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# Our history



## **Since its establishment in 1983, Oak Foundation has made grants to not-for-profit organisations in 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 contributing to a safer, fairer, more sustainable 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 eight global programmes and two country programmes. Our main programmes are: Housing and Homelessness, International Human Rights, Issues Affecting Women, Prevent Child Sexual Abuse, Learning Differences, Environment, Global Climate Initiatives, and Special Interest. Our country programmes are Oak Foundation Denmark and the Zimbabwe Programme.

Oak Foundation has its main administrative office in Geneva, Switzerland, and a presence in four other countries: Denmark, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Zimbabwe. Check out our website to find out more: [www.oakfnd.org](http://www.oakfnd.org).

# Letter from the Trustees

In 2025, Oak Foundation made grants totalling USD 383 million to 336 organisations based in 33 countries around the world.

Some of this year's grantee highlights include the following:

**Our Environment Programme** tells the story of how grantees are turning cutting-edge technology into a force for good. By combining satellite imagery with GPS data from fishing vessels, they've created a groundbreaking global snapshot of maritime activity – giving countries the tools they need to protect natural resources. We hope this will help ensure that marine life can regenerate and coastal communities can depend on healthy, sustainable ecosystems.

In Scotland, our **Housing and Homelessness Programme's** grantees are championing the right to a secure and affordable home for everyone. The team provides vital legal support that helps people stay in their homes and access essential services. Their work has even influenced Edinburgh's City Council to invest tourist tax revenue into council housing, creating real and lasting change for communities.

**Our International Human Rights Programme's** grantee, Fundo Brasil, is collaborating with the Brazilian Government so that families that have been involved with the judicial system can stay together. The results speak volumes: mothers can stay home with their children while awaiting trial; reports of torture are falling; people are able to stay working or studying while awaiting trial; and custody hearings have resulted in the release of nearly 820,000 people.

**Our Issues Affecting Women Programme's** grantees in Mexico are driving change in both urban and rural communities – helping to reshape public discourse on gender-based violence, strengthen legal

protections, and build dependable support systems for women and girls. Their work spans from bread-making workshops that foster solidarity, to training, convenings, and technical assistance for women-led groups.

**Our Learning Differences Programme's** grantees are helping transform teacher preparation in the US by linking local school systems to innovative training programmes. This ensures new teachers step into classrooms ready to teach young readers from day one. Through hands-on experience and research-based instruction, trainee teachers gain practical skills that turn theory into action – so every child has the support they need to thrive.

**Our Prevent Child Sexual Abuse Programme** is shining a light on the urgent work of its grantees, who are helping to guide boys and young men away from destructive online spaces and toward supportive communities, mental health resources, and opportunities for real, meaningful offline connections.

In the UK, through our **Special Interest Programme**, we support the Trussell Trust – a network that has grown to unite over 1,400 independent food banks, where 40,000 volunteers provide emergency food with compassion, alongside advice and practical support. We also support Helpforce, a charity helping NHS trusts and community organisations nurture volunteering programmes that make healthcare more human.

Across the Atlantic in North Carolina, we have provided support to: the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project to promote strong local farms and thriving food economies; Transplanting Traditions, a farm and cultural space helping Burmese migrants thrive in their new community; and Durham Tech community college, which guides students along career pathways to break down barriers to academic success. Finally, we showcase the work of Nest, which helps craft workers across the US and globally

earn sustainable livelihoods – allowing art, craft, and small businesses in rural communities to flourish.

**Oak Foundation Denmark** celebrates the inspiring work of NuQi – a dance organisation bringing the joy and power of movement to communities in Greenland's most remote corners. Through dance, NuQi is creating spaces for connection, expression, and cultural pride, even in the farthest reaches of the world.

**Our Zimbabwe Programme** showcases grantees' vital work – from delivering compassionate palliative care to restoring land through regenerative efforts after demining, and ensuring that children who have lost one or both parents stay connected to their communities and siblings. These initiatives bring hope, healing, and resilience to families and landscapes alike.

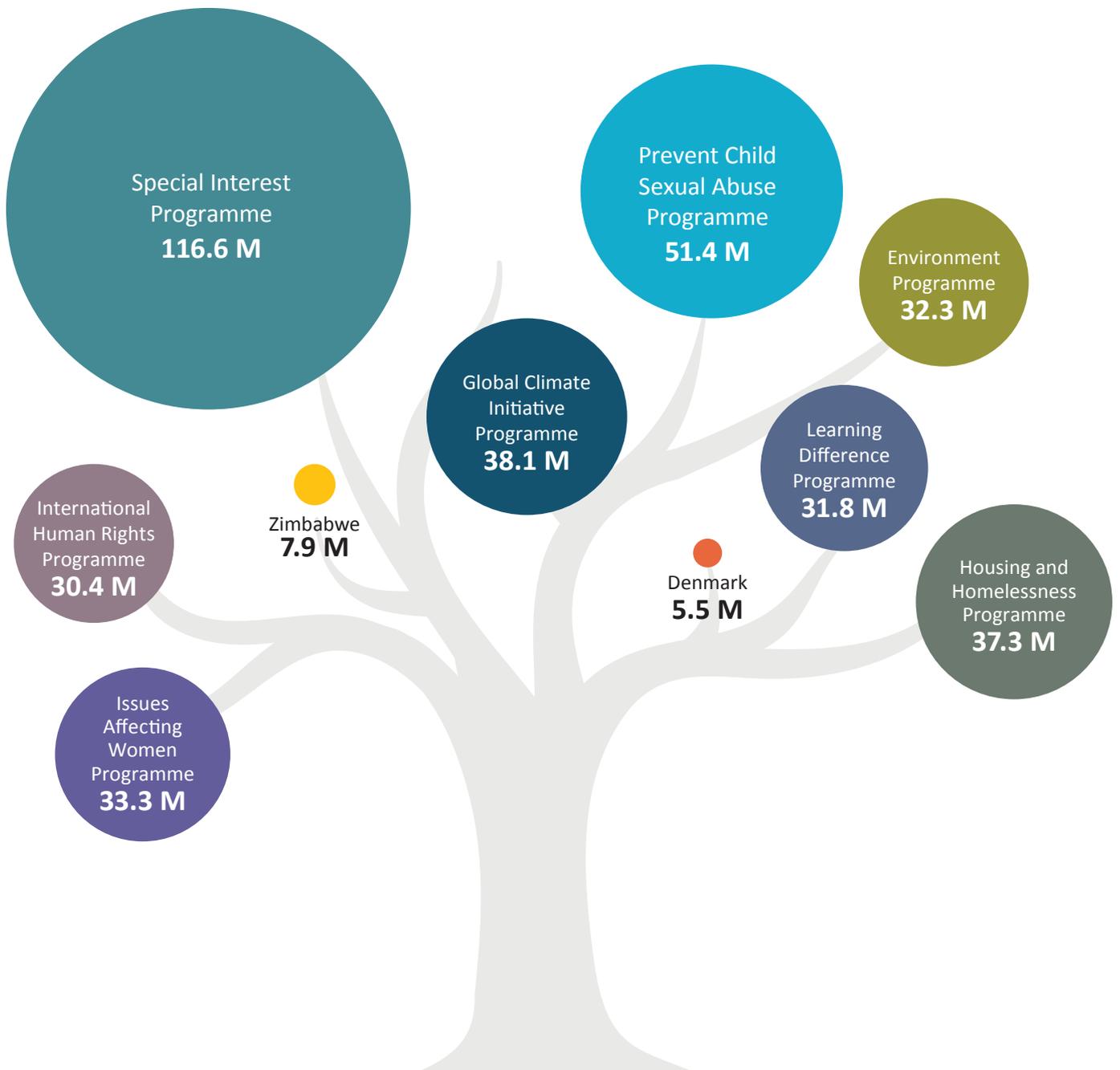
In 2025, we started the **Global Climate Initiatives Programme**, which supports practical, people-first solutions that help communities thrive while reducing the harm caused by pollution and overuse of natural resources. The launch of the programme celebrates a powerful story of hope and resilience. In Pakistan, homes and businesses are driving one of the fastest and most unexpected clean energy transitions. Driven by households embracing rooftop solar panels, this grassroots movement is transforming the energy landscape and setting a powerful example of what is possible for the world.

Each year, our annual report reminds us of the hope we feel when hearing the stories of our grantees – your dedication and impact inspire us every single day. To all our grantees: thank you for your tireless efforts to help make a safer, fairer, and more sustainable world.

**The Parker Family**

# Our grant-making in 2025

In 2025, Oak Foundation made grants totalling USD 383 million. This figure includes 365 programme grants and 613 discretionary grants, which Oak Trustees, Advisors, and staff made to organisations in 33 countries that contribute to a safer, fairer, and more sustainable world.



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## Grant-making highlights

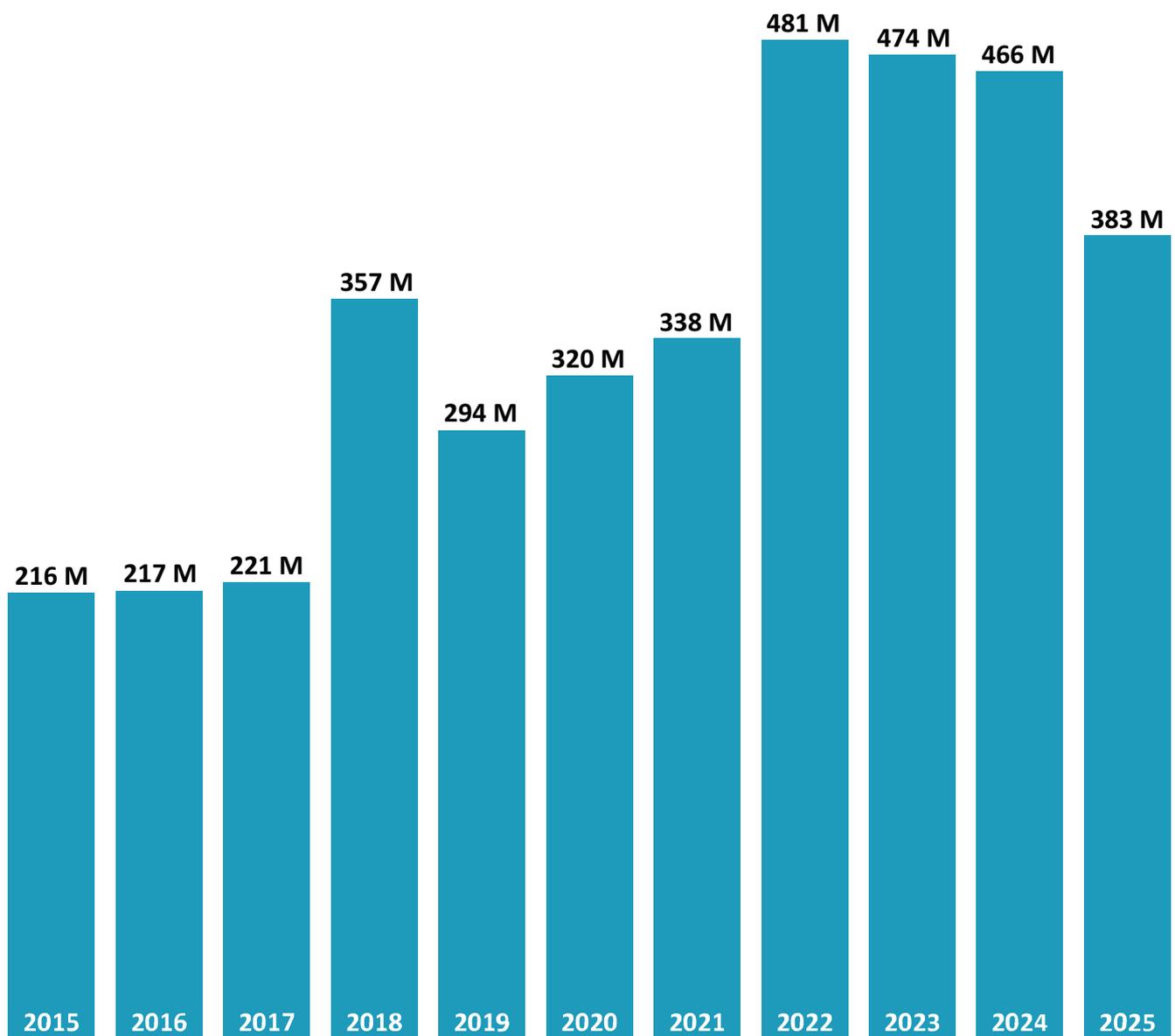
We provided  
**365**  
programme grants

in  
**33**  
countries

totalling  
**383**  
in USD million

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## Total grant-making 2015-2025 in USD million



\* Please note that this total also includes cancelled grants, which are not listed in this report.

## Supporting grantees beyond funding

Alongside our grant-making, we strive to be a purposeful, supportive grant-maker. We prioritise working with our grantees to provide additional support if needed. This includes organisational-strengthening support, which strengthens the areas our grantees consider necessary to deliver their missions. In addition, our child safeguarding officer helps protect the children our grantees come in contact with. Our monitoring, evaluation, and learning specialist helps us better understand how we can improve our grant-making. Our communications team helps ensure transparency around our grant-making, supports connection and communications with our grantees, and elevates their great work. Read on to find out more about our work in 2025.

## Organisational strengthening & effectiveness

The past year has presented significant challenges for civil society organisations, as the sector continues to grapple with the impact of external funding cuts. The significant reduction in overseas development assistance has created instability for many of our grantees, forcing organisations to prioritise crisis management and adapt rapidly to shifting circumstances. These disruptions have underscored the vulnerability of over-reliance on single funding sources and highlighted the urgent need for greater financial resilience within the sector.

In this context, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to supporting grantees, not only through core funding but also by continuing to invest in organisational strengthening. We recognise that building robust internal systems, leadership, and resource mobilisation capacity is essential for long-term stability.

By providing tailored support alongside core grants, Oak helps grantees to weather external shocks, strengthen governance, and embed a culture of sustainability. We hope that this dual approach contributes to the overall stability and effectiveness of organisations, enabling them to continue delivering impact in their communities, despite a challenging funding environment.

A prime example of this commitment is the Emerge Programme, delivered in partnership with The Resource Alliance. This 16-month initiative supported a cohort of 20 Oak grantees from 14 African countries, with the aim of revising organisational purpose and creating income diversity through enhanced skills, strategy, and networks. The programme fostered a transformative shift: 94 per cent of participating organisations reviewed and agreed on their purpose, with 12 adopting new purpose statements.

In terms of resource mobilisation, 56 per cent finalised new or revised strategies, and 89 per cent are now actively pursuing diversified funding streams. All participating organisations reported full engagement from staff and boards in resource-mobilisation efforts, signalling a significant shift towards a culture of shared ownership of long-term sustainability.

The programme's participatory design, tailored coaching, and peer learning components were particularly effective, enabling organisations to move from grant dependency to proactive, innovative approaches – including social enterprise models and collaborative fundraising. The legacy of Emerge lies not only in these numbers but in the strengthened resilience, leadership, and networks that will empower organisations to deliver meaningful change for years to come.

Despite the challenges of funding cuts and regional instability, Oak's approach – combining core support with targeted organisational strengthening – continues to build a more sustainable, resilient, and impactful civil society sector.

## Child safeguarding

Oak Foundation is committed to safeguarding the rights, safety, and wellbeing of children and all people. We recognise that safeguarding is a shared responsibility and is a core part of our mission.

We uphold high standards and work with our grantees to strengthen their own child-safeguarding measures, supported by a growing network of experts. Our Child Safeguarding Policy aligns with international standards and reflects the experience of peer organisations and grantees. We have recently updated the policy to make it clearer, more accessible, and actionable.

Oak is committed to continuous learning and adaptation as new risks and best practices emerge, including those related to digital safety. Our annual child safeguarding training addresses risks and opportunities linked to new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, ensuring our processes remain relevant and effective. This training is delivered by our grantee, the Funder Safeguarding Collaborative.

In 2025, we supported research led by the Funder Safeguarding Collaborative to develop practice standards for safeguarding in grant-making organisations. This initiative is part of our ongoing journey of learning, collaboration, and shared accountability. Underpinned by empirical research and shaped by funders and those impacted by funder policies, these standards aim to promote greater alignment and strengthen safeguarding requirements across the sector.

## Monitoring, evaluation & learning

Oak Foundation is committed to making a meaningful difference through our grant-making, working closely with grantees to drive the change they envision. By gathering evidence of impact, identifying effective approaches, and embedding

reflection into our work, we ensure our actions lead to positive transformation and inform strategic decisions.

In 2025, programme staff continued to support grantees in collecting meaningful impact data, developing compelling stories, and creating safe spaces for learning and reflection. Our senior adviser for impact provided tailored support to grantees seeking to strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems, and advised programme officers on how best to assist. We also offered guidance to grantees commissioning external reviews and evaluations to assess programmes and strategies, ensuring fit-for-purpose solutions.

We have worked to improve reporting and tracking systems while reducing the reporting burden on staff and grantees. Together with other funders in the climate sphere, we piloted joint reporting, allowing grantees to submit one report to multiple funders.

We also tested oral reporting with selected grantees, demonstrating its effectiveness in reducing burden and enhancing the reporting experience under the right conditions. More broadly, our senior adviser for impact led efforts to streamline information and data flows across all stages of the grant-making process, setting clear expectations and asking more purposeful questions to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

At Oak Foundation, we believe in the transformative power of core funding, which represents a significant component of our grant-making. Building upon the work initiated in 2024 to consolidate and share the findings of available evidence on the impact and effectiveness of core funding, in 2025 the senior adviser for impact presented the results of her review at various venues and contributed to a number of pieces in key outlets such as the Center for Effective Philanthropy and Alliance magazine.

## Communications

At Oak Foundation, we believe good communication builds trust, ensures transparency, and amplifies voices that are too often unheard. It is our privilege to share the stories of people whose lives are positively impacted by the inspiring work of our grantees around the world.

Our communications team plays a central role in this effort. Through our twice-yearly newsletters, annual report, social media channels, and the stories page on our website, we aim to showcase the achievements of our grantees and highlight how their work is making the world fairer, safer, and more sustainable.

Oak values communications as a powerful tool for social change. We provide funding for communication initiatives within our programmes and support organisational-strengthening efforts to improve global and local communication capacity. If you are an Oak grantee and would like to explore these opportunities, please contact your programme officer.

We love hearing success stories from our grantees. Sharing these stories helps inspire others and demonstrates the impact of your work. Please reach out to our communications team if you have a story to share. We also welcome feedback – let us know how we can improve our communications to better serve you.



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# Environment



© Environmental Justice Foundation

## Safeguarding our future by restoring our connection to nature

Our strategy places people at the heart of our grant-making to safeguard our future and restore our connection to nature. The Environment Programme has three sub-programmes: Marine Food Systems and Livelihoods, Nature and People, and Regenerative Landscapes. We take a systems change approach by aiming to address the sources of the challenges we face as a society to improve the health and strength of communities and our natural environment. This approach allows us to see inter-connections and envision solutions across sectors to achieve multiple social and biodiversity benefits.

This year's annual report highlights the Marine Food Systems and Livelihoods Sub-programme. Fishers are vital stewards of coastal land and sea, sustaining ecosystems where they live and work. When coastal communities and small-scale fishers are supported to manage and conserve resources, environmental outcomes improve.

We support efforts that protect the food security of coastal and Indigenous communities while ensuring the health of marine ecosystems. This includes enhancing the governance of small-scale fisheries, building resilience to climate change, empowering communities, conserving fish stocks and habitats, and increasing transparency and labour rights in fisheries. We support efforts in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, especially if there is a regional or global impact.

# Tenure, transparency, and tech: protecting small-scale fisheries worldwide

In June 2025, at the UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France, an announcement from an African nation signalled a hopeful step forward – Ghana’s Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Emelia Arthur, pledged to extend inshore exclusive zones for artisanal fishers by six nautical miles. This was a clear commitment to supporting small-scale fisheries in her home country.

“The decision was a victory for locally led marine conservation organisations,” says Ebrima Saidy, CEO of Blue Ventures, an environmental not-for-profit organisation that works with local communities to protect fish stocks, care for marine habitats, and find new ways to safeguard the ocean. “I hope other nations will recognise and learn from the practical solutions that small-scale fishers are using to manage their coasts effectively.”<sup>1</sup>

“

“We aim to support governments so that they can [...] create inshore exclusion zones that are sustainably managed by artisanal fishers.”

Annie Tourette, Blue Ventures

## Strengthening the tenure of local fisheries

As stewards of land and sea, fishers help sustain the diverse ecosystems where they live and work. When local communities, small-scale fishers, and fish workers are fully supported to use, conserve, manage, and develop their coastal areas, there are better environmental and societal outcomes. This is why international re-granter Turning Tides supports coastal and shoreline communities and small-scale fishers.

Turning Tides works across Asia, Africa, and Latin America to address the unique challenges of each region. It helps ensure that the concerns, actions of local communities, and tenure rights are represented and reflected in global decision-making processes and policies.<sup>2</sup>

## Putting a stop to bottom trawling

Industrial fishing practices like bottom trawling are, in some cases, driving fish stocks to the brink of collapse.<sup>3</sup> This practice involves dragging weighted nets over the seabed, destroying marine habitats. The Transform Bottom Trawling Coalition is a global movement bringing together small-scale fisher and environmental organisations to stop bottom trawling in nearshore areas and in vulnerable ecosystems.

The coalition ensures that its members have access to the funding, technical support, and networks they need to support coastal communities, promote practical solutions, and achieve lasting change. “We aim to support governments so that they can restrict bottom trawling in all marine protected areas, and create inshore exclusion zones that are sustainably managed by artisanal fishers,” says Annie Tourette of Blue Ventures, which hosts the Transform Bottom Trawling Coalition.

## Transparency that protects artisanal fishers

Artisanal fishers’ efforts to manage nearshore areas sustainably are regularly undermined by industrial vessels engaged in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. The lack of transparency in the fishing industry hampers efforts to protect these areas and restricts local governments’ ability to act. This is according to the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency, a global network of civil society organisations that work together to improve transparency and accountability in fisheries’ governance and management.<sup>4</sup>



**Caption opposite:** Cape Coast, Ghana. Small-scale fisheries are a source of employment for millions of Ghanaians.



The Coalition's Global Charter for Fisheries Transparency works with governments around the world to make transparent information on fishing vessels, fishing activity, and fisheries governance and management. This information includes fishing vessel identification numbers, vessel ownership data, fishing licenses and vessel position data, and information about transshipment, a process of transferring goods from one vessel to another.

"Transparency is a critical tool for combatting illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing practices," says Maisie Pigeon, director of the coalition. "The good news is we can achieve transparency today through simple, affordable measures that countries can readily implement."<sup>5</sup>

### Strengthening local fisheries through satellite surveillance

Global Fishing Watch uses cutting-edge technology to turn big data into actionable information. Satellite imagery, combined with GPS data from fishing vessels, is now being used to analyse millions of gigabytes of data and create a first-of-its-kind global snapshot of maritime industrial activity. However, as long as fisheries data is not made publicly accessible, the platform offers only a partial view.

This is why FIMA NGO works with lawyers located in different countries and uses surveillance data from Global Fishing Watch to gather information on illicit fishing practices. With this information, they can support legal processes and help local authorities uphold laws that discourage illegal fishing.

FIMA NGO's Legal Ocean Watch project brings together organisations in Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Chile, which are working to curb the illegal and unregulated fishing practices that threaten Latin America's marine ecosystems, human rights, and coastal economies. Legal Ocean Watch supports organisations to use data from surveillance to build and pursue robust legal cases. It also helps countries use the data to strengthen their judicial processes and regulations.<sup>6</sup>

"By using satellite positioning systems to monitor illegal fishing at sea, civil society organisations can use this information to improve the chances of apprehending and prosecuting illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in our oceans," says FIMA NGO's general coordinator Antonia Berrios.

In June 2026, Kenya will be the first African country to host the Our Ocean Conference. Our grantees seek to come up with practical approaches that strengthen local fisheries and protect marine ecosystems. They offer models to help sustainably regulate fisheries around the world, and better support thriving, local coastal communities globally.

Oak supports Blue Ventures, the Transform Bottom Trawling Coalition, Turning Tides, the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency, Global Fishing Watch and FIMA NGO through our Environment Programme. We support efforts that protect the food security of coastal communities and ensure the health of marine ecosystems.

## Grants

### Agricultural Partnership Trust

**USD 400,000 (3 years)**

To support agroecological and regenerative farming work of the Agriculture Partnership Trust and the Agriculture Research Trust in Zimbabwe.

### Alinea Network Organisation Limited

**USD 1,500,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to ensure resilience and sustainable impact across Africa's conservation landscapes by building capacity, collaborative networks, and equitable approaches.

### Associação Kwaedza Simukai Manica

**USD 300,000 (3 years)**

To promote the adoption of Climate-Smart Agriculture as a means of regenerating landscapes in Vanduzi and Sussundenga districts in Manica Province, Mozambique.

### Biodiversity Funders Group

**USD 300,000 (2 years)**

To help build a network of funders in Africa to support a sustainable, just, and healthy future for all life on earth.

### Biodiversity Funders Group

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

To support and expand the Small-Scale Fisheries Funders Network, which contributes to resilient and equitable small-scale fisheries globally.

### Capacity Foundation

**USD 315,789 (1 year)**

To support the preservation and flourishing of the Amazon rainforest.

### Coalition Clean Baltic

**USD 157,895 (1 year)**

To enhance ocean environmental sustainability, improve livelihoods, and strengthen food security across Europe.

### Community Markets for Conservation (COMACO)

**USD 300,000 (3 years)**

To scale COMACO's market-based model for promoting the adoption of regenerative agriculture and conservation of biodiversity in Zambia.

### Community Technology Development Organisation

**USD 820,000 (4 years)**

To accelerate the implementation of regenerative agriculture practices in communities bordering wildlife conservation areas in Zimbabwe.

### Conservation Collective

**USD 300,000 (3 years)**

To connect wild landscapes and protect biodiversity across Sri Lanka.

**Earthlore Foundation****USD 399,881 (3 years)**

To promote the use of traditional ecological knowledge and practices in protecting biodiversity and enhancing food sovereignty in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

**Environmental Justice Foundation CT****USD 2,000,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to help strengthen the organisation's internal systems and support its work to protect the natural world.

**European Climate Foundation****USD 1,052,632 (1 year)**

To provide core support to promote thriving forests in Europe and their benefits for people, nature, and climate.

**Green Living Movement Zambia****USD 300,000 (3 years)**

To support farmers in Mumbwa district to adopt agroecology practices and build resilience to climate change.

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

To promote sustainable fishing practices and protect the oceans in Asia.

**Hen Mpoano****USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To provide core support to help establish resilient, inclusive, evidence-based marine systems that serve coastal communities in Ghana, Africa.

**ICCF Group****USD 1,003,200 (2 years)**

To provide core support to ICCF to build collaboration and support for international conservation.

**Institute for Poverty, Land & Agrarian Studies****USD 500,000 (18 months)**

To strengthen community-based conservation efforts in South Africa by supporting communities to access the internet and energy sources.

**Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation****USD 700,136 (3 years)**

To provide core support to establish and run operations in community-owned conservation areas in northwest Namibia, known as Kunene People's Parks.

**International Collective in Support of Fishworkers****USD 500,000 (4 years)**

To strengthen leadership within small-scale fisheries to help build just and sustainable ocean livelihoods.

**Masifundise****USD 500,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to strengthen small-scale fishing communities and organisations globally.

**Mongabay****USD 290,825 (2 years)**

To support Mongabay, a global news outlet, to help strengthen conservation efforts worldwide through its network of biodiversity-focused journalists.

**Namibia Nature Foundation****USD 500,012 (3 years)**

To provide core support to the Namibia Nature Foundation to improve sustainable community livelihoods and biodiversity conservation in Namibia.

**Namibian Association of Community Based Natural Resource Management Support Organisations****USD 499,965 (3 years)**

To provide core support to strengthen communities in Namibia to safeguard biodiversity and adapt to the effects of climate change.

**Only One****USD 1,000,000 (3 years)**

To make fisheries data visible and accessible to manage oceans responsibly, protect artisanal fishing zones, and improve conditions on fishing vessels.

**Plant with Purpose****USD 430,000 (3 years)**

To scale up community-led landscape restoration work in Malawi.

**RARE, Inc****USD 700,000 (3 years)**

To strengthen coastal conservation efforts in Brazil's Amazon by strengthening the governance of mangroves and fisheries.

**Regenerative Space NPC****USD 200,000 (2 years)**

To sustain RE-SPACE's current environmental restoration work and creation of green jobs in Overberg district, South Africa.

**Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.****USD 4,500,000 (3 years)**

To protect the world's oceans by establishing marine protected areas, implementing sustainable fisheries management, and promoting the benefits to people from coastal communities.

**Stichting BirdLife Europe****USD 1,500,000 (2 years)**

To restore ecosystems across Europe by ensuring the effective and timely implementation of the European Nature Restoration Regulation.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation****USD 568,182 (1 year)**

To support Wild5 and its work to balance the needs of people and nature in Africa and Asia.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation****USD 3,600,000 (3 years)**

To provide re-granting support to Oak Environment Programme grantees for their efforts to promote transparency and fairness in global fisheries.

**Traffic International****USD 450,000 (2.5 years)**

To promote legal and sustainable trade in wild plants, which will help stop illegal harvesting, protect biodiversity, and bring economic benefits to rural communities living in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area.

**Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust****USD 750,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to reduce the spread of disease from wildlife and domestic animals to people in Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area.

**Wilderness Foundation****USD 727,178 (3 years)**

To sustain and scale conservation work in South Africa and across the African continent.

**Wildlife Asia****USD 4,020,000 (3 years)**

To support living landscapes benefiting people, nature, and climate in Southeast Asia.

**Wildlife Conservation Society****USD 350,000 (2 years)**

To support the Women Ocean Guardians Initiative to assist women in leading efforts to protect and manage ocean resources.

**WINGS****USD 250,000 (2 years)**

To support WINGS and Philanthropy Dialogues to foster locally led and collaborative learning and action for climate and environmental resilience across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

**Zimbabwe Women's Bureau****USD 350,000 (3 years)**

To improve the capacity of rural women farmers in Zimbabwe to implement regenerative agriculture processes, and restore and conserve biodiversity.

**Caption:**

The photos throughout the Environment Programme section of this report illustrate the work of our grantees to secure food for coastal and Indigenous communities while protecting marine ecosystems around the world.

# Global Climate Initiatives



## Supporting a cleaner, healthier, and thriving future

We all want to live in places where our families can breathe clean air, drink safe water, and build a life that is secure and prosperous. But today, rising temperatures, increasingly severe weather events, and pollution are putting that future at risk. Fortunately, we already have many of the tools we need to turn things around.

The Global Climate Initiatives Programme was established in 2025 to support practical, affordable, people-first solutions that help communities thrive while reducing the harm caused by pollution and overuse of natural resources. Whether it is increasing the use of cleaner energy, reducing waste, or improving how communities grow and share food, we support efforts that focus on changes that make life better now – and protect what matters for the future.

We believe that by working together – across sectors, communities, and cultures – we can build a future that is not only cleaner, but also fairer and healthier for everyone. In this year’s annual report, we focus on the success story of Pakistan, where an exciting clean energy revolution is underway. We are excited that Pakistan has undergone one of the most rapid and unanticipated transitions to clean energy, driven largely by homes and businesses installing rooftop solar panels. Read on to find out more.

# From panels to progress: powering a brighter future in Pakistan

In 2025, we celebrated a pivotal milestone: for the first time, wind and solar power generated more electricity than coal.<sup>1</sup> This signals a rapid transformation in how the world powers its homes, industries, and businesses. As well as delivering cleaner air, healthier lives, and job prosperity, this will also reduce household bills, and build economic stability and security.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most striking examples of this transformation is unfolding in Pakistan, where an exciting clean energy revolution is underway.

According to the World Resources Institute, Pakistan has undergone one of the most rapid and unanticipated transitions to clean energy, driven largely by homes and businesses installing rooftop solar panels. In just a few years, the country's electric grid has transformed from negligible solar power to having an expected 20 per cent of all its electricity coming from solar by 2026.<sup>3,4</sup>

Pakistan, like many countries across the world has been facing high energy prices, an unstable power grid supply, and the removal of diesel subsidies. As a result, fuel was more expensive, and this was driving consumer demand for cheaper, more reliable alternatives.

What sets Pakistan's solar expansion apart is that it is anchored in the needs of the community. According to an energy expert in Karachi called Ubaid Ullah, the energy transition is driven by people. Rather than relying on large-scale utility projects, most panels are installed on household rooftops and in the fields of small farms independently by ordinary people. "If you look at satellite images of any Pakistani city," he says, "all the roofs appear blue, covered in solar panels."<sup>5</sup> This bottom-up movement reflects a shift in consumer behaviour, driven by necessity and opportunity.

According to Dave Jones from the energy think-tank, Ember, solar panels are available for USD 60 to USD 80 in the country. "This is a consumer

revolution," he says. "Ordinary people can simply buy a panel from a hardware shop and install it themselves with the help of a YouTube video."<sup>6</sup>

The solar boom in Pakistan has been astonishing for its speed and scale. But the other remarkable feature of the boom is that it has been largely unplanned. Indeed, Pakistan proves a different story is possible: a revolution driven by market forces, rather than climate-driven or state-led green policies. According to the World Resources Institute, one of the most profound dimensions of Pakistan's solar boom is how it has facilitated energy access after 60 years of trying to do this with subsidised fossil fuels.

Indeed, vast swathes of rural Pakistan that were previously unserved by the grid, now have access to low-cost electricity. For rural households, stand-alone solar systems mean that access to lighting, connectivity, and cooling are now possible and affordable. "We hope that Pakistan's people-led transition can evolve from an infrastructure of necessity into a foundation for resilience, opportunity and social renewal," says Jigar Shah, senior fellow at the World Resources Institute (WRI) Polsky Center for the Global Energy Transition.<sup>7</sup>

“

**"We hope that Pakistan's people-led transition can evolve from an infrastructure of necessity into a foundation for resilience, opportunity, and social renewal."**

Jigar Shah, WRI Polsky Energy Center

Alongside this rapid, people-led transformation, a number of local research organisations have helped strengthen the enabling environment

for distributed renewables. Through public awareness efforts, knowledge-sharing, and constructive engagement with decision-makers, they have contributed to greater understanding of solar's practical and economic benefits.

In Pakistan, organisations such as Renewables First, an energy and environment think-tank based in Islamabad, have played an important role in informing policymakers and strengthening the data underpinning the country's solar expansion. Their work has added valuable local context, supported dialogue around import conditions and taxation, and helped ensure that accurate evidence informs national energy discussions.

These efforts have reinforced confidence in solar as a reliable and financially viable solution – helping sustain momentum behind the country's bottom-up transition. Muhammad Mustafa Amjad from Renewables First says: "Beyond policy, the solar boom is essentially people-led and market driven – it is the people motivating markets to import more solar panels."

## **A blueprint for other nations?**

About 600 million people in Africa – nearly half of the continent's population – lack access to reliable electricity. But this is changing: Ember has found evidence of a nascent solar boom across the continent. With household incomes between Pakistan and many countries across the African continent being quite similar, African policy makers are starting to think about how to catalyse solar power uptake and transform and strengthen the energy system.

Many people believe that Pakistan's experience can be a model for other developing nations. They hope that renewable energy heralds in the cleaner, safer, fairer, and more affordable future that the world needs. "Global South countries don't have to be the laggards," says Muhammad Mustafa Amjad. "They



can actually be the leaders of the energy transition.”<sup>9</sup>

As Waqas Moosa, CEO of Pakistan-based Hadron Solar, a leading solar solutions provider in Pakistan, says: “The Stone Age did not finish because we ran out of stone, the Iron Age did not finish because we ran out of iron, and the oil age is not going to finish because we ran out of oil or fossil fuels. It basically ends when the new technology is ready to take the throne. And today, renewables are in the right place.”<sup>10</sup>

Through the Global Climate Initiatives Programme, Oak supports regional regranters that are working with organisations including Renewables First, the World Resources Institute Polsky Energy Center, the European Climate Foundation and Ember. We support practical, people-first solutions that help communities thrive, while reducing the harm caused by pollution and the overuse of natural resources.

## Grants

### AFEF

**USD 700,000 (3 years)**

To support Indian philanthropists to lead the way in supporting solutions for a cleaner, healthier, and thriving future for everyone in India.

### Bite Back 2030

**USD 500,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Bite Back 2030 for its work to support food systems and environments to be healthier, fairer, and more sustainable across the UK.

### EarthON Foundation

**USD 1,200,000 (3 years)**

To improve the lives of over 10 million Indian farmers by installing solar panels above croplands, generating both electricity and food, and delivering economic benefits to rural communities.

### Eating Better (UK)

**USD 900,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to Eating Better to help scale up its work for healthy, just, and sustainable food environments in the UK.

### Friends of the Earth Europe

**USD 600,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Friends of the Earth for its work across Europe in support of forms of farming that are cleaner and healthier for all.

### Fundo Brasileiro para a Biodiversidade - Funbio

**USD 150,000 (1 year)**

To support communications efforts around the COP30 climate conference in Brazil.

### Give2Asia

**USD 1,250,000 (3 years)**

To provide support for carbon reduction and renewable energy acceleration in Asia.

### Green New Deal UK

**USD 250,000 (2 years)**

To address climate change, create jobs, and reduce economic inequality in the UK.

### Lighthouse Reports

**USD 950,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support for independent journalism that looks into how food systems are changing in Europe, helping people better understand the different views and issues involved.

### Meliore

**USD 7,500,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to strengthen climate action and safeguard the wellbeing of current and future generations.

### Oil Change International

**USD 1,250,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to help accelerate the transition to a cleaner, fairer, and safer future.

### Our Common Home

**USD 1,800,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Our Common Home, which works with people from all parts of society to build the common good for the environment.

### Réseau Action Climat - France | Climate Action Network - France

**USD 900,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to help make food systems in France healthier, more sustainable, and fair.

### Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.

**USD 150,000 (1 year)**

To support Urban Movement Innovation Fund in exploring a philanthropic partnership to advance safe, clean, and affordable mobility for all.

### Stichting 350 Global

**USD 500,000 (1 year)**

To provide core support to 350.org, an international movement of people working to safeguard our planet for future generations.

### Swiss Philanthropy Foundation

**USD 3,400,000 (3 years)**

To scale the use of clean power, which combines farming with solar power generation, to meet both energy and food security needs in India.

### World Resources Institute

**USD 1,100,000 (2 years)**

To support efforts in India that cut food loss and waste, improving people’s livelihoods and ensuring that people and communities have a cleaner, healthier, and thriving future.



#### Caption:

The photos throughout the Global Climate Initiatives Programme section of the report illustrate the work of our grantees to support the exciting clean energy movement in Pakistan that is currently underway.

# Housing and Homelessness



© SOSCH

## Supporting organisations to end homelessness and create housing opportunities

A safe and secure home helps build strong communities where everyone can thrive and live dignified lives. However, far too many people are under constant pressure of losing their home. Given that the gap between income and homes that are affordable is growing, our focus is primarily on people who are most excluded from housing opportunity.

Homelessness is preventable. This is why we support not-for-profit organisations that are ambitious in their strategies to end homelessness and create housing opportunity – from testing new approaches to scaling up what works. Our programme has a deep commitment to strengthening the voices of people with lived experience and a focus on efforts that contribute towards change at a systemic level.

In this year's annual report, we profile the work of some of our grantees in Scotland. They reflect the three pillars of our programme – reducing and preventing homelessness, strengthening renter rights and increasing supply and access to genuinely affordable and decent homes. Read more on the following pages about their amazing work to defend the rights of people in Scotland to a secure and affordable home.

# Turning the tide on homelessness: creating safe, secure homes for all



Samantha Austin loves her new home in Closeburn, a village in Dumfries & Galloway, southwest Scotland: “We are so happy – it has been amazing to finally have somewhere secure after being made homeless with two young children,” she says.

Samantha’s new home is one of three in the village developed by the Nith Valley Leaf Trust, with the support of **South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH)**, an organisation that supports the planning and delivery of community-led housing in Scotland.

The lack of suitable housing in the area, particularly for families, was causing people to move away from the village. In a bid to address the issue, the Nith Valley Leaf Trust purchased land from the council, and, with the support of SOSCH, started building work on site in summer 2019.

By August 2020, they had completed three houses, and three families have since moved into an affordable, secure home, with five children between them. The children attend the local village school, and the adults all work in and around the village, supporting the local economy.

Samantha’s experience of being made homeless with her family is sadly all too common. In 2024, the Scottish Government declared a ‘national housing emergency’.<sup>1</sup> Recent statistics show that more than

17,200 households are currently trapped in temporary accommodation, a six per cent increase in one year, impacting over 10,000 children.<sup>2,3</sup>

In addition, nearly 250,000 people are on waiting lists for a social home across Scotland, and 40,688 households have applied to their local council for help with homelessness last year. On average, those in temporary accommodation wait 238 days for a settled home.<sup>4</sup>

“

“We believe a future without homelessness is possible.”

Maggie Brünjes,  
Homeless Network Scotland

Maggie Brünjes of **Homeless Network Scotland** believes that it doesn’t have to be this way. “We believe a future without homelessness is possible,” she says. “In Scotland, we’ve never known more about homelessness and its solutions. But the data paints a different picture: homelessness is rising, and people are spending longer than ever without a settled home.”

A raft of legislation, often described as some of the most comprehensive in the world, gives people living in Scotland strong rights when it comes

to homelessness. The new Housing Bill, passed in November 2025, creates a robust legal framework intended to prevent homelessness. It places new duties on a range of relevant bodies, including police and health services, to ‘ask and act’ on homelessness.

“The act is a step towards making homelessness prevention everyone’s business,” says Maggie. People experiencing homelessness and the people who support them have long worked toward the measures that have been included in the new act. For example, Homeless Network Scotland supports a team of peer researchers that provided the evidence base for the new legislation.

The **Govan Law Centre** supports people facing homelessness with the legal support they need to ensure they can stay in their homes or receive appropriate services. It has specialist solicitors, caseworkers, and financial and welfare rights advisers based in its offices in Govan and Govanhill in Glasgow. The team manages to prevent homelessness in nine out of every ten cases that come to them.<sup>5</sup> This extraordinary work was recognised at this year’s Scottish Legal Awards, where the team won the legal champion award.

“It is such a privilege to work at Govan Law Centre, using the law every day to help people,” says Lorna Walker, the head of prevention of homelessness services at the Govan Law Centre.



© Living Rent

“We are committed to helping as many people as possible, and to ensuring their legal rights are met.”

**Living Rent** is Scotland’s tenants and community union. Its members have built branches and groups across the country over the last decade. Members have built expertise through their own experiences as renters, and by working together to ensure everyone has a secure and affordable home.

By working with other Living Rent members, Edinburgh renter Lucas was able to get a rent reduction of GBP 175 per month for six months, when an unrepaired plumbing blockage left him unable to use the shower or sinks in his flat. Living Rent brought the matter to the attention of his landlady, who then carried out repairs and compensated Lucas with more than GBP 1,000.

Edinburgh is a vibrant and exciting city, which attracts visitors from all over the world. In 2024, there were over five million overnight tourist visits to the city and surrounding area.<sup>6</sup> While tourism contributes to a thriving economy, it also pushes up costs for residents, especially when homes are converted into short-term rentals for visitors. Living Rent members encouraged the city council in Edinburgh to commit money raised from a new tourist tax to be spent on council housing. The council agreed, and now GBP 5 million a year from

the visitor levy paid by those who stay in hotels will enable the City council to borrow a further GBP 150 million to build new council and affordable homes.

The tourist tax funding is significant because new affordable housing is much needed in Edinburgh, where a shortage of council and affordable homes has led the city to suspend new lettings of its own council-owned homes, except to families who are experiencing homelessness. The suspension forms part of the city council’s own housing emergency response. The work of organisations like Living Rent and SOSCH is already proving vital in delivering solutions that enable more decent, affordable homes to be built in Scotland.

Oak’s Housing and Homelessness Programme supports organisations that help people enjoy the safety and security that Samantha and her family have found in their new home. “We seek to support different models of community ownership that benefit people with the greatest housing need,” says Oak’s director of the Housing and Homelessness Programme, Brian Robson. “We know that housing is the solution to homelessness, and would like to see increased supply of genuinely affordable and decent homes – in Scotland and elsewhere.”

“Strengthened laws are a huge step forward, but as experience in Scotland shows, they can mean little without the availability of homes. Like our grantees in Scotland, we believe a future without homelessness is possible – and we are supporting efforts towards a future where more people live in decent, affordable homes.”

Oak’s Housing and Homelessness Programme supports South of Scotland Community Housing, Homeless Network Scotland, Govan Law Centre and Living Rent. A safe and secure home helps build strong communities where everyone can thrive and live dignified lives, and to this end, we support housing and homelessness not-for-profit organisations in the UK and US to end homelessness and create housing opportunity. Find out more on our website.



**Caption for photo opposite:** The image features the "Life in Govan" mural series on Elder Street in Govan, Glasgow. The mural is a collaborative artwork by artists Marion Brandis and Nicholas Martin. It is located on the side of a tenement building, next to traditional Glasgow red sandstone buildings.

**Caption above:** The Govan Law Centre supports people facing homelessness with the legal support they need to ensure they can stay in their homes or receive appropriate services.

# Grants

## **Astraea Lesbian Foundation For Justice**

**USD 2,000,000 (4 years)**

To provide grants and organisational support to community-based organisations addressing homelessness and housing rights for people furthest from housing opportunity across the United States.

## **Bevan Foundation**

**USD 424,772 (4 years)**

To work with local and national organisations in Wales to increase the supply of affordable housing.

## **Boston Medical Center Corporation**

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

To develop a scalable and financially sustainable process to develop supportive housing, so that people at risk of homelessness remain housed in the US.

## **Bristol Law Centre**

**USD 487,342 (3 years)**

To deliver housing advice and support to prevent homelessness and improve housing conditions for people in Bristol in the UK, working in partnership with Housing Matters and wider stakeholders.

## **Ceiba**

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

To improve access to generally affordable and decent homes for people with the greatest housing need in Philadelphia.

## **Center for Responsible Lending (CRL)**

**USD 800,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to CRL for its work on housing in the US.

## **CentrePoint Soho**

**USD 758,228 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Centrepoint, a leading UK youth homelessness charity, which seeks to deliver 300 affordable one-bed homes for young people.

## **Church Housing Association**

**USD 249,367 (2 years)**

To provide core support to help the association achieve self-sufficiency to create new homes for people in need in the UK.

## **Citizens UK**

**USD 1,265,823 (4 years)**

To support local leaders to help make better quality temporary accommodation and more affordable housing available to members of their communities.

## **Clan Childlaw**

**USD 500,000 (4 years)**

To support care-experienced children and young people in Scotland by helping to prevent them from being made homeless when they leave care.

## **Community Land and Finance CIC**

**USD 4,993,671 (5 years)**

To increase the supply of affordable community-led housing across England.

## **Ealing Law Centre**

**USD 524,051 (3 years)**

To provide core support to prevent homelessness and encourage new housing lawyers to enter the sector.

## **Face To Face**

**USD 850,000 (4 years)**

To increase the supply and access to housing for low-income residents of northwest Philadelphia.

## **Friends, Families and Travellers**

**USD 759,494 (5 years)**

To increase access to homes and improve housing rights for Gypsy and Traveller communities in the UK.

## **Grassroots Support Ltd**

**dba Movement Research Unit**

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

To strengthen and increase the capacity of organisations working to improve housing opportunities for communities in the UK.

## **Greater Manchester Law Centre**

**USD 800,000 (4 years)**

To help ensure the protection of tenants in the UK.

## **Heriot-Watt University**

**USD 581,152 (3 years)**

To deliver a UK-wide, cross-sectoral programme of research and capacity strengthening on homelessness prevention.

## **Homeless Network Scotland**

**USD 1,341,772 (4 years)**

To provide core support to Homeless Network Scotland to further its strategic goals to end homelessness.

## **HomeStart Inc.**

**USD 1,500,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to HomeStart in Boston to support its work to improve people's housing and expand its work to prevent homelessness.

## **Hope Projects**

**USD 569,620 (5 years)**

To provide core support for Hope Projects, which provides housing opportunities in the West Midlands.

## **Housing Assistance Council**

**USD 750,000 (3 years)**

To build a national community of practice in rural homelessness and take forward work to advance support for preserving affordable housing in rural areas.

## **London Renters Union**

**USD 475,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support for decent, secure, and affordable homes for Londoners, in the UK.

## **Longleigh Foundation**

**USD 93,741 (1 year)**

To support people living in social housing to start establishing a national group that will work together to help shape fair and meaningful change for residents in the UK.

## **National Alliance to End Homelessness**

**USD 1,400,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, which works to end homelessness in the US.

## **National Housing Law Project**

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

To support the Tenant Union Federation to guarantee housing as a public good and ensure housing security, safety, and affordability for tenants.

## **National Law Center for Homelessness and Poverty**

**USD 250,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to help prevent and solve homelessness in the United States.

## **National Low Income Housing Coalition**

**USD 1,200,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to help advance affordable housing solutions for those most in housing need.

## **Native Americans in Philanthropy**

**USD 1,000,000 (3 years)**

To provide support to low-income communities to help them access safe and affordable housing.

## **One PA For All / One PA Activists United**

**USD 500,000 (3 years)**

To help increase and improve housing opportunities for people with the greatest housing needs in Pennsylvania, USA.

## **One25 Limited**

**USD 860,000 (3 years)**

To provide core funding to support women who are working as sex-workers in Bristol, the UK.

## **Point Source Youth**

**USD 500,000 (3 years)**

To help prevent youth homelessness in cities across the US through collaboration with states, cities, and local communities to implement and assess cash transfer programmes.

## **Race on the Agenda Resource for London**

**USD 295,000 (5 years)**

To prevent and reduce homelessness in London, the UK.



© Housing Network Scotland

**Refugee Council**  
**USD 1,200,000 (4 years)**  
 To provide unrestricted programme support for the Refugee Council, which aims to reduce and prevent homelessness and increase the supply and access to decent and affordable homes for refugees in the UK.

**Regional Housing Legal Services**  
**USD 1,000,000 (3 years)**  
 To provide core support to reduce housing insecurity for low-income households and to create thriving communities in Pennsylvania.

**Right To The City Alliance**  
**USD 1,500,000 (4 years)**  
 To provide core support to increase the supply of genuinely affordable housing and prevent homelessness in the US.

**Simon Community Northern Ireland**  
**USD 100,000 (1 year)**  
 To support effective solutions to improve the supply and access to genuinely affordable homes in Northern Ireland.

**Supportive Housing Network of New York**  
**USD 850,000 (3 years)**  
 To provide core support to the Supportive Housing Network of New York to increase and improve the supply of supportive housing for homeless New Yorkers.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation**  
**USD 1,000,000 (3 years)**  
 To re-grant and provide core support grants to Housing and Homelessness grantee partners in the US and UK.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation**  
**USD 116,000 (1 year)**  
 To provide organisational development support grants to Housing and Homelessness Programme partners in the US and the UK and to Environment Programme partners in Southern Africa.

**The Social Change Nest CIC**  
**USD 100,000 (2 years)**  
 To provide core support to improve access to housing for those furthest from opportunity or with the greatest housing needs in the UK.

**The Trustees of Princeton University**  
**USD 950,000 (3 years)**  
 To support the Eviction Lab at Princeton University to develop tools that help prevent homelessness across the United States.

**Trust for London**  
**USD 1,652,684 (4 years)**  
 To support Trust for London's 'Better Temporary Accommodation (Better TA) for Londoners' alliance, which aims to ensure that Londoners' stays in temporary accommodation are short, safe, and healthy within a decade.

**United Way of Massachusetts Bay Inc**  
**USD 500,000 (3 years)**  
 To increase the supply of housing to reduce homelessness in Massachusetts, the US.

**Why Not Prosper, Inc**  
**USD 700,000 (5 years)**  
 To provide core support to reduce and prevent homelessness among women leaving prison in Pennsylvania, the US.

**Women in Prison**  
**USD 916,076 (3 years)**  
 To improve housing opportunities for women in contact with the criminal justice system in England.

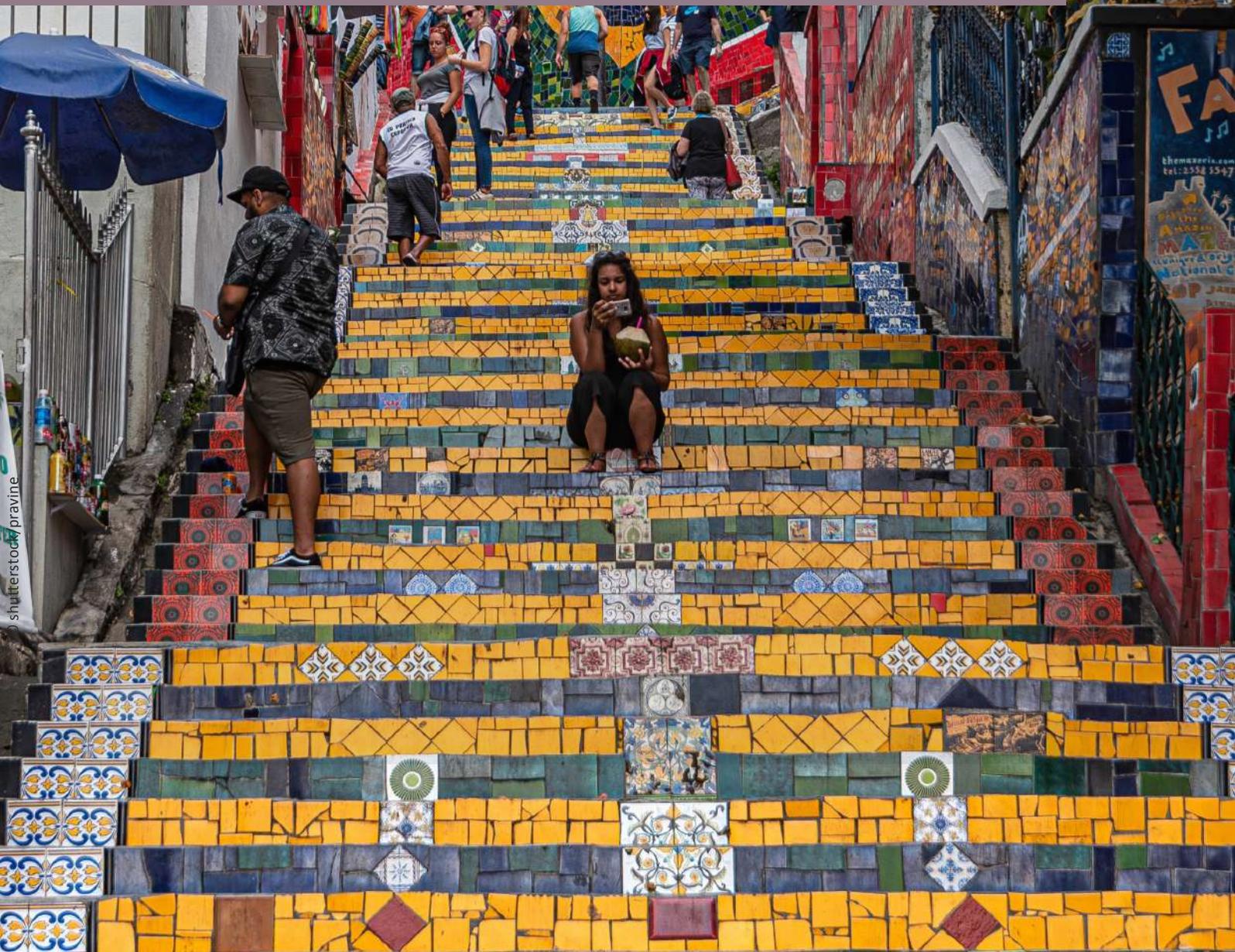
**Woodside on the Move**  
**USD 100,000 (1 year)**  
 To support the Western Queens Community Land Trust's projects that promote community ownership of land and housing in Western Queens, New York City.

**Young Roots**  
**USD 525,727 (3 years)**  
 To provide support to Young Roots for its efforts to address housing and homelessness issues.



**Captions:** The photos throughout the Housing and Homelessness Programme section of the report illustrate the work of our grantees to support the creation of safe, new homes for everyone in Scotland.

# International Human Rights



## Protecting and promoting the human rights of all people

Since 1948 the international community has developed an extensive body of laws and principles to protect human rights. The laws provide all of us with the tools to live full lives with access to justice. Unfortunately, there remains a gulf between human rights rhetoric and the lived experience of many people. We support efforts that seek to close that gap.

In recent decades, prolonged pre-trial detention for those awaiting criminal trial has become more commonplace.<sup>1</sup> Detainees can sometimes suffer overcrowding and poor conditions, in which torture and inhuman treatment can thrive. Oak's International Human Rights Programme supports the efforts of civil society organisations to promote the idea of detention as a last resort: detention should only be a necessary and proportionate response to concerns of public order and/or flight risk.

In this year's annual report, we profile the work of Fundo Brasil, which works around Brazil to help tackle excessive use of pre-trial detention. The story illustrates the work of some of its grantees that seek to uphold the due process rights of detainees, promote the use of alternatives to detention, and ensure independent and adequate oversight of detention regimes.

# Expanding access to justice: how Brazil is tackling excessive pre-trial detention

Maria was in her twenties when the Sao Paulo police in Brazil arrested her on the street, accusing her of drug dealing. “I was a user, not a dealer, and I was three months pregnant, with two children at home,” she says.

Maria’s baby was born in prison before her trial took place. Conditions were harsh, with overcrowding and limited access to basic amenities. “The child cried every night as the cell door was slammed,” she says.

When the baby was six months old, she, along with Maria’s other children, was sent into foster care. Maria was devastated. While she recognised the need to take responsibility for her choices, the experience felt like a double punishment – for her and her children.

Her situation changed in 2018 when the Supremo Tribunal Federal ruled that women with children under 12 who were being detained for non-violent crimes could await their trial under house arrest. Thanks to this ruling, Maria was able to go home, reunite with her family, and go back to work.

## Fundo Brasil – working to improve access to justice in Brazil

Fundo Brasil is an independent, not-for-profit foundation that seeks to strengthen civil society organisations in Brazil. For more than a decade, it has supported hundreds of organisations focused on improving justice processes and expanding access to legal safeguards.

“We engage with a broad range of organisations across Brazil working to tackle injustices that disproportionately target communities through unequal systems and structures,” says Pedro Lagatta, programme officer at Fundo Brasil. “This helps us understand the nationwide criminal justice landscape, and helps our grantees contribute to greater national, regional, and local impact.”

Maria’s experience reflects wider changes in Brazil’s justice system.

Long delays between arrest and trial have been common, with serious consequences for families. In 2015, 261,786 people were being detained pre-trial in Brazil. By 2024, this number had dropped by 13 per cent of the overall prison population – to 214,447 people. This was in part due to the fact that more people were put under house arrest while awaiting trial, instead of being incarcerated. In 2016, 6,027 people were under pre-trial house arrest, but by 2024, this number had risen to 235,051.<sup>2</sup>

The Supremo Tribunal Federal ruling means that more detainees were able to stay at home, and for women in particular, the change has been significant: the number in pre-trial house arrest rose from 850 in 2016 to 24,587 in 2024, which amounted to nearly 46 per cent of all women who were being detained pre-trial.<sup>3</sup>

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“These efforts have been transformative in the lives of real people.”

Pedro Lagatta, Fundo Brasil

In tandem, the cohort of babies and young children in prison with their mothers fell from 705 in 2016 to 120 in 2024. Significantly, the number of pre-trial detainees working during this time rose by over 25 per cent, as did the number in education.<sup>4</sup> These figures demonstrate that alternatives to detention keep families together and allow people to sustain their livelihoods. “These efforts have been transformative in the lives of real people,” says Pedro.

## Implementation of custody hearings

Key to these changes were the creation in 2015 of custody hearings (audiências de custódia) by the Conselho Nacional de Justiça. Custody hearings require detainees go before a judge and prosecutor within 24 hours of arrest. The judge



analyses the reasons for arrest, the case for pre-trial detention, and tailors the judicial response to the specific situation of each person. This provides a fundamental safeguard for due process and against arbitrary detention.

Custody hearings were the result of a collective effort by state actors and civil society organisations such as: the Instituto de Defesa do Direito de Defesa, which contributed legal expertise and engaged with judicial authorities; and the Rede de Justiça Criminal, which engaged



© Airan Albino/Brazil Fund

with parliamentarians. The Instituto de Estudos da Religião also played a central role in monitoring the conduct of hearings at the State level in Rio de Janeiro and ensuring their fair and effective functioning.

According to official data, in the decade since their introduction, custody hearings have resulted in the release of nearly 820,000 people.<sup>5</sup>

#### Reduction in torture

Overcrowding and poor conditions remain challenges in Brazil's prisons, where violence and ill-treatment have been documented. In 2013, Brazil established the National Preventive Mechanism, an independent system of detention monitoring which has been demonstrated to play a crucial role in preventing torture.

The organisations Justiça Global, Gabinete de Assessoria Jurídica às Organizações Populares, Conectas, and Pastoral Carceraria sought to maximise the impact of the mechanisms, regularly serving as members, supporting their effective functioning, and improving conditions in prison. Challenges remain, but the prevention system has been substantially strengthened in recent years. Eight states have now created their own mechanisms, often as a result of sustained engagement from grantees.

#### A comprehensive action plan

In 2017, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) identified severe human rights violations across prisons in Pernambuco, Maranhão, Rio de Janeiro, and Espírito Santo, including

homicides, torture, beatings, overcrowding, and cruel, inhumane, and degrading conditions. Conectas, Justiça Global, the Sociedade Maranhense de Direitos Humanos, and Gabinete Assessoria Jurídica às Organizações Populares were involved in bringing this to the attention of the IACHR.

This case led to the Supremo Tribunal Federal ruling in 2023 that these prison conditions violated the Brazilian constitution. Conectas, Justiça Global, Instituto de Defesa do Direito de Defesa, Instituto Terra, Trabalho e Cidadania, and Pastoral Carceraria acted either as *amicus curiae*<sup>1</sup> or had lawyers participating in the case. "For the first time, victims and their loved ones were officially recognised," says Patricia Oliveira from Agenda Nacional pelo Desencarceramento. "Having the voices of those most affected in the courtroom was a huge victory for justice and transparency."

This decision has led to the creation of a national action plan, called Pena Justa, the implementation of which is being overseen by the Ministério da Justiça e Segurança Pública and the Conselho Nacional de Justiça.

Maria's story illustrates the human impact of these reforms. "Being at home with my children gave me back my life," she says. "I am in work. My kids have a mother. I have my children. I paid a high price, but my story offers hope."

## Grants

#### Aspiration

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

To provide core support to De|Center for its work to promote technology that meets the needs of all users, particularly those furthest from opportunity.

#### Brazil Fund for Human Rights

**USD 4,100,000 (3 years)**

To support the Brazil Fund for Human Rights to strengthen its communications and support civil society organisations working in the area of criminal justice.

#### Check My Ads

**USD 600,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support for its work to bring transparency to the digital advertising industry and contribute towards a transparent and fair digital advertising market.

#### Community Initiatives

**USD 1,500,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to the Council for Global Equality for its work to foster innovative engagement and collaboration in support of global equality.

#### Conectas

**USD 1,500,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to Conectas for its mission to promote human rights and build fair, free, and democratic societies.



#### Caption:

The photos throughout the International Human Rights Programme section of the report illustrate the work of our grantees to support civil society organisations in Brazil to help reshape the justice system so that it works better for people.

<sup>1</sup> Translates as 'friend of the court' and means an impartial adviser to a court of law.

References: Please see page 58 of this report.

#### Digital Freedom Fund

**USD 631,579 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Digital Freedom Fund to achieve its mission of supporting the digital rights community in Europe to advance and protect human rights in digital spaces and reduce the negative impact of technology in the world.

#### EU DisinfoLab

**USD 315,789 (3 years)**

To equip civil society with knowledge and expertise, and design responses to support a healthy information sphere in Europe.

#### European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights

**USD 250,000 (1 year)**

To provide core support to the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights for its work in pursuit of international justice.

#### European Center for Not-for-Profit Law Stichting

**USD 250,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to ECNL for its work to expand, empower, and support the resilience of people and communities working to protect human rights globally.

#### Fortify Rights

**USD 1,050,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Fortify Rights to strengthen organisations and communities in Southeast Asia.

#### Forum Brasileiro de Seguranca Publica

**USD 750,000 (3 years)**

To support public safety in Brazil.

#### Foundation for the Rights of Disadvantaged Populations

**USD 250,000 (3 years)**

To advance the rights of people in need of protection in Asia-Pacific, through capacity-strengthening, and sharing knowledge and resources.

#### Fundo Positivo

**USD 613,134 (2 years)**

To support civil society organisations in Brazil working to build a more inclusive and just society.

#### Global Detention Project

**USD 375,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to the Global Detention Project, which works to end arbitrary and harmful migration-related detention practices around the world.

#### Human Dignity Trust

**USD 911,392 (3 years)**

To provide core support to promote justice, safety, and full dignity for LGBTQI people.

#### Hungarian Helsinki Committee

**USD 1,173,913 (3 years)**

To provide core support to the Hungarian Helsinki Committee.

#### HUQUQYAT LTD

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

To support documentation and investigative work seeking to advance justice and accountability in Syria.

#### HURIDOCs

**USD 250,000 (1 year)**

To provide core support to develop tools and strategies that make information accessible to human rights defenders.

#### International Crisis Group

**USD 100,000 (18 months)**

To help mitigate conflict in parts of the Asia Pacific region and alleviate its impacts on civilians, and to build support for the pillars of sustainable peace.

#### International Detention Coalition

**USD 1,152,360 (4 years)**

To provide core support to strengthen the human rights of people affected by immigration detention, in collaboration with civil society, UN agencies, and governments.

#### International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association

**USD 1,000,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to promote justice, safety, and full dignity for LGBTQI people across Europe and Central Asia.

#### International Network of Civil Liberties Organisations

**USD 450,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to uphold essential rights and freedoms, including privacy, freedom of belief, peaceful civic engagement, and the ability to express views responsibly.

#### INTRAC

**USD 200,000 (1 year)**

To help human rights groups use a new tool to improve their work and share it widely for future use.

#### Jagori

**USD 99,738 (1.5 years)**

To support initiatives that promote opportunity and justice for women and communities across India, in partnership with government and civil society.

#### NALSAR University of Law

**USD 603,234 (3 years)**

To provide core support to the Square Circle Clinic to advance fair treatment in the justice system in India through legal help and research.

#### National Endowment for Democracy

**USD 600,000 (1 year)**

To provide core support to help grow and strengthen democratic institutions around the world.

#### Network of European Foundations

**USD 631,579 (2 years)**

To support diverse public interest groups in their efforts to ensure that Artificial Intelligence better serves people and society.

#### Network of European Foundations

**USD 526,316 (3 years)**

To support and nurture alliances for inclusive and resilient societies in Europe.

#### New Venture Fund

**USD 1,050,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to the Sage Fund to protect human rights globally.

#### New York University

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

To provide core support to develop strategies and frameworks that address online harms while safeguarding freedom of expression and privacy.

#### Rigardu e.V.

**USD 752,632 (3 years)**

To provide core support to end violence against people on the move.

#### Southern Africa Litigation Centre

**USD 237,873 (2 years)**

To provide core support to the Southern African Litigation Centre, which works to promote justice and accountability in Southern Africa.

#### Stawatch

**USD 303,622 (3 years)**

To provide news, information, and analysis on EU spending and practices in the field of justice and home affairs.

#### Stop Online Harm

**USD 250,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to offer support and guidance to survivors of online violence.

#### The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland

**USD 577,219 (3 years)**

To protect rights in Northern Ireland and help groups work together for lasting peace.

#### The Regents of the University of California

**USD 1,500,000 (3 years)**

To support the Berkeley Human Rights Center in researching war crimes and human rights violations, developing standards, and training investigators, students, and leaders around the world.

#### Tides Foundation

**USD 250,000 (2 years)**

To support Freedom to Marry Global to promote understanding and public awareness of equality and human rights globally.

# Issues Affecting Women



## Supporting women and girls to be safe, free, and have an equal opportunity to thrive

For more than 20 years, the Issues Affecting Women Programme (IAWP) has funded organisations and movements around the world. All women and girls should be safe, free, and have an equal chance to thrive. Yet, every day, women experience violence and discrimination and are denied the freedom to decide how they will live. This undermines their health, safety, dignity, and independence.

We find inspiration from strong and vibrant organisations and movements, built and led by women. These courageous people transform lives and communities across the world. Supporting them with resources, organisational strengthening, and connections is at the heart of what we do. We support cross-cutting strategies that build women's movements and resource women's funds. We also support specific issues that aim to end domestic violence, stop psychological violence, and prevent trafficking and exploitation.

In this year's annual report, we are showcasing the work of our grantees in Mexico that are finding innovative ways to reach women who have experienced violence in the region. Throughout the country, women-led civil society organisations are working across both urban and rural areas, from Ciudad Juárez on the northern border to Mérida in the southeast, to bring pillars of hope and renewal into communities. Please read on to find out more about their inspiring efforts to: reshape public discourse around gender-based violence; improve legal responses to violence against women; and build reliable support services for women and girls.

# From tradition to transformation in Mexico: taking time for reflection, conversation, and healing

Sugar, eggs, milk, butter, flour – plus friends, feminism, and a group of psychologists. These are the unlikely ingredients behind Las Panas, a women’s collective in Mexico City’s historic La Merced neighbourhood. The team at Las Panas use the simple art of baking as a tool to support women who have experienced gender-based violence.

Together in the Las Panas workshop, the women knead dough and share stories while learning to make conchas, ciabatta, cinnamon rolls, pizza, and more. They also engage in individual therapy sessions and group conversations on topics such as self-knowledge and economic security. Psychologists Rosalía Trujano and Alicia Salgado support the women’s emotional recovery. “Baking bread provides a platform to talk about violence, to name it, and to imagine ways out of it,” says Rosalía. The therapy sessions unfold during the natural pauses that bread-making allows – waiting for dough to rise, for instance, becomes time for reflection, conversation, and healing.

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“Throughout Mexico, we are turning ordinary places into space for healing, solidarity, and hope for the future.”

Participant, Las Panas workshop

In addition, Las Panas connects participants to internships in other bakeries and community cafés that respect labour rights. The organisation also runs its own small café and bakery, generating income to help sustain its programmes and creating pathways to employment opportunities for the women. So far, Las Panas has reached and supported more than 700 women with this approach.

These types of initiatives are much needed in Mexico. According to Amnesty International and IPAS,

violent deaths of over 3,400 of women were registered in Mexico in 2024.<sup>1</sup> The country also faces some of the highest numbers of missing persons in the world: currently, over 130,000 people in Mexico are missing,<sup>2</sup> and the percentage of women among these has been growing at alarming rates. In addition, thousands of women and children in Mexico face domestic violence.

The work of Las Panas is just one example of the many innovative approaches to reaching women who have experienced violence in Mexico. Throughout the country, women-led civil society organisations are working across both urban and rural areas, from Ciudad Juárez on the northern border to Mérida in the southeast, to bring pillars of hope and renewal into communities.

Indeed, women-led not-for-profit organisations are helping to: reshape public discourse around gender-based violence; improve legal responses to violence against women; and build reliable support services for women and girls. Their work takes many forms – from psychological support to pioneering mechanisms to promote women’s safety online.

Together these organisations are weaving care with and for women into the fabric of everyday life. Read on to find out more about our grantees’ efforts to support women in Mexico.

**Iniciativa Mesoamericana de Defensoras de Derechos Humanos** (IM-Defensoras) is a network of feminist organisations across Central America that supports women who defend human rights and face threats because of their work. It documents attacks against them and helps them heal. The network emphasises the importance of caring for both individuals and groups and values different approaches to protecting defenders.

**Casa La Serena** is one of its respite houses for women defenders in Mexico. Over the past decade, more than 450 women defenders – journalists, community



**Caption:** Every year, many of our grantees in Mexico gather to share experiences, learn together, and support each other. The photos throughout the Issues Affecting Women section of the report illustrate their work in Mexico to protect women who have experienced violence, and help them heal.



communicators, environmentalists, and others – have passed through the doors of Casa La Serena to attend week-long residency programmes.

These programmes combine personalised care plans with collective learning and exchange processes. Art, leisure activities, workshops, and even nutrition plans are integrated as healing practices, fostering rest, joy, and social connection as essential elements of care. “I have learned that care is not a privilege – it’s a necessity,” says one Mexican human rights defender. “It sustains our work and our lives.”

**Aluna Acompañamiento Psicosocial** supports women human rights defenders, journalists, and women who have been forcibly displaced due to violence, poverty, or climate disasters. It recognises that people engaged in social work often experience trauma, fear, isolation, and discouragement.

Aluna’s work spans multiple countries in Latin America, where it seeks to address trauma, build collective memory, and heal organisational and community relationships to allow defenders to envision a hopeful future. “We seek to develop more comprehensive coping mechanisms from security and psychosocial perspectives,” says executive director Clemencia Correa. “Our goal is to

strengthen the social fabric through shared spaces of dialogue, support, and collaboration, turning isolation into collective coping.”

Through workshops in regional schools – in places such as Oaxaca, Guanajuato, Michoacán, and Guadalajara – Aluna trains local practitioners and builds a network of people and communities that can provide psychosocial support mechanisms for women defenders.



“Our goal is to strengthen the social fabric through shared spaces of dialogue, support, and collaboration, turning isolation into collective coping.”

Clemencia Correa, Aluna

**Red Nacional de Refugios** supports survivors of domestic violence through a network that offers support services for women and children with diverse needs and in different stages of life.

It hopes to foster women’s autonomy so they can live in safety and freedom and overcome abusive relationships on their own terms, with a broad

support network to help them. It also offers workshops on sexual health and financial advice, artistic activities, and several other therapeutic approaches that provide emotional support, as well as tailored support for children.

Because overcoming violence in personal relationships can be a long and challenging process, women and children receive continued support for a full year after completing the workshops. This sustained accompaniment, combined with other measures to help women rebuild their autonomy, has prevented many women from returning to abusive relationships.

**Luchadoras** is a collective that works to reclaim online spaces for women in the digital realm. Founded in Mexico during the rise of social media, it is also a hub for research and media production, challenging dominant technological practices that harm women, and informing practices that protect those targeted by online harm.

For example, Luchadoras has closely monitored the implementation of Mexico’s landmark Ley Olimpia, which, since 2020, criminalises the dissemination of intimate images without consent. It also provides

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References: Please see page 58 of this report.

counselling for survivors of digital violence, operates a support line offering psychological and legal assistance to those facing online abuse, and helps train staff in public institutions to adopt digital rights approaches that safeguard women and vulnerable communities.

**Hispanics in Philanthropy (HIP)** is a re-granting, networking, and capacity-building organisation. It supports most of the civil society organisations mentioned in this article, with the aim of strengthening communities and promoting the freedom, safety, and autonomy of women and girls.

Founded in 1983, HIP provides grants, training, convenings and technical assistance to organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially in Mexico, as well as to Latino-led and Latino-serving civil society organisations outside of Latin America. HIP mobilises more and better philanthropic support for Latin American and Latino organisations, advising on practices that promote equality, safety, and prosperity for communities.

“For more than a decade, our grantees in Mexico have supported change that protects and cares for women,” says Marcela Buzo, programme manager at HIP. “We have accompanied our grantees in organisational strengthening, crisis response, strategic resources, and in-person gatherings that strengthen networks and learning.”

The work of civil society organisations in Mexico such as these listed above speaks to the creativity and resilience of countless women across Mexico, with initiatives offering hope, skills, and a lifeline of connection, dignity, and solidarity. “Making bread was just the starting point,” says one of the participants in Las Panas’ workshops. “Here and throughout Mexico, we are turning ordinary places into space for healing, solidarity, and hope for the future.”

## Grants

### Disability Rights Fund

**USD 610,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to support the leadership of women with disabilities globally.

### Fearless Foundation for the Arts

**USD 300,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to strengthen a network of women artists in South Asia through public art and civic engagement.

### Fondation pour l'Egalité de genre

**USD 4,878,409 (3 years)**

To provide core support to strengthen a portfolio of Swiss organisations working on women's rights and the prevention of violence against women.

### Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres Foundation

**USD 5,602,722 (3 years)**

To provide flexible support to not-for-profit organisations and their communities in Central America to ensure that everyone can be safe, free, and have an equal chance to thrive.

### FreeFrom

**USD 700,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to continue to create pathways to financial security and long-term safety for survivors of economic abuse in the US.

### Global Dialogue

**USD 69,620 (2 years)**

To support funders to work collaboratively to advance women's rights in the UK.

### Hispanics in Philanthropy

**USD 6,947,000 (3 years)**

To support a cohort of nearly 30 Mexican organisations working to advance safe, fair, and prosperous lives for Mexican women and girls through grant-making, capacity strengthening, and network building.

### Hungarian Women's Fund

**USD 100,000 (18 months)**

To provide core support for organisations working with women in Hungary to improve their lives and livelihoods.

### MADRE

**USD 2,500,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to deepen global partnerships with women's rights organisations, fostering collaboration on issues relating to women's rights worldwide.

### Media Matters for Women

**USD 300,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to support women and girls to create the social change they seek in rural Sierra Leone.

### Nobel Women's Initiative

**USD 330,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to amplify the solutions of women peacebuilders worldwide.

### openDemocracy

**USD 318,987 (3 years)**

To provide core support to use and increase innovative storytelling to contribute to a fairer and more just society.

### Stichting Women Win

**USD 4,760,400 (2 years)**

To support women's funds working for a more sustainable and resilient women's rights sector.

### Swiss Philanthropy Foundation

**USD 4,350,000 (1 year)**

To support the IAWP Care Fund to support IAWP grantees with their emergent needs, promoting wellbeing and collective care.

# Learning Differences



## Unlocking the potential of all learners

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 provide grants to not-for-profit organisations that create learning environments to improve education for students with learning differences, particularly those who are furthest from opportunity.

We support efforts that: build knowledge and understanding of what works best for students with learning differences; translate knowledge into educator practice to help students with learning differences thrive; and create the enabling conditions for schools to adopt supportive practices that help students with learning differences. This includes connecting research with the needs of students with learning differences, training educators and school leaders, and engaging young people and their families in developing supportive learning environments. Additionally, we support the development and sharing of tools and resources of evidence-based strategies with stakeholders.

The following story showcases our grantees' efforts to ensure that all students have access to educators who are trained in evidence-based methods to early literacy. Read on to find out more.

# Supporting new teachers to teach children how to read

In Whitfield County, a community in the state of Georgia in the United States, future teachers are gaining early experience with young readers long before they have their own classrooms.

Through a partnership between the local school system and nearby teacher training programmes, future teachers or teacher candidates spend time in classrooms learning how children develop reading skills, observing experienced teachers, and getting to know the students and families they will eventually serve. The goal is simple: to ensure new teachers enter the profession already grounded in what research-based reading instruction looks like in practice.

“I think something that we all get from this is confidence, knowing it’s not just about what material you’re teaching, but also who you’re teaching. We learn to differentiate, to make sure every student is heard and getting what they need,” says one teacher candidate.

Leaders in the hiring school systems have noticed that candidates are arriving better prepared and ready to engage young readers from the very first day. School leaders consistently note this heightened readiness and confidence. “I’ve seen teacher candidates much more confident as they walk through the doors of our schools. They have a greater understanding of early literacy skills and jump right in when they need to,” says Amy Allen, district literacy coach for Whitfield County Schools. “Knowing that those are our future teachers walking into our buildings and we’re providing them real-world opportunities is so important.”

Across the country, teacher candidates are preparing to enter tomorrow’s classrooms, eager to provide children with the best possible opportunities in learning and life. It’s also an opportunity to address the longstanding challenges in reading instruction found in many US schools.

Most teacher training courses in the US still use the outdated ‘whole

language’ approach to prepare new teachers for reading instruction. This encourages children to guess unfamiliar words by using external cues, such as pictures or the wider context of the story. By contrast, the evidence-based method – also known as ‘the science of reading’ – encourages children to sound out new words by first understanding how letters and sounds work together. This method benefits all children’s reading progress, but especially those with learning differences such as dyslexia.

Each year 1.3 million children in the US enter fourth grade (age 9-10) unable to read at a basic level.<sup>1</sup> Teacher training is the perfect opportunity to introduce evidence-based methods from day one, but only about a quarter of new elementary teachers each year enter classrooms prepared to teach children to read in a way that aligns with the science of reading.<sup>2</sup>

State legislation around reading instruction is starting to change, with growing support for the science-based approach. This leaves teacher training institutions with a challenge – how do they prepare future educators to follow methods aligned with these policies?

Two US not-for-profit organisations helping to embed science-based reading techniques in teacher preparation – and support their wider adoption – are BranchED and SCORE. BranchED is shaping the future of education by strengthening educator preparation programmes. Its community-centred approach creates a supportive space for educators to test and learn, while informing their plans with up-to-date, action-focused data and research.

“High-quality teacher training does not happen in isolation,” says President and CEO, Dr Cassandra Herring. “It grows out of collaboration, where preparation programmes, local school system leaders, and teacher candidates learn together to meet the demands of today’s rapidly changing classrooms.” BranchED strengthens these learning environments by helping future



## Captions:

The photos throughout the Learning Differences Programme section of this report illustrate the work of our grantees to train educators and school leaders to help students with learning differences thrive.



teachers develop the confidence and skill needed to enter the profession fully prepared. As part of its broader work with teacher training programmes, BranchED has convened a group of universities to bring their training in line with the science of reading. In its first cohort, 100 per cent of participating faculty said they had improved their knowledge and have applied that knowledge in their coursework for new teachers.

In Georgia, leaders across teacher training programmes have strengthened early literacy preparation to reflect state guidance. BranchED's adaptable, evidence-based approaches have supported these improvements within the context of each institution's needs. With BranchED's support, Dalton State College in Georgia redesigned its literacy courses a full year ahead of the new guidelines. "Our participation in BranchED's programme has made these changes forward-thinking, stimulating and – dare I say – enjoyable," says Dr Sharon Hixon, dean of the school of education.

Across the US, a growing movement is keeping the science of reading in focus. In Tennessee, the State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) is an independent organisation that supports a unified approach to public education. Its goal is to enable students to succeed in the classroom, career, and life. SCORE has established the Leading in Literacy Network, which convenes people working in teacher preparation programmes to improve how reading is taught.

"Our network has piloted a common set of tools and knowledge to improve teachers' training in early literacy," explains Courtney Bell, Vice President of Research & Innovation at SCORE.

"Ultimately this contributes to a more skilled teaching workforce who can meet their students' needs from their first day on the job – all using research-backed practices."

Deans and faculty members from four of the largest teacher preparation colleges in Tennessee are now collaborating on this issue. Each of the training programmes has begun overhauling their syllabuses and coursework, and they are also better preparing new teachers to identify and support students with learning differences such as dyslexia.

SCORE's new report on supporting early grade literacy, for example, gives robust evidence and guidance to help students with additional needs to succeed in reading. In this model, children receive additional intensive tutoring using the same materials as the rest of their class, rather than being confused by separate programmes and different learning materials unconnected to the mainstream syllabus.

Thanks to vibrant networks like those supported by SCORE and BranchED, there is hope for a new generation of stronger US readers. As of early 2025, 21 US states have passed some form of legislation requiring universities and teacher preparation programmes to review their courses and approaches, and bring them in line with evidence-based practices.

## Grants

### **Achievement Network** **USD 800,000 (4 years)**

To support students with learning differences in the United States through school and district coaching and assessment innovation.

### **Achieving the Dream** **USD 900,000 (3 years)**

To improve support to community college students with learning differences across the United States.

### **Africa Dyslexia Organization** **USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To provide core support to help improve support for people with dyslexia in Africa.

### **Blue Engine Inc** **USD 800,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to improve outcomes for students with learning differences by improving traditional teaching methods across the US.

### **Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity** **USD 1,600,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to integrate evidence-based practices in early reading instruction into training for elementary educators in the US.

### **Catalyst Education Inc** **USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To provide tailored and timely support to Learning Differences Programme partners, helping them strengthen their organisational capacity.

### **Catalyst Education Inc** **USD 350,000 (18 months)**

To support Oak Foundation's Learning Differences Programme in convening its partners for a successful in-person gathering.

References: Please see page 58 of this report.

#### Center for Learner Equity

**USD 1,100,000 (2 years)**

To raise public awareness about the needs, rights, experiences, and successes of students with learning differences and disabilities in the United States.

#### City Year

**USD 1,500,000 (3 years)**

To serve 7,500 students with learning differences and enhance student support through research partnerships.

#### Council of the Great City Schools

**USD 20,000 (1 year)**

To bring together 78 urban public schools across the US to create a playbook for implementing dual language immersion programmes to support students with learning differences.

#### DAS International

**USD 750,997 (3 years)**

To develop and deliver affordable training programmes that help children with dyslexia and other learning difficulties globally.

#### Deans for Impact

**USD 1,200,000 (3 years)**

To strengthen teacher preparation programmes so new US teachers can deliver effective reading instruction for students with learning differences.

#### East Carolina University

**USD 999,520 (6 years)**

To support students with learning disabilities to enroll in and graduate from East Carolina University.

#### Education Forward DC

**USD 1,000,000 (3 years)**

To facilitate access to a high-quality education for all students in Washington DC.

#### Education NC

**USD 650,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support for EdNC's coverage of public schools and students with learning differences in North Carolina.

#### Education Writers Association

**USD 800,000 (3 years)**

To provide support to build and integrate programming for journalists focused on students with learning differences in the US.

#### Educators for Excellence

**USD 850,000 (3 years)**

To provide support to improve the quality of literacy instruction and resources supporting teachers of students with learning differences.

#### Ensemble Learning

**USD 798,900 (3 years)**

To develop and disseminate effective teaching approaches that support multilingual students with learning differences in Colorado, Texas, and California.

#### InnovateEDU

**USD 1,200,000 (3 years)**

To provide support to InnovateEDU and the Educating All Learners Alliance to identify and share effective strategies for students with learning differences.

#### Kingmakers of Oakland

**USD 750,000 (2 years)**

To provide support to improve the educational and life outcomes for students, including those furthest from opportunity.

#### Leading Educators

**USD 850,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Leading Educators for its efforts to help more children learn to read in the US.

#### Modern Classrooms Project

**USD 675,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to educators who work with students with learning differences in the US.

#### National Public Radio, Inc

**USD 850,000 (3 years)**

To support coverage of students with learning differences and disabilities across national and community public radio platforms.

#### New Leaders

**USD 1,600,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to train teachers and expand support for students with learning differences in US public schools.

#### New Schools Fund

**USD 806,000 (1 year)**

To provide support to organisations serving students with learning differences in the US.

#### Policy Innovators in Education Network (PIE Network)

**USD 750,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to improve the way students with learning differences receive support in the United States.

#### Roger Williams University

**USD 750,000 (3 years)**

To support the Center for Youth & Community Leadership in Education to integrate a focus on learning differences in its programmes.

#### Study Group Solutions Inc

**USD 500,000 (3 years)**

To pilot and refine high-quality, easy-to-use mental health assessments for students with learning differences in the US.

#### Swiss Philanthropy Foundation

**USD 2,000,000 (3 years)**

To provide flexible and responsive support to Oak's Learning Differences Programme grantee partners.

#### Teach For All

**USD 2,400,000 (3 years)**

To support Teach for All in its work to ensure that all children can fulfill their potential.

#### The Education Trust

**USD 1,350,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to ensure all students with learning differences can thrive, including students furthest from opportunity.

#### Thomas B. Fordham Institute

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

To support a research study of early reading strategies and approaches in US schools.

#### Trevor Noah Foundation

**USD 799,334 (3 years)**

To support programming that provides youth in South Africa with access to quality educational experiences.

#### True Measure Collaborative

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

To provide core support to improve educational outcomes for students furthest from opportunity in the US.

#### Understood

**USD 1,100,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to help people who learn and think differently thrive in school, at work, and throughout life.



#### Captions:

Opposite: University faculty and members of the BranchED team come together to examine literacy coursework for new teachers.

A group of diverse young people, including a young man in the foreground and several young women behind him, are smiling and laughing together. They are wearing light blue shirts. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

# Prevent Child Sexual Abuse

## Supporting a safer world where children can thrive

Stopping child sexual abuse before it happens has the potential to benefit millions of children around the world: data from UNICEF suggests that one in five girls and one in seven boys will experience some form of sexual violence before their 18th birthday.<sup>1</sup> Peer-to-peer sexual violence is rising<sup>2</sup>, amplified by technology and societal normalisation of sexual violence. The impact is often devastating and longlasting, affecting mental and physical health, future relationships, and society at large.

Thankfully, child sexual abuse is preventable. This fact drives our commitment to end child sexual abuse online and offline. Our grantees are survivors, change-makers, and researchers working to accelerate action at the community, national, and global levels. There is growing public desire to do more, and we have the knowledge and solutions needed to create a world where all children can thrive.

Through dialogue, connection, and positive narratives, our grantees are helping young people engage in healthy relationships. This is the focus of this year's story.

## Building positive spaces for young men online

On a school bus, a 14-year-old watches a clip on his phone that feels like a pep talk. The doors hiss, his thumb flicks, and the next video promises ‘getting fit fast’, and another claims to decode ‘what girls really want’. Within minutes, his feed becomes a list of rules and advice about being a ‘real’ man.

What he’s seeing is part of the manosphere, an organic network of online communities, channels, and forums that talk about what it means to be a man. It ranges from personality-driven influencer feeds, to anonymous forums, monetised coaching courses, and an endless stream of short-form clips. He did not go looking for it – it is engineered to find him.

While these communities are diverse, many orbit a core claim that society is biased against men. A study across the United Kingdom, United States, and Australia found that 63 per cent of young men aged 16 to 25 regularly engage with men-and-masculinity influencers online.<sup>3</sup> What began as fringe discourse is now mainstream, shaping how millions of young men understand masculinity, power, and relationships.

Multiple pathways link the manosphere to peer-to-peer sexual violence among young people. Repeated exposure to hostile, sexist, and male-dominance narratives normalises sexual coercion, which increases acceptance of aggressive behaviour and minimises the importance of consent.<sup>4</sup> A narrative that ‘the system is rigged against men’ fosters feelings of resentment and backlash. These, in turn, correlate with real-world violence.

Worryingly, young men who regularly engage with manosphere content report worse mood and loneliness.<sup>5</sup> Psychological distress is a well-established risk factor for harming oneself and others, including coercion and gender-based violence. The manosphere offers boys simplistic fixes for loneliness and insecurity. It teaches men to hide their worries

and never ask for help. At its core, the manosphere casts men as victims of social change, eroding respect, consent, and trust. The harm is real for women who face contempt and harassment, and it is real for boys who are promised strength, but handed isolation and fear.

The good news, however, is that online feeds can be steered, conversations can interrupt these scripts, and the collective voices of survivors can fuel change. Three promising solutions are mapping a better path toward healthy masculinity – a flexible set of beliefs and behaviours that support men’s mental and physical health while promoting respect and equity. Read on to find out more about the work of our grantees.

### LinkUp Lab – turning scrolls into belonging

LinkUp Lab starts from a simple idea: if algorithms can push boys toward isolation and misogyny, they can also guide them toward care, community, and healthier ways of being men. Co-founded by Equipundo and Futures Without Violence, two US-based not-for-profit organisations, the lab invites young men to meet on the platforms they already use and offers something better.

“By working with game studios, moderators, and creators whom young men already trust, LinkUp Lab builds campaigns that seek to move young men away from toxic content and toward supportive communities, mental wellbeing resources, and opportunities for offline connections,” says Gary Barker, founder and CEO of Equipundo, which runs the LinkUp Lab project. “LinkUp Lab also produces tools for parents, educators, and community groups to help them strengthen real-world interactions among young men.”

**Young Men and Media Collective – storytellers rewriting the narrative**  
The Young Men and Media Collective (YMMC) supports initiatives that



#### Captions:

The photos throughout the Prevent Child Sexual Abuse section of this report illustrate the work of our grantees to highlight and address the toxic influence of social media on boys and young men, and what happy childhood for boys can look like away from screens.



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produce and distribute relatable, emotionally honest digital content that seeks to engage young men and strengthen their mental health and wellbeing.

Co-convener by Movember and Equimundo, YMMC funds creators, media organisations, and youth-led groups that aim to shift the dominant digital culture, replacing harmful myths about what makes a successful man with alternative narratives that feel not only acceptable, but aspirational.

“Young men are not drawn to harmful content because they want to hurt others,” says Sarah Sternberg, director of Movember’s Global Reimagining Masculinities Initiative. “They are drawn to it because they are looking for guidance, certainty, and direction. If we want to shift the culture, we need to offer healthier stories that meet those same needs.”

**Everyone’s Invited – when shared stories reshape culture**

Everyone’s Invited began during the Covid-19 lockdown, when student Soma Sara posted on Instagram about the everyday sexism and harassment she had experienced at school – the comments, pressures, and assumptions that make sexual abuse among young people feel normal. Her posts exposed what many had long sensed but rarely named: a pervasive rape culture within schools, where

harmful behaviour and attitudes were normalised, ignored, or minimised. She didn’t expect the response she received – within days, hundreds of students had sent in their own, similar stories. Soon it was thousands.

“Young men are not drawn to harmful content because they want to hurt others. [It’s] because they are looking for guidance, certainty, and direction. If we want to shift the culture, we need to offer healthier stories that meet those same needs.”

Sarah Sternberg, Movember

Her posts revealed how widespread harmful behaviour and attitudes were – and how alone many students felt navigating it.

What began as a safe space for anonymous testimony grew into a youth-led movement calling for empathy, accountability, and reform. The UK Department for Education launched a new helpline for students.

Ofsted, the UK Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills, conducted a rapid review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges. In 2023, a parliamentary inquiry on attitudes toward women and girls credited Everyone’s Invited with surfacing thousands of testimonies and highlighting the toxic influence of social media on boys and young men.

Today, Everyone’s Invited works with schools and education programmes at universities that have reached more than 82,000 students and almost 13,000 staff between 2022 and 2024. These sparked conversations about consent, respect, healthy relationships, and the online forces shaping young people’s beliefs.

Together, these three organisations offer practical steps for building positive change. LinkUp Lab shows that the same algorithms that funnel boys into harm can guide them toward connection. The Young Men and Media Collective shows that when you invest in new storytellers, you can change what millions of boys see as possible. And Everyone’s Invited proves that when young people speak up, institutions listen, and culture can shift.

Our grantees promote belonging for all and agree that if the problem has arrived by design, the solutions can too.

References: Please see page 58 of this report.

# Grants

## **African Women's Development Fund**

**USD 2,100,000 (3 years)**

To provide support to establish a participatory grant-making fund with and for survivors of child sexual abuse and their allies in Africa.

## **Asociación Centro Latinoamericano de Investigación Periodística**

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

To provide core support to advance its mission in support of independent journalism and public dialogue on issues concerning children's online safety in Latin America.

## **Avec les Survivant.es**

**USD 500,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to advance justice for survivors of child sexual abuse and to strengthen the organisation.

## **Barnahus Network**

**USD 500,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to the Barnahus Network to advance the Barnahus model through research, evidence, and improving practice.

## **Bishop Accountability.org, Inc.**

**USD 100,000 (1.5 years)**

To provide core support to prevent child sexual abuse in the Catholic church by providing data.

## **Center for Countering Digital Hate**

**USD 1,446,451 (3 years)**

To provide core support to build a safer internet for children in the European Union.

## **Centre for Public Health in Greenland**

**USD 1,217,193 (3 years)**

To help prevent child sexual abuse in Greenland through the evaluation of good practices at national and community levels.

## **Centro Iberoamericano para el Fomento del Derecho Internacional y los Derechos Humanos**

**USD 100,000 (2 years)**

To strengthen the expertise of child rights organisations in Latin America, which work to implement international legal mechanisms that protect children.

## **Childfund International**

**USD 1,500,000 (3 years)**

To unite thought leaders, civil society, survivors, and young people to create a safer digital world for children around the world.

## **Children's Advocacy Centers of North Carolina**

**USD 250,000 (2 years)**

To help prevent child sexual abuse in North Carolina.

## **ECPAT France**

**USD 663,158 (3 years)**

To provide core support to provide essential support to combat child sexual exploitation, particularly in the digital environment in Europe.

## **Enough Abuse**

**USD 401,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to apply tested strategies and solutions to prevent child sexual abuse and exploitation.

## **Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice**

**USD 1,333,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to create supportive environments for boys and young men, and foster healthy social interactions so that all can thrive.

## **Everyone's Invited**

**USD 759,494 (3 years)**

To provide core support to empower school communities across the UK to promote healthy relationships.

## **Face à l'inceste**

**USD 400,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to prevent incest and seek justice for survivors in France, and to strengthen the organisation.

## **Fédération Européenne pour Enfants Disparus et Sexuellement Exploités / European Federation for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children**

**USD 970,772 (3 years)**

To provide core support for the Combating Online Grooming project, which seeks to prevent grooming and abuse, and reduce instances of missing children.

## **Gymnasts for Change International**

**USD 474,684 (2 years)**

To provide core support to strengthen and expand survivor-led initiatives to prevent child sexual abuse in sports events globally.

## **Healