildFund's campaign in the US for effective federal legislation that will protect children online.

Children's Rights Alliance

USD 561,824 (3 years)

To enable the Children's Rights Alliance in Ireland to scale up a national campaign to make the online world safe for children by supporting the work of the online safety commissioner.

Children's Rights and Violence Prevention Fund (CRVPPF)

USD 2,400,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to CRVPPF, which works to prevent sexual violence against children and young people in East Africa.

Council of the Baltic Sea States

USD 100,000 (14 months)

To support the Promise Barnahus Network to enhance the protection and support for child victims and witnesses of violence, including sexual abuse, across Europe.

ECPAT Deutschland e.V.

USD 780,864 (3 years)

To support ECPAT Deutschland e.V. in its collective advocacy work in Germany for strong policy against online child sexual abuse.

Everyone's Invited

USD 250,000 (2 years)

To provide core support to Everyone's Invited, a survivor-led and youth-focused organisation that works to eradicate rape culture.

Face à l'inceste

USD 250,000 (2 years)

To provide core support to Face à l'inceste to implement its strategy and to improve the protection of children in France from incest.

Family for Every Child

USD 1,000,000 (3 years)

To provide support to help scale up Family for Every Child's work around the world to strengthen prevention and response to sexual violence affecting boys.

Fédération Européenne pour Enfants Disparus et Sexuellement Exploités

USD 100,000 (2 years)

To support efforts to prevent technology-facilitated online grooming and the child abuse and disappearance of children that results from it.

Fundació Vicki Bernadet

USD 200,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to Fundació Vicki Bernadet, a not-for-profit organisation based in Spain that works on prevention, advocacy, and healing for survivors of child sexual abuse.

Girls not Brides

USD 199,214 (3 years)

To provide core support to Girls Not Brides for its work to leverage knowledge, learning, and evidence to address child marriage across the movement.

Grassroot Soccer

USD 500,000 (3 years)

To support Grassroot Soccer in its efforts to ensure that adolescent boys and young men transition healthily to adulthood to become agents of change within their communities and champions for their female peers and partners.

Guido Fluri Stiftung / Justice Initiative

USD 416,667 (1 year)

To provide core support to Guido Fluri Stiftung in its efforts to end online child sexual abuse.

Gymnasts for Change Ltd.

USD 500,000 (2 years)

To provide core support to Gymnasts for Change Ltd, a movement of gymnast survivors and their allies who have come together to campaign for change.

Hispanics in Philanthropy

USD 2,100,000 (3 years)

To set up a regional fund to support and nurture the growing movement to end child sexual abuse in Latin America, with a particular focus on justice.

Hope for Justice

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To provide core support to Hope for Justice in its efforts to support survivors of trafficking and sexual exploitation in Ethiopia.

Hopewell Fund

USD 1,000,001 (2 years)

To provide core support to the Heat Initiative of the Hopewell Fund in its efforts to ensure that children are safe online.

Hopewell Fund

USD 373,950 (3 years)

To provide support to the Hopewell Fund for its project 'All Tech is Human', which seeks to create a more responsible, ethical, and safe technology ecosystem for children and young people.

In Good Faith Foundation

USD 242,687 (2 years)

To establish an elite sport Survivors Advisory that advises on reforms needed in elite sport organisations to improve their response to survivors.

International Step by Step Association (ISSA)

USD 926,250 (3 years)

To support ISSA and partners to create champion cities in Europe that increase the engagement of men in providing nurturing care for children.

Jasriel Foundation (The)

USD 79,698 (1 year)

To provide core support to the Jasriel Foundation, which works to address child abuse in sport in South Africa.

Marie Collins Foundation**USD 500,000 (30 months)**

To provide core support to the Lived Experience Group of the Marie Collins Foundation composed of people with lived experience from technology-assisted child sexual abuse, primarily in the UK.

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)**USD 1,500,000 (3 years)**

To support the NCMEC to create and launch a first-of-its-kind, online, publicly accessible global child sexual exploitation policy platform.

National Network for Youth**USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To empower survivors of child sexual abuse with lived experience of homelessness in the US.

OpEd Project**USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To support OpEd Project in its efforts to increase public awareness of the global child sexual abuse epidemic and the urgent need to prevent the abuse.

Panorama Strategy**USD 249,929 (8 months)**

To assess the environment for funding the prevention of sexual violence against children.

Plataforma de Infancia**USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To support Plataforma de Infancia to coordinate a civil society working group that aims to prevent child sexual abuse and develop evidence-informed advocacy strategies and priorities for Spain.

Prevent Child Abuse**North Carolina Inc****USD 400,000 (4 years)**

To strengthen Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina to better assist other child welfare organisations in North Carolina, the US, to develop and implement effective child safeguarding policies and practices.

Protection International**USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To help prevent child sexual abuse in Europe by building capacity among organisations to help them face potential risks they may encounter due to their work.

Raising Voices**USD 1,000,000 (4 years)**

To support Raising Voices to help transform the operational culture of up to 3,000 schools in Uganda to promote positive gender norms and prevent sexual, physical, and emotional violence against children and adolescents.

Santé Sexuelle Suisse**USD 212,000 (18 months)**

To provide core support to Santé Sexuelle Suisse as it advocates for policy, and financial commitments necessary, to effectively implement comprehensive sexual education in Swiss schools.

Save the Children Sweden**USD 249,905 (1 year)**

To provide support to Save the Children for its work towards strong child online safety legislation in the EU.

Sexual Violence**Research Initiative (SVRI)****USD 1,500,118 (3 years)**

To provide core support to SVRI to build evidence that prevents child sexual abuse in low- and middle-income countries.

Spring Impact**USD 1,634,125 (3 years)**

To provide unrestricted programme support to Spring Impact for the implementation of the Scale Accelerator Programme on Preventing Childhood Sexual Violence.

Suojellaan Lapsia - Protect**Children Finland****USD 458,333 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Protect Children Finland for its work to prevent child sexual abuse.

Survivors Network of those**Abused by Priests (SNAP)****USD 350,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to SNAP so that it can continue its work of supporting survivors of child sexual abuse, advocating for reforms, and demanding accountability from religious and institutional leaders.

Swiss Philanthropy Foundation**USD 3,281,289 (3 years)**

To fund a small-grants fund at Swiss Philanthropy Foundation that will support initiatives to combat child sexual abuse.

Thomas More University of Applied Sciences**USD 973,494 (4 years)**

To develop, pilot, and evaluate a bystander intervention to prevent the abuse and harassment of children in elite football clubs in Belgium.

Thorn**USD 1,250,000 (18 months)**

To provide core support to Thorn to support its efforts to raise awareness about technological solutions.

UNI Global Union, The World Players Association**USD 1,242,605 (3 years)**

To make sports safe for children and survivors globally.

UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti**USD 240,350 (1 year)**

To advance children's rights by supporting UNICEF to update its seminal paper on advancing understanding of children's evolving capacities.

World Childhood Foundation**USD 250,000 (3 years)**

To research online self-generated child sexual materials and its links to online abuse of children in Thailand.

World Vision Inc.**USD 500,000 (30 months)**

To encourage increases in governments' budget allocations to end sexual violence against children globally.



© North Carolina Wildlife Federation

Special Interest

Supporting a diverse range of partners around the world, reflecting the interests of Oak's Trustees

Driven by the interests and passions of Oak's Trustees, the Special Interest Programme provides the space and flexibility to make grants outside of Oak's other programme strategies. Special Interest grants are diverse, supporting grantee partners in a wide range of fields including medical research, education, environment, humanitarian relief, mental health, the arts, and much more.

Trustees support inspiring leaders, organisations, and projects from the local to global level, helping them to thrive and succeed in their missions. Read our stories, both here and on our website, and visit the grant database to see the diversity of grants within our programme.

The Special Interest Programme makes grants globally. Our grants support individual organisations, intermediaries, and community groups. Our grants are usually multi-year. We provide: core support (i.e., flexible and unrestricted funding); project support; and support to strengthen organisations to become more resilient and effective.

Oak also makes Special Initiative grants every year, which are usually one-off large grants with a big purpose. We have listed these grants, along with a capacity-building and a child-safeguarding grant on page 49.

A voice for wildlife in North Carolina



Caption: In November 2023, the team at North Carolina Wildlife Federation worked with students to remove a huge pile of rubbish from what will become a new Wake County public park in North Carolina, the US. Together they removed thousands of pounds of rubbish, including tyres, scrap metal, old furniture, a sofa, pipes, metal canisters, and old housing materials.

Across North Carolina, a vast new highway is taking shape. But this one doesn't involve bulldozers or miles of asphalt. From pollinator pitstops in families' backyards to large-scale roadside habitat restoration, the Butterfly Highway is a growing network of native flowering plants supporting pollinators across the state.

As encroaching scrub and invasive species give way to native plants like Blazing Star and Purple Coneflower, populations of butterflies, bees, and birds will thrive. By September 2023, the Highway had registered its 3,000th site.

This is just one of the projects from the North Carolina Wildlife Federation (NCWF), a not-for-profit organisation that works to protect, conserve, and restore North Carolina wildlife and habitats for all. From the mountains to the coast, it helps native species return to the landscape, including protecting the only wild population of red wolves in the world.

"North Carolina is one of the fastest growing states in the US, and as a result, habitat is being eaten up by construction," says Kate Griner, VP of Philanthropy. "NCWF has been addressing this problem head-on since 1945, as the voice for wildlife in the state. But conservation doesn't happen through one organisation alone – it takes a lot of hands and a lot of partners coming together."

Community Wildlife Chapters are a great example of these partnerships, empowered by NCWF to run their own nature programmes, field trips, and community wildlife projects. In fact, the NCWF spirit is characterised by community and inclusion, in the belief that everyone has a role to play in protecting and conserving wildlife – including hunters, anglers, outdoor enthusiasts, or members of government and industry. Everyone who values wildlife and wild places is welcome.

"We're a strong advocate for conservation policies that benefit the future of our state's wonderful

wildlife resources," says Manley Fuller, VP of Conservation Policy at NCWF.

"We remind decision-makers of their duties to uphold the laws that protect natural resources for everyone. NCWF shows up everywhere as a voice for wildlife, often behind the scenes, to make significant changes."

Policy and public affairs teams work at state and federal levels to: give wildlife a seat at the table; develop modern programmes to manage fish and wildlife; and keep climate resilience front-of-mind in every decision made.

With a strong network of support behind it, NCWF is building a brighter future for everyone in North Carolina. As Kate says, "If wildlife have a healthy place to live, then people have a healthy place to live as well." Oak supports the North Carolina Wildlife Federation as part of our Special Interest Programme. [Go to our online report to watch the NCWF video.](#)

Cracking the code to a more diverse tech sector



From online shopping to booking appointments and keeping in touch with friends, there's an app for every aspect of our lives. As a result, software developers are in high demand. Recognising a market opportunity, not-for-profit organisation Code the Dream, based in Durham, North Carolina, developed a programme that offers free, intensive training in software development, to young people from diverse, low-income backgrounds.

Code the Dream aims to foster win-win situations, where coders gain real work experience building apps that make the world a better place, such as for a range of startups, not-for-profit organisations, and government clients. Two of the many apps the coders have helped create are Vamos, which helps outreach workers connect with migrant farmworker communities, and So Much Potential, a tool to help people plan for college, regardless of their immigration status.

In the Code the Dream training programme, coders work with experienced mentors to hone their skills by building apps and technology platforms. After their training, coders can use their work experience to launch new careers and find new, well-paid work opportunities.

The free classes and support are made possible by volunteers like software engineer Andres Alcocer, who gives his time to review apprentices' coursework and mentor them one-to-one. "Being able to connect with the students at a personal level motivates them to complete assignments and keep the momentum going," he says.

"These are great career paths where people can make the life they want for themselves," says co-executive director Dan Rearick. "But we also have diverse voices involved in making these technologies – it ensures we're solving the right problems and solving them in a way that takes into account everyone's needs."

There were twice as many enrolments in the training programme in 2022 as in 2021, but Code the Dream hasn't lost sight of its founding vision: "We've grown exponentially, but we've really stayed true to who we intend to serve," says Daisy Magnus-Aryitey, who joined the organisation as one of its first students in 2015, and is now co-executive director. "Over 70 per cent of participants come from immigrant backgrounds and over 50 per cent are women. So, we see this diversity that is rich and exciting and rewarding."

"I'm an immigrant and I wasn't able to attend college here, but organisations like Code the Dream give you the chance to enter the technology community," says apprentice Samantha Galindo. "Code the Dream has literally changed my life."

Oak supports Code the Dream through a grant to the Triangle Community Foundation, a grant-making organisation that works to reduce inequality and address the most pressing issues in the Triangle region of North Carolina. [To find out more about Code the Dream, check out our online report to watch the video.](#)

Caption (above): Code the Dream staff and apprentices.

Hope in the vaults at the ‘world’s richest bank’

Beneath the English countryside in the heart of Sussex lies an incredible bank – but the type that may come to mind as you read this is not the one we mean. In sub-zero chambers, in flood-, bomb-, and radiation-proof vaults, 2.4 billion seeds, collected from around the world, are stored. This is the Millennium Seed Bank, an insurance policy against the global biodiversity crisis that is threatening plant species with extinction.

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is a research and education organisation that works to understand and protect plants and fungi, for the wellbeing of people and the future of all life on Earth. Kew’s wild botanic garden at Wakehurst is home to the world’s biggest wild plant seed conservation programme, a ‘Noah’s Ark’ to protect our rarest and most threatened plants. Since it opened in 2000, the Millennium Seed Bank has preserved seeds from nearly all the UK’s native plant species and thousands of seeds from around the world.

“With two in five plant species at risk of extinction, it’s a race against time to protect our incredible plant life,” says Dr Elinor Breman, senior research leader at the Millennium Seed Bank. “By storing seeds ex situ (away from their natural habitat), and supporting seed banks in countries around the globe, we’re giving a safe home to some of the world’s most threatened plants.”

Scientists from Kew work with 97 countries to share Kew’s 260 years of botanic expertise, and to encourage the sustainable use of native plants. Together, they collect plant life faced with extinction. Some collections are straightforward. Others require expeditions to mountainous extremes or – as in the case of tiny seeds from the orchid *Aerides odorata* (measuring in at a dust-like 0.2mm) – careful handling.

The team at Wakehurst make data and collections more accessible to international researchers, training partners in seed conservation and conserving up to 2,000 seed collections a year. Once seeds are collected, they are stored in their native countries where possible, and also sent to the Millennium Seed Bank in the UK – the ultimate insurance. They are dried, cleaned, X-rayed for quality, counted, and logged on Kew’s database, before being stored at -20 degrees Celsius. They are tested for viability every 10 years. In March 2023, the Millennium Seed Bank celebrated reaching 40,000 different species in its collection.

“Conserving seeds is not just about chasing numbers,” says Elinor. “It’s about increasing the genetic diversity of the collections and unlocking their potential to solve some of the biggest challenges we face today, from biodiversity loss to food security to climate change.”

Despite its long-term view, the Millennium Seed Bank is very much a living collection. The team germinates seeds, helps reintroduce plants to the wild, and the collection contributes to global scientific research to find future food and medicines. In 2020, the team at Millennium Seed Bank sent 250 seeds of clover glycine (a rare and threatened pea unique to Australia) to the South Australian Seed Conservation Centre to help restore the plant species following the Cudlee Creek fire.

[To find out more about the Millennium Seed Bank, check out our online report to watch the video.](#)



Caption: Aerial view of the Millennium Seed Bank, at Kew’s wild botanic garden at Wakehurst in Sussex.

Facing cancer together



Caption: Some of the team and volunteers at Cancer Support Switzerland in Geneva

When Hanadi was diagnosed with cancer, her fear and panic were compounded because she knew she would go through treatment away from her home country. Through Cancer Support Switzerland, she found a supportive community that helped to alleviate her fears.

“The community offered me a lot of affection and intimacy,” she says. “I knew I was allowed to be scared, to be myself, to share my worries, and to talk about how difficult it is for me as a foreigner to experience this.”

Cancer Support Switzerland works to ensure that no-one experiencing cancer in Switzerland faces it alone. It provides free emotional support, practical help, wellbeing activities, and a welcoming community, in English, which is the first or second language for many people living in Switzerland. Whether being warmly welcomed into the Geneva drop-in centre, accessing services across the country, or finding support online, everyone affected by cancer in Switzerland has somewhere to turn.

“When someone receives a cancer diagnosis it affects their whole life,” says director Elina Viitaniemi. “Shockwaves ripple through it all, from your social to your work life – it has emotional, practical, and physical consequences. Our work is to support people through all of that.”

Cancer Support Switzerland provides emotional support to people with a cancer diagnosis at every stage of their illness, as well as to their loved ones and caregivers. It gives counselling and mindfulness sessions to help people navigate their feelings around diagnosis or bereavement, while activities like art therapy and gardening provide hands-on ways to explore these emotions. Since 2022, it has provided a new coaching service designed to offer advice on the stress and uncertainties that cancer brings to people's professional lives.

“When you walk through our doors, you can really feel the love and the community and care that we provide for people who are affected by cancer.”

Elina Viitaniemi

“It’s about being held as an individual, but also as a couple or as a family,” says Christian Holyoak, counselling and support services manager. Instructors trained in working with cancer patients run yoga and pilates classes in-person and online, and regular Walk’nTalk groups give

everyone in the community a chance to build their fitness and make new friends. Both the wellbeing activities and the emotional support help reduce the chances of relapse or recurrence of cancer.

For people like Hanadi who are far from family, it can be difficult to get help with day-to-day activities, or navigate the medical system and available services. Cancer Support Switzerland is always on hand with practical advice through its telephone helpline, a library of resources at its centre in Geneva, and online support groups.

At the heart of all this work is a compassionate, caring group of peer support volunteers, who have either experienced cancer themselves or been affected by a loved one’s diagnosis. They help out with something practical – like walking the dog or picking up groceries – or they are simply there to listen.

“They provide support with a real human touch, coming from their heart, for people who come to us in their time of need,” says Elina. “When you walk through our doors you can really feel the love and the community and care that we provide for people who are affected by cancer.”

To find out more about Cancer Support Switzerland, [check out our online report to watch the video.](#)

Grants

Access Your Right to Care (ASC)

USD 7,246,988 (5 years)

To provide core support to ASC to scale up its work in England.

Access Your Right to Care

USD 85,773 (1 year)

To ensure older and disabled people with social care needs and their carers get the right support to live safe and fulfilled lives.

Ace Africa UK

USD 496,062 (3 years)

To improve child protection, access to education, and essential health services for communities in western Kenya and northern Tanzania.

Acosta Dance Foundation Ltd

USD 1,000,000 (3 years)

To support the development and operation of a new junior dance company, Acosta Danza Junior.

Antibiotic Research UK

USD 496,928 (3 years)

To provide core support to Antibiotic Research UK to help drive forward solutions for antibiotic-resistant infections, improve the lives of patients, and raise greater awareness about the impact of antibiotic resistance.

BeLoved Asheville

USD 475,000 (3 years)

To bring together Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and People of Colour and people of low wealth to create innovative solutions to some of the toughest challenges in the Asheville, North Carolina area.

Beresford Street Kitchen

USD 361,446 (3 years)

To provide core support to Beresford Street Kitchen, a social enterprise based in Jersey, the UK, to deliver quality education, training, and employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

Birmingham Royal Ballet

USD 2,771,084 (5 years)

To provide support to Birmingham Royal Ballet to develop and stage three new ballet works over the next 5 years (building on the success of new works such as *Black Sabbath: The Ballet*) and to support the development of the newly established BRB2 – Birmingham Royal Ballet's second company, nurturing the next generation of dance talent.

Blueprint Trust

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To provide core support to Blueprint Trust, based in the UK, which works to help businesses be inspired and guided by a purpose that puts society at the heart of their core business activities.

Book Harvest

USD 1,500,000 (2 years)

To provide support to Book Harvest in its efforts to transform literacy for under-resourced children across North Carolina.

Build It International

USD 240,964 (18 months)

To support Build It International's 'Training into Work' programme in Zambia.

Cancer Support Switzerland

USD 631,579 (3 years)

To provide core support to Cancer Support Switzerland, which provides emotional, physical, and practical support in English to people in Switzerland living with cancer, their families, and caregivers.

Climate Leadership Initiative

USD 5,000,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to the Climate Leadership Initiative in San Francisco (United States) to raise massive philanthropic money to mitigate climate change by connecting donors with peers, experts and high-impact solutions.

Colby College

USD 500,000 (1 year)

To contribute to the 'Cotter Financial Aid Fund' at Colby College in the US, which will support unrestricted financial aid for students with demonstrated need.

Coram's Fields and The Harmsworth Memorial Playground

USD 939,759 (4 years)

To provide core support to Coram's Fields, a children's park and playground in central London that is open all year for children under 16 years old.

Council for the Blind in Zimbabwe

USD 396,000 (3 years)

To provide life-changing eye health services to children and adults across Zimbabwe.

Creative Folkestone

USD 301,205 (2 years)

To support the commissioning of emerging and internationally recognised artists to create artwork for Folkestone's public spaces as part of the Folkestone Triennial, the largest exhibition of newly commissioned work in the UK.

Criminal Justice Reform Foundation dba REFORM Alliance

USD 2,000,000 (4 years)

To provide core support to REFORM Alliance to help the organisation transform community supervision, i.e., probation and parole, in the US.

Day One NY, Inc

USD 800,000 (4 years)

To provide core support to Day One to reduce the occurrence and impact of intimate partner violence among young people in New York City.

dZi Foundation

USD 400,000 (4 years)

To enable dZi Foundation to continue its work to help communities in Nepal and expand its reach to four new communities.

Ecology Trust (The)

USD 536,378 (2 years)

To provide core support to enable Funders for Fair Trade to support the European trade justice movement by re-granting funds to organisations across Europe.

Fondation Foyer-Handicap

USD 1,052,632 (3 years)

To provide core support to Fondation Foyer-Handicap, in Geneva, Switzerland, to promote the full integration of people with physical disabilities into society.

Fondation Partage

USD 631,579 (3 years)

To provide core support to Fondation Partage, Geneva's foodbank, in Switzerland.

Foundling Museum (The)

USD 1,204,819 (3 years)

To provide core support to help the Foundling Museum build itself as a financially sustainable organisation.

Global Fishing Watch

USD 2,500,000 (5 years)

To provide core support to Global Fishing Watch for its work to publicly and freely share data about human activity at sea, promoting international cooperation and enabling a new era of ocean governance where transparency is the norm.

Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN)

USD 1,500,000 (4 years)

To provide core support to GIJN, which works to connect watchdog journalists around the world with resources, tools, technology, and contacts.

Good Shepherd Sisters

USD 600,000 (5 years)

To provide support to the Good Shepherd Sisters to assist the villagers of Nong Khai Thailand.

Graduate Institute Geneva

USD 100,000 (8 months)

To provide core support to the Global Commission on Drug Policy, a global advocacy organisation based in Geneva, to reform drug policies away from prohibition and towards responsible legal regulations at the local, national, regional, and international levels.

Guardian.org Foundation dba theguardian.org

USD 600,000 (2 years)

To provide core support to theguardian.org to fund the Age of Extinction reporting project.

Guilford Education Alliance

USD 3,000,000 (3 years)

To provide support to Guilford Education Alliance to help it promote health equity and reduce absenteeism in elementary schools in North Carolina.

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|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Habitat for Humanity of Durham USD 500,000 (3 years) To support Habitat for Humanity of Durham's Critical Repairs programme, which provides home repairs at no cost to low-income homeowners in Durham, North Carolina.</p> | <p>Migration Museum Project USD 722,892 (3 years) To provide core support to the Migration Museum based in Lewisham, London, to establish the museum at its newly secured permanent site, and deliver a cultural and education programme that explores the rich and complex story of migration to and from the UK.</p> | <p>Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew USD 1,204,819 (3 years) To provide support to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and its Millennium Seed Bank, which aims to safeguard the world's rarest and most threatened plants.</p> | <p>Sutton Trust (The) USD 2,710,843 (5 years) To support Sutton Trust's summer school programme, which enables high-achieving young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to access leading universities in the UK.</p> |
| <p>Harlem Children's Zone USD 1,000,000 (1 year) To support the work of the William Julius Wilson Institute at Harlem Children's Zone, which is a national resource for place-based, people-focused solutions that open pathways for economic and social mobility.</p> | <p>MiracleFeet USD 757,544 (3 years) To provide support to the Zimbabwe Sustainable Clubfoot Programme for its work running a country-wide clubfoot treatment programme in Zimbabwe.</p> | <p>Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales USD 3,614,458 (3 years) To provide core support to the Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales, which works to create a better future for a fairer, more inclusive society and healthier planet.</p> | <p>swisscleantech USD 631,579 (2 years) To provide core support to swisscleantech, a business association promoting technical innovation and advocating for a political framework enabling Switzerland to become CO2 neutral by 2050.</p> |
| <p>High Point University USD 1,000,000 (1 year) To renovate a space in High Point University, a private university in High Point, North Carolina, in order for it to become a centre for community engagement.</p> | <p>North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness USD 250,000 (3 years) To provide core support to North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness's work towards social and economic justice for people experiencing homelessness.</p> | <p>Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) (The) USD 1,204,819 (2 years) To support the RHS in its efforts to develop gardens in hospitals and healthcare settings in the UK and increase numbers of people from underrepresented groups accessing horticultural careers.</p> | <p>Swiss Philanthropy Foundation USD 231,579 (1 year) To co-fund an investment in digitisation of Swiss Philanthropy Foundation to strengthen its ability to provide services to the sector.</p> |
| <p>Horniman Museum and Gardens USD 722,892 (3 years) To provide support to the Horniman Museum and Gardens, based in London, the UK.</p> | <p>North Carolina Wildlife Federation USD 2,020,000 (5 years) To provide core support to North Carolina Wildlife Federation to improve conservation efforts for wildlife, fish, and habitat in North Carolina.</p> | <p>Royal Marsden Cancer Charity USD 3,005,120 (5 years) To support the Royal Marsden Hospital in London, United Kingdom, to develop new treatments for children and young people with cancer.</p> | <p>Synchronicity Earth USD 220,000 (2 years) To help the Amphibian Conservation Fund protect amphibians and reduce the loss of amphibian habitats around the world.</p> |
| <p>Immigrant Justice Corps (IJC) USD 1,500,000 (3 years) To provide core support to IJC in the US to ensure that all low-income immigrants in removal proceedings have access to high-quality legal representation, and to close the representation gap for unaccompanied migrant children by 2027.</p> | <p>Partnership for a Healthier America USD 800,000 (4 years) To provide core support to transform food systems to ensure that all families can enjoy the right to nutritious food.</p> | <p>Secure Forests CIC USD 722,892 (4 years) To establish a training centre at the Mount Edgcumbe Estate, in Cornwall, the UK, to teach about land management and wildlife conservation.</p> | <p>Systemic Justice USD 500,000 (2 years) To broaden access to judicial remedies for those fighting for justice and equality within Europe.</p> |
| <p>Lifescape Project Limited (The) USD 542,169 (4 years) To provide core support to the Lifescape Project, which works to achieve greater protection and restoration of wild landscapes around the world.</p> | <p>Philea (Philanthropy Europe Association) USD 416,667 (4 years) To provide core support to Philea, which aims to inspire, connect, and represent the European philanthropy sector.</p> | <p>Smart Works Charity USD 361,446 (3 years) To provide core support to Smart Works, a UK charity that dresses and coaches unemployed women before job interviews.</p> | <p>Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership USD 450,000 (5 years) To provide core support to safeguard wildlife migration corridors, conserve special places, and strengthen recreational access to public land in the western United States.</p> |
| <p>Made in Durham USD 450,000 (3 years) To identify and address gaps and barriers in Durham's Education to Career system through new models of collaboration between area youth, community organisations, and businesses.</p> | <p>Real Zero Ltd USD 1,807,229 (5 years) To provide core support to Real Zero to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by around 45 per cent by 2030 across the National Health Service in the UK.</p> | <p>Southern Vision Alliance USD 500,000 (3 years) To support the North Carolina Collaborative for Strong Latinx Communities in its work to create a healthy, inclusive, and strong infrastructure that promotes equitable outcomes for everyone in North Carolina via participatory grant-making.</p> | <p>The Sixteen USD 301,205 (3 years) To provide core support to The Sixteen, a UK-based choir.</p> |
| <p>Right To Be USD 800,000 (4 years) To provide core support to help prevent and reduce hate incidents around the world.</p> | <p>Right To Be USD 800,000 (4 years) To provide core support to help prevent and reduce hate incidents around the world.</p> | <p>Stichting BirdLife Europe USD 416,667 (3 years) To reduce the illegal killing and trapping of birds in Italy, Cyprus, Malta, and Greece.</p> | <p>UK Youth USD 421,684 (3 years) To provide core support to UK Youth, a UK-based charity that works with young people.</p> <p>University of Calgary USD 746,441 (5 years) To support the Richard Parker Initiative (RPI), housed at the University of Calgary's School of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape.</p> |

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
USD 400,000 (4 years)

To support the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill's programme, HEELS 2 Transition, which offers a range of strengths-based programmes that support young adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities toward a more self-determined life.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
USD 500,000 (5 years)

To meet the complex health needs of teenagers and young adults who have suffered a severe burn injury, and support their successful re-entry and adjustment into society.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
USD 1,000,000 (5 years)

To support families of children with congenital and acquired disabilities admitted to the North Carolina Children's Hospital, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

University of Oxford
USD 3,244,177 (1 year)

To establish two scholarships on the Master of Public Policy course for Zimbabwean graduates at the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford.

Upstream USA, Inc.
USD 2,500,000 (5 years)

To provide core support to Upstream US to transform contraceptive care in health centres in the US.

Verein Klimaschutz Schweiz (Association Suisse pour la Protection du Climat)
USD 112,105 (6 months)

To support Switzerland's efforts to reduce the country's net carbon emissions to zero by 2050.

Warriors & Quiet Waters Foundation Inc.
USD 500,000 (5 years)

To help a new generation of US veterans to successfully reintegrate into society.

Windward Fund
USD 750,000 (1 year)

To support the Hive Fund for Climate and Gender Justice to integrate healing justice and holistic security into its core grant-making work.

World Resources Institute (WRI)
USD 5,000,000 (4 years)

To provide core support to WRI to accelerate locally led land restoration of Africa's vital landscapes.

Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights (The)
USD 1,399,986 (3 years)

To support the Young Center in its work to strengthen safe repatriation best practices for child immigrants in the US, and enhance data management practices, such as tracking safe repatriation services.

YoungMinds
USD 722,892 (3 years)

To provide core support to Young Minds, a UK-based organisation that supports children and young people with mental health needs.

Other grants

Courtauld Institute of Art (The)
USD 6,024,096 (3 years)

To renovate and preserve the Courtauld Institute of Art in London.

European Climate Foundation
USD 15,000,000 (3 years)

To accelerate a healthier, safer, and more inclusive transition to clean and secure power.

European Climate Foundation
USD 10,000,000 (5 years)

To accelerate the transition to clean power, globally.

Hawaii Community Foundation (HCF)
USD 22,000,000 (5 years)

To support HCF's vision of an equitable and vibrant Hawaii, where all island communities thrive.

Hawaii Community Foundation
USD 4,000,000 (1 year)

To support the Maui Strong Fund of the Hawaii Community Foundation, which is providing financial resources to Maui Island in the wake of devastating fires.

New Venture Fund
USD 10,000,000 (5 years)

To provide support to the Climate Justice Resilience Fund to strengthen its role as a grant-making intermediary, with the aim of empowering women, youth, and Indigenous People on the frontlines of climate change to create and share their own solutions for resilience.

Re:wild
USD 6,000,000 (52 months)

To acquire land in the Gran Chaco region of Argentina to increase the protection of El Impenetrable national park.

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.
USD 5,000,000 (3 years)

To support the Indigenous People's Initiative in developing a responsive grant-making approach to supporting Indigenous needs and priorities, beginning in the Arctic.

University of St Andrews
USD 18,072,289 (5 years)

To support the University of St Andrews in Scotland to develop a state-of-the-art campus for the University's newly announced Business School and School of International Relations.

Organisational strengthening

Spitfire Strategies
USD 584,000 (1 year)

To strengthen the strategic communications capacities of 20 Oak partners through an executive training programme.

Child safeguarding

Global Fund for Children
USD 450,000 (3 years)

To provide core support to the Funder Safeguarding Collaborative.



Brazil

Contributing to a secure, inclusive, and equitable society

The Brazil Programme focuses on people – people who see their equal worth, rights, and dignity challenged or denied, and people who see these injustices and work together to address them.

We have divided our funding into three priority focus areas: socio-environmental rights and land justice; disinformation and polarisation; and drug policy. We have chosen to work in these areas because civil society and communities are well positioned to inspire positive, transformative change.

Through our grant-making, we support our partners' efforts to build a thriving society where solutions are co-created with communities, changemakers, and policymakers.

In the article on the following pages we outline the work of our partners to build a more just, evidence-based, and effective drug policy that prioritises the health and wellbeing of people.

A more humane response to narcotics

In 2020, a young man in the outskirts of a town in São Paulo state was arrested for drug trafficking. Police found him in possession of 1.5 grams of cocaine. The man was convicted for drug trafficking and sentenced to nearly eight years in prison. The police records on the arrest showed only two words: ‘Black individual’.¹

In 2006, Brazil passed a law intended to distinguish drug traffickers from drug users. The aim was to reduce the number of people detained for drug possession and to weaken criminal organisations that smuggle and sell drugs. However, because the law does not set a minimum quantity of drugs to differentiate between users and traffickers, it has had the opposite effect.² This has contributed to an explosive rise in Brazil’s prison population. Unofficial figures now put Brazil’s prison population at over 830,000 people, with Black people disproportionately making up 68 per cent of those incarcerated.³

Brazil’s drug policy has failed to weaken criminal organisations or curtail drug markets. Indeed, there has been an increase in crime and violent police operations in the last decade. In 2022, nearly 6,500 people were killed in police action, 1,400 of them in Rio State alone.⁴ In 2019, the Center for Studies on Public Security and Citizenship (CESeC) found that nearly 300 schools in Rio were forced to suspend classes due to drug raids, and there were nearly 100 shootings in the area surrounding four of these schools last year due to police operations.⁵

Taking a violent, punitive approach against drug use, production, and distribution fuels the growth of criminal organisations and fills prisons with people who should not be there. That is why several not-for-profit organisations in Brazil are working to improve the situation. This includes Oak partners CESeC, the Black Initiative for a New Drug Policy, the Brazil Drug Policy Platform, and the Free School of Harm Reduction.

CESeC has led four studies⁶ that lay the foundation for rigorous, evidence-based advocacy. Significantly, it has sought to quantify the cost of the drug policy. In 2019, it assessed its financial cost to taxpayers. In subsequent years, it looked at its impact on mental health, schooling, and community infrastructure and economy. “We are on the cusp of life-changing reform,” says Julita Lemgruber, executive director of the CESeC. “We have ramped up

our research and advocacy in Congress, the Supreme Court, and the executive branches, like the Ministries of Justice, Education, and Health.”

The Black Initiative for a New Drug Policy and the Brazil Drug Policy Platform have been working to make sure that drug policy reforms incorporate the perspectives of impacted communities. In 2022, they developed a national agenda for a new drug policy, which proposes a more humane and effective approach.

Brazil’s Supreme Court is scrutinising current drug laws in a case that could decriminalise possession of certain quantities of drugs for personal use. Oak partners have presented material supporting the adaptation of the law, based on extensive research, to Supreme Court judges in the hope that their decision could herald nationwide change.

In addition, because evidence-based treatment options for drug addiction are limited in the country, not-for-profit organisation Free School of Harm Reduction seeks to address the criminal justice aspect and the health implications of drug use on community members. The organisation also provides training workshops in harm reduction, carries out outreach work to marginalised communities, and conducts localised research.

“We envisage a world in which our society’s response to drug abuse involves community participation, therapeutic institutions, rights defenders, politicians, and the police working together to produce local, national, and regional policies based on humanity, rights, and dignity,” says Arturo Escobar, director of the Free School of Harm Reduction. “We believe this model can be applied across Latin America and the Caribbean.”

These grants all fall under our Brazil Programme, which strives to support people and communities to live prosperous lives in a secure, inclusive, and equitable society. [To find out more, please visit the Brazil page on our website.](#)

Caption (left): People take part in a demonstration against racism during the Black Awareness Day commemoration in São Paulo, Brazil, on 20 November 2023.

Grants

Agencia Publica

USD 499,000 (2 years)

To strengthen the coverage, international distribution, and sustainability of Agência Pública, the largest not-for-profit newsroom in Brazil.

Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania

USD 600,000 (3 years)

To support research on the current drug policy.

Comissão Pastoral da Terra

USD 49,981 (16 months)

To support the National Campaign in Defense of the Cerrado, an alliance of 56 organisations, movements, and community associations, in its efforts to encourage more public and formal protections for the Cerrado and its traditional communities.

Fundação Tide Azevedo Setubal

USD 299,435 (2 years)

To support the capacity of civil society, media, and public institutions to monitor and respond to disinformation related to democracy, public health, and climate in Brazil.

Fundo Socioambiental CASA

USD 180,000 (1 year)

To support independent communication initiatives that bring visibility to socio-environmental and land struggles in the MATOPIBA and Amazon regions of Brazil.

Fundo Socioambiental CASA

USD 770,000 (3 years)

To support communities and organisations pursuing land rights in the states of Maranhão, Tocantins, and Piauí.

Iniciativa Negra por uma Nova Política sobre Drogas - Black Initiative for a New Drug Policy

USD 205,265 (2 years)

To expand the national, local, and international capacity of the Brazil Drug Policy Platform (PBPD) and its partners in Brazil.

Institute for Technology & Society

USD 300,000 (3 years)

To strengthen the capacity of journalists and human rights defenders to respond to disinformation campaigns and promote an informed public debate.

Instituto Alma Preta Jornalismo

USD 275,894 (3 years)

To strengthen Alma Preta's operations in Recife and Salvador and to advance the organisation's skills and improve its sustainability.

Sleeping Giants Brazil

USD 265,000 (3 years)

To reduce disinformation, misinformation, and hate speech on key topics for democracy, socio-environmental issues, and human rights in Brazil.



Oak Foundation Denmark

Contributing to efforts that help people reach their full potential,
be safe and healthy, and have a place to live

Oak Foundation Denmark partners with foundations and organisations that have a direct impact on people's lives. We understand that social change takes time and is not a linear process. We believe that we can achieve social change by supporting broad, professional, holistic, and innovative approaches that tackle issues at the root.

To this end, most of our grant-making includes support for strategies and approaches that address challenges at community level. We also contribute to strengthening or building organisational capacity. We provide funding to both large and grassroots organisations.

We support organisations in Denmark that provide innovative solutions to improve the lives of socially vulnerable and marginalised groups at the community level. As well as supporting not-for-profit organisations in Denmark, we also support organisations in Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

In 2023, we turned 20! Many of you came to see us at our offices in Copenhagen in August to celebrate. See more over the page about this and our grant-making.

Oak Foundation Denmark celebrates its 20th anniversary

One afternoon at the end of August 2023, Oak Foundation Denmark's office was filled with the talk and chatter of many guests who had come to celebrate a very special day with us – our 20th anniversary! We were so pleased to have so many friends and partners join us on this memorable day. "It was great to be able to come together to celebrate, and take stock of what has been achieved over the last two decades," says Esther Nørregård-Nielsen, director of Oak Foundation Denmark.

"It was great to be able to come together to celebrate, and take stock of what has been achieved over the last two decades."

Esther Nørregård-Nielsen

Since 2003, we have made 704 grants worth more than USD 87 million in Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands. When we started out, one of

our main goals was to make sure that Oak Foundation Denmark remained accessible to everyone who would like to apply for funding. We also hoped that our support to address hidden issues affecting communities would bring them to light more generally. To this day, our grant-making reflects this ethos.

Initially, our grant-making focused on supporting cultural and social projects. Then in 2012, we changed focus, and now, we primarily give grants to social causes. This includes helping improve the lives of vulnerable people in the short and long term – especially people experiencing homelessness, and migrants, including through trying to improve their legal status. We also support efforts to help families who have been exposed to violence in all forms, as well as initiatives in Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

We had a lot to celebrate in 2023! Thank you to everyone who made the effort to come to the office in person. If you want to know more about our grant-making, please check out our website. And in the meantime, let's celebrate another great 20 years!



Caption (above): Oak Foundation Denmark turned 20 in 2023. We threw a party in August at our offices in Copenhagen to mark the occasion. Thank you to all our partners who joined us to celebrate.

Supporting children seeking asylum in Denmark

Seven years old. That was the age of the youngest unaccompanied child seeking asylum who knocked on the door of Vores Asylbørn in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Founded in 2017, Vores Asylbørn, which in English translates to Our Asylum Children, is the only organisation in the country that works independently of state funding to help children seeking asylum. By adopting a holistic approach, Vores Asylbørn works to improve the wellbeing of asylum-seeking children by providing them and their close family with legal and psychosocial support.

Nina Arlet-Ziari and Tine Lautrup founded the organisation, when, several years earlier, they found out that two young Afghan brothers had been imprisoned and were in danger of being deported. “I was so indignant that a boy under 18 had been imprisoned,” says Nina. “My parents were refugees, and I could see myself in their situation.”

In time, the younger brother was released from prison. He did not return to the asylum camp as he ran the risk of being quickly deported. Some churches in Denmark give shelter to people experiencing homelessness, so he found a church where he could stay. It was the first time that he had been separated from his brother since they left Afghanistan, and he found the whole situation distressing. Children seeking asylum typically have no adults around them that they trust. They have often travelled alone on long journeys, during which they can experience trauma, hunger, and are at risk of sexual exploitation.

The boy was frightened to be alone in the church with people he did not know who were also experiencing homelessness. The church pastor and Nina were very concerned, and they both felt it would be better for the boy not to be alone. Nina moved into the church to be close to the boy and to provide him with psychological support while she worked on his case. For a while, she acted as both legal counsellor and caregiver, cooking for them both, and sleeping on a bed she made up next to the baptismal font and altar.

Caption: An asylum-seeking child reads a book. Vores Asylbørn works independently of state funding in Denmark to help children seeking asylum.

As the brothers’ legal representative, Nina appealed the deportation order, and applied for the boy’s residence permit. Despite the odds, they won the case to have him stay legally in the country. “When I took it on, I did not realise that it would be such a difficult case,” she says. “Soon after, we had 20 other children in the same situation knocking on our door. We were overwhelmed by the many enquiries, and we realised that no one had the children’s best interests at heart.”

Because Nina had started to see that providing care for the children is as important and needed as legal work, she joined forces with Tine to try to help asylum-seeking children in a more systematic way. In 2022, Vores Asylbørn helped 143 children from 18 different countries – both unaccompanied and accompanied. Today, the organisation has 43 team members, including counsellors, family workers, a fundraising and communications team, a project coordinator, and a board of directors. Vores Asylbørn wins up to 80 per cent of the cases it reopens. For the cases it doesn’t win, it continues to support the children and helps them prepare for deportation.

Oak Foundation Denmark supports Vores Asylbørn to build capacity, in order to ensure its future operations as it continues to provide compassionate and legal assistance to children in need.



Grants

Autismeforeningen Kalaallit Nunaat

USD 41,783 (1 year)

To organise a conference on autism in the town of Qaqortoq in southern Greenland.

BalCon

USD 150,418 (3 years)

To provide support to BalCon, and organisation that gives young people an understanding of their own talents through collaboration with professional performing artists.

Center for Voldsforebyggelse

USD 53,621 (1 year)

To memorialise and raise awareness of 284 murdered women and children by erecting memorial plaques in 98 municipalities in Denmark.

Den Selvejende institution Hyttefadet

USD 55,710 (1 year)

To renovate the premises of Hyttefadet, a programme that seeks to help people with addiction issues and people experiencing homelessness in Denmark.

Foreningen Hjemløsninger

USD 489,747 (2 years)

To support Danish municipalities with a tool that will allow them to better understand and help people experiencing homelessness in the municipality.

Foreningen Sawa

USD 68,384 (3 years)

To develop and run a world festival in Aalborg that will help encourage cross-ethnic cooperation, increased integration, and increased understanding of the many ethnic groups living in Aalborg.

Frivilligcenter SR-Bistand

USD 263,429 (2 years)

To employ a trainer social worker in order to attract more volunteer social workers, and make the best possible use of the resources available.

Grace Kbh - Blå Kors Danmark

USD 128,935 (3 years)

To launch Unique By Grace, a shop and cafe whose profits partly fund Grace Kbh's activities to improve the living conditions of people experiencing homelessness.

Ilisimatusarfiks Center for Arktisk Velfærd

USD 671,401 (3 years)

To provide training to people from homeless shelters and people working with people living on the streets in the capital city of Nuuk, Greenland.

KIFUM's Sociale Arbejde, Café Parasollen i Vejle

USD 103,203 (3 years)

To continue the project "Hear me", aimed at Greenlanders in the area, in the social venue café Parasollen, in Vejle, Denmark.

Kirkens Korshær

USD 142,206 (1 year)

To provide emergency accommodation in two locations in Copenhagen for people experiencing homelessness, especially migrants.

LGBT Asylum

USD 527,855 (3 years)

To ensure the rights and wellbeing of LGBTQI asylum seekers and refugees.

Landsorganisationen af Kvindekrisecentre (LOKK)

USD 557,103 (2 years)

To provide support to LOKK, a member organisation for Danish women's shelters.

Maskine Maskine Amager

USD 710,306 (2 years)

To provide support to the recovery centre Maskine Maskine Amager, which works with people experiencing mental illness.

Netværkscafeen (Sindhuset i Thisted)

USD 45,961 (1 year)

To provide support to the network café, a social enterprise project in Thisted, Denmark that provides shelter for lonely people and their relatives, and for those in need of a social network.

Next Step By Bindslev

USD 83,565 (1 year)

To develop and demonstrate a new approach towards supporting people in psychiatric care, where the person's needs, desires, and resources are placed at the centre.

Respons

USD 53,872 (1 year)

To create a six-episode podcast series that investigates and documents the experiences of young adolescents who have grown up in the Danish asylum system.

Rigshospitalet – BørneUngeProgrammet

USD 51,811 (3 year)

To use rhythm and song to strengthen the mental and motor development, and safety and resilience of young children at Rigshospitalet, where children with serious illnesses are hospitalised for long periods of time.

Siu-Tsiu

USD 826,741 (3 years)

To establish a social enterprise in the town of Qaqortoq, South Greenland, and to continue supporting a social enterprise in the town of Tasiilaq.

Stenbroens Jurister

USD 153,203 (1 year)

To ensure legal aid in Denmark in 2023 and 2024 for people from Greenland.

Teaterforeningen HiLS DiN MOR

USD 139,276 (3 years)

To spread knowledge about LGBTQI people to the Faroese population through theatre, among other things.



India

Supporting equitable opportunities for all

The India Programme supports efforts to sustainably improve the lives of marginalised people in West Bengal, a state in the eastern region of India on the Bay of Bengal. This includes tea workers, who for a variety of geographic, economic, and historical reasons, are quite vulnerable financially, and do not have full access to entitlements.

We believe in the importance of bringing the diverse voices of communities together, and how that can help people to work out solutions to their problems. When communities determine choices through an inclusive process, they have greater collective ownership of the solutions aiming

to address structural change in their own communities. Ultimately, the outcomes of such processes last longer and the impact is more equitable.

To this end, the India Programme's grant-making deliberately supports efforts that puts community voices at the centre, leading to community-driven actions fostered by local leaders. The article on the following pages illustrates the efforts of our partners working in West Bengal alongside the tea workers to help them improve their lives.

Improving the lives of tea garden workers in West Bengal

In the far north of West Bengal, India, in the foothills of the Himalayas, lies the famous town of Darjeeling. Surrounded by 20,000 hectares of neatly growing tea gardens, a staggering 10 million kilograms of organic tea are grown in this region every year.

The origins of the tea gardens date back to the 19th century. Under British colonial rule, thousands of Nepalese and Bhutanese workers from the Himalayan region, and Indigenous people from the tribal heartland of eastern central India, moved to work in the tea gardens across the five districts of the northern part of West Bengal. Today, they employ well over one million permanent and temporary workers across the country.¹

When they first arrived in the region, tea garden workers cleared thick forests, planted thousands of tea bushes, and built settlements for themselves on the grounds of the tea gardens, including houses, schools, and creches. Tea garden owners agreed that workers could live there and have access to the facilities, as long as they worked for the tea gardens. Today, some 150 years later, many of the descendants of the original tea workers still live in these settlements.

However, times have changed, and the tea market is not as lucrative. The share of Indian tea in the international market is declining,² and higher than normal temperatures and unusual rainfall patterns due to climate change, as well as ageing tea bushes, are affecting the quality of the tea. "This is greatly impacting the lives of the people who have

made their living off the tea gardens for generations," says Paromita Chowdhury, programme officer for the India Programme.

Based on this decline in demand for and quality of tea, many of the tea gardens have closed, but the people continue to live there. In many cases, the workers continue to maintain the tea gardens independently. They sell the tea directly to local distribution factories, often for more money than they would earn if the gardens were still open. However, once the gardens close, the workers no longer have access to benefits such as healthcare, housing maintenance, or pensions. And, they do not have a legal right to their land either, despite the fact they and their families have lived there for nearly two centuries.

In addition, many of the workers are unable to access government aid and essential services that they are entitled to, including subsidised food supplies, safe and secure housing, drinking water, healthcare, education, and social security services. "This is often due to a lack of awareness and incorrect identity documents," says Indranil Niyogi, programme officer for the India Programme. "This is why we are supporting not-for-profit organisations working in the West Bengal area to help register people so that they can access their entitlements, even if the tea gardens close."

In recent years, there have been some great victories for the tea garden communities and workers in the informal sector in India. There has been a surge in worker benefits and social entitlements for informal workers in the tea, construction,



Caption: The photos in the India section of the report illustrate our partners' work to support tea garden workers in West Bengal.



garment, handloom, and domestic work sector. For the first time, domestic workers secured mandatory paid holidays and annual wage hikes.

“We work with local partners, tea companies, communities, the government, and trade-related agencies to improve working and living conditions for tea garden workers.”

Chitralkha Chowdhury

This is thanks to the work of several Oak partners. For example, Swaniti Initiatives is a not-for-profit organisation that works with local partners to provide technical assistance to state and local governments in West Bengal. This helps ensure that tea worker communities can access fair wages, tea garden-specific entitlements, and benefits. By working with the district administration, Swaniti has helped facilitate identity documents for 10,500 tea garden workers. In addition, community outreach work has helped inform the workers of their entitlements, which has helped increase overall registration for government entitlement schemes.

“For the last ten years, Swaniti, through its local partner organisation, has been working with the government, civil society organisations, and communities to see how access to schemes can be made better,” says Gaurav Bhattacharya, chief operating officer at Swaniti Initiatives.

In addition, our partner Transform Trade works to help strengthen 9,000 tea worker communities from five districts of Assam and West Bengal. “Transform Trade works with local partners, tea companies, communities, the government, and trade-related agencies to improve working and living conditions for tea garden workers,” says Chitralkha Chowdhury, programme manager of Gender & Policy at Transform Trade. “In this way, they and their families can enjoy economic self-reliance and social security benefits.”

The West Bengal Right to Food and Work Network works to ensure that the legal commitments under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013 are understood by people so that they can request the state to deliver on these commitments. The NFSA is an Indian Act of Parliament that aims to provide subsidised food grains to approximately two thirds of the country's 1.4 billion people. The network operates in 20 out of the 23 districts of West Bengal state, including in the tea garden region in the north.

A Supreme Court case has been ongoing since 2006, in the hope of securing payment for tea garden workers who have not been paid. To date, the workers have still not received what they are due. In 2018, the network supported the workers from closed tea gardens in two tea growing-districts to access interim relief of USD 2.2 million dollars, after a Supreme Court order for partial payment of unpaid wages.

In addition, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the network helped thousands of migrant workers to return safely to their villages in Bengal and also monitored the distribution of free grain and other entitlements under the NFSA. At present, network members are actively working to bring attention to the right to land of tea garden workers.

Video Volunteers works to support community members to produce video content that highlights the prevalent issues of their own communities and regions. “The work of the community content creators has been really important in giving a platform to showcase our issues and concerns,” says Manzil Tapa, a tea garden worker in Darjeeling.

These efforts are supported by Oak's India Programme, which funds efforts to sustainably improve the lives of marginalised people in West Bengal, including unorganised workers, Indigenous communities known as Adivasis, and adult and child migrants. We focus on the tea gardens of North Bengal and the Sundarbans coastal region, which face a range of climate-related and other challenges, where marginalised communities are found in greater numbers. [Check out the online version of this report to watch the video.](#)

References: Please see page 65 of this report.



Grants

Aangan Trust

USD 483,012 (3 years)

To safeguard children in the high climate risk districts of North and South 24 Parganas in West Bengal.

American India Foundation

USD 5,219,770 (4 years)

To build a robust environment for rural women entrepreneurs from Assam and West Bengal to help establish inclusive and environmentally sustainable micro, small, and medium enterprises.

American India Foundation

USD 25,000 (20 months)

To provide technical support to advance rural women entrepreneurs in the Indian states of Assam and India.

Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e.V

USD 500,000 (3 years)

To support communities who are severely impacted by the climate in the Sundarbans in West Bengal through micro-enterprise development.

Durbar Mahila

Samanwaya Committee

USD 242,659 (3 years)

To enable families living below the poverty line in West Bengal to have income and food security.

Environment

Conservation Society, dba

SwitchON Foundation

USD 581,917 (3 years)

To ensure energy security for tea garden communities across three districts in West Bengal.

ICLEI South Asia

USD 792,644 (3 years)

To develop a collaborative platform for local government, tea estate management, and local not-for-profit organisations and communities to revive local water sources and ensure the sustainable use of surface and ground water in four large tea estates in Darjeeling and Kurseong area of Northern Bengal.

Indo-Global Social Service Society

USD 459,715 (4 years)

To support 100 collectives of informal workers in the Kolkata Metropolitan Development Area to adapt strategies to enhance their resilience to adverse socio-economic and climate events.

Kamonohashi

USD 500,000 (3 years)

To enable Kamonohashi to support the Taftteesh consortium, which works to strengthen the resilience of communities in India against human trafficking.

Society for Direct Initiative for Social and Health Action

USD 426,489 (4 years)

To support small-scale fish workers of seven districts in West Bengal, India to protect natural resources and biodiversity by practicing sustainable fishing for their livelihoods.

Southern Voices for Global Development

USD 645,672 (34 months)

To support Praxis UK to scale up the pilot on people-centred development to strengthen communities in the Indian Sundarbans to become resilient to social, environmental, and economic challenges.

Water For People

USD 900,000 (3 years)

To support Water for People to establish integrated water resource management in two blocks of Indian Sundarbans.



© Foundations for Farming Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe

Contributing to prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable communities

The Zimbabwe Programme is a national programme through which we fund local organisations involved in supporting the hopes and aspirations of Zimbabweans, particularly those furthest from opportunity.

We support organisations operating in the following priority areas: helping families and communities thrive; building skills and fostering entrepreneurship; supporting children and others with special needs; and making

strategic grants that empower Zimbabweans to improve their lives and communities. We align our grant-making to government and international development goals.

As of 2024, the Zimbabwe Programme has started increasing its annual grant-making. Our new strategy includes making longer-term grants, diversifying our grant-making to include new partners, and increasing grant amounts.

Hope grows in the fields of Africa

When James Shawa's fields of maize weren't thriving, he began to explore the reasons behind the crop failure. Regenerative agriculture held the answers. "I learned that a good harvest doesn't depend on (chemical) fertiliser," he says. "I realised I can use what God has already given me."

James started using chicken manure to feed the soil, and added a layer of mulch so it wouldn't dry out. This process has a name. Known as regenerative farming, it is a holistic approach to farming that promotes carbon sequestration, soil improvement, watershed health, and biodiversity. James soon saw the difference – he was quickly rewarded with a rich harvest. "We are so thankful that our maize looks well," he says, standing among the plants of maize that are now towering above his head. "This year we will have enough food."

Across Africa, 80 per cent of the population relies on small farms' produce to feed their families, but fewer and fewer are able to do so, as the yields are simply not giving what they once did. This leaves countless people in a precarious position – one failed crop could tip whole communities into famine.

That is why Foundation for Farming (FFf), a not-for-profit organisation based in Zimbabwe, wanted to do something about it. "There's an answer to the poverty and hunger that has stalked this beautiful country: it is as simple as it is hopeful," says William Tom, lead trainer at Foundations for Farming. "We teach farmers to become faithful stewards of nature. We train people to use sustainable, nature-based farming methods. These simple, climate-smart methods regenerate soil and feed their families."

Regenerative farming practices focus on producing food organically, in ways that restore the soil and wider environment. Instead of endless expansion, over-ploughing, and chemical fertilisation, methods include composting, mulching, mixed cropping, minimum soil disturbance, and agroforestry.

The big idea? Small field – more yield. The techniques lead to less soil erosion, efficient water management, more nutritious food, and increased biodiversity. Climate-smart farming reduces the impact of droughts and makes plants stronger to withstand pests and diseases.

All of this means crops are working harder for the land they occupy. Communities that learn Fff principles produce on average eight metric tonnes of maize per hectare – eight times the Zimbabwean average for small-scale farmers.

"When farmers become self-sufficient and generate surplus from their land, it is transformational," says Ben Gilpin, head of Oak's Zimbabwe office. "Communities can escape poverty, have healthy and more varied diets, improve the environment, and generate enough income to build a better future for themselves and their families."

For James, the recovering soil on his land has created fertile ground, and not just for food for his family. He has been able to sell surplus maize to pay for his children's school fees. In addition, he has shared the techniques he's learned with his community. "I hope my village will come out of poverty," he says.

Since it began in 1982, Foundations for Farming has been testing and developing these ideas in Zimbabwe – and exporting them around the world. Clouds End, its 15-hectare model farm outside Harare, is home to crop trials and research, as well as a training centre that teaches methods under the Fff mantra: "On time, at standard, without waste and with joy". In 2021, Fff received the Presidential award for making Zimbabwe food secure for the first time in 20 years.

Oak has supported Foundations for Farming since 2022, as part of our Zimbabwe Programme, which funds local organisations involved in supporting the hopes and aspirations of Zimbabweans, particularly those furthest from opportunity. We support organisations that help families and communities thrive, and those that build skills and foster entrepreneurship.



Caption: Foundations for Farming is a grassroots organisation that seeks to create sustainable livelihoods and food sovereignty in Zimbabwe, and boost the profitability of small-scale farmers.

KidzCan Zimbabwe: Wadzanayi's story



Caption: Wadzanayi Mayiseni has overcome childhood cancer to go on and thrive in life. KidzCan provides care to children with cancer and financial aid to families to ensure that financial challenges don't prevent children from receiving treatment.

An inspiring young woman who survived cancer as a child has forged a promising career in medical research – driven by the desire to help others be free from pain.

When Wadzanayi Michelle Mayiseni was just 12 years old, she was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a type of bone cancer. To save her life, her leg was amputated above the knee and she went through three grueling cycles of chemotherapy.

Throughout her time in hospital, Wadzanayi and her family were supported by KidzCan, a charity that works to improve children's cancer survival rates in Zimbabwe, and enhance their quality of life in a loving and caring environment.

KidzCan provides families with financial help for diagnostic tests, drug treatments, and travel, to ensure financial challenges don't prevent children from receiving treatment. It also gives psychosocial support in structured playtimes several times a week, and children receive toys, books, sweets, and warm clothing to help them feel comforted while in hospital.

Following her recovery, Wadzanayi went on to excel in high school, achieving outstanding exam results and receiving several academic prizes. She was accepted into New York's Columbia University on a full scholarship, where her curiosity and determination led her to work with Nobel laureate Dr Eric Kandel. Motivated by her own experience

with phantom pain after her leg amputation, she then decided to pursue pain sensitivity research and explore these findings in her thesis.

Today at age 23, Wadzanayi is researching neurology at the Yale School of Medicine, while applying to medical school. She hopes to become a neurologist and, despite her busy academic life, still gives her time to work with KidzCan to engage more people in the fight against cancer. She organises fundraising campaigns for cancer patients, and leads online discussions about cancer with young people in Zimbabwe.

Oak has been supporting KidzCan Zimbabwe since 2018. Oak's Zimbabwe Programme funds local organisations involved in supporting the hopes and aspirations of Zimbabweans, particularly those furthest from opportunity.

Grants

Africa Ahead

USD 79,996 (1 year)

To improve water, sanitation, hygiene, and livelihood programmes through the Community Health Club approach to three Oak partners in Manicaland, Zimbabwe.

Agricultural Partnerships Trust

USD 149,598 (2 years)

To help establish micro-enterprises that will provide market-based services to the farming community in Mount Darwin, Zimbabwe, in areas that have recently been cleared from landmines.

Alfred Walter Hostel

USD 79,177 (1 year)

To provide accommodation, education, and care to children with mental healthcare needs who live at Alfred Walter Hostel and attend Ratidzo Zimcare School.

Bethany Project (The)

USD 277,000 (3 years)

To promote the wellbeing of children affected by HIV and AIDS in the southern region of Zimbabwe.

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (The)

USD 328,615 (3 years)

To support women and girls in Rushinga to cope with environmental and climate change-induced shocks by promoting food security.

ChildLine Zimbabwe

USD 300,000 (3 years)

To provide support to ChildLine Zimbabwe, which works to prevent drug and substance abuse interventions in Harare Central District.

Dance Trust of Zimbabwe

USD 26,868 (6 months)

To provide dance lessons to children with physical and mental disabilities, and children who come from underprivileged backgrounds.

Dzikwa Trust Fund

USD 30,000 (1 year)

To combat the problems of substance abuse and violence against children in Dzivarasekwa, a highly populated suburb of western Harare, Zimbabwe.

Family Action for Community Empowerment in Zimbabwe

USD 100,000 (1 year)

To improve the quality of lives of people in Makoni district of Manicaland Province and Marondera Mutoko and Mudzi Districts of Mashonaland East Province in Zimbabwe.

Family Support Trust

USD 450,000 (3 years)

To provide support to Family Support Trust, a not-for-profit organisation that provides medical and psychosocial support to children who have been sexually abused.

Foundations for Farming

USD 449,928 (3 years)

To provide support to partners working with communities in different regions of Zimbabwe to promote food security.

HALO Trust

USD 312,051 (3 years)

To teach 28,000 children to read in 40 deprived schools in the remote areas near the Mozambique border in Mt Darwin and Rushinga districts in north-eastern Zimbabwe.

Hope for Kids

USD 48,008 (1 year)

To provide support to Hope for Kids, a not-for-profit organisation that provides education, health and psycho-social support to orphaned and vulnerable children in Zimbabwe.

Isheanesu Multi-purpose Centre for Disabled Children

USD 27,405 (6 months)

To promote a safe environment for children living with disabilities in Zimbabwe by identifying, empowering, nurturing, and strengthening their development.

J.F. Kapnek Trust

USD 576,196 (3 years)

To scale up the work of J.F. Kapnek Trust, which provides cost-effective, sustainable, and quality early childhood care and education for marginalised children.

KidzCan

USD 170,000 (2 years)

To ensure the availability, accessibility, and affordability of chemotherapy drugs, diagnostics, bus fares, psychosocial support, home services, and nutritional support to children in Zimbabwe.

Mavambo Orphan Care

USD 850,500 (3 years)

To scale up Mavambo Orphan Care's efforts to create a healthy, self-sustaining community for children, where they are empowered to become responsible citizens who are fully aware and enjoy their rights and able to defend them.

NZEVE Deaf Children's Centre

USD 280,000 (1 year)

To support children and young people with hearing challenges, in order to enable them to reach developmental milestones, access services, and gain livelihood skills for independent living.

Sir Humphrey Gibbs Training Centre

USD 33,918 (2 years)

To support the Sir Humphrey Gibbs Training Center in its work of caring for people living with disability.

Stitching Young Africa International

USD 165,014 (1 year)

To provide support to strengthen four Oak partners in Zimbabwe in efforts to implement technical vocational education and training opportunities for young people.

Sustainable Agriculture Technology

USD 94,824 (6 months)

To improve agricultural production and income generation at two centres in Harare, Zimbabwe Homefields Centre and Sharon Cohen School.

Time + Tide Foundation

USD 50,057 (1 year)

To provide tailored capacity-building support for two Zimbabwean-based not-for-profit organisations.

Zvitambo Institute for Maternal & Child Health Research

USD 80,000 (1 year)

To improve child development in rural Zimbabwe by carrying out a study to assess the specific needs of children, in particular children with disabilities, to allow them to reach their full potential.

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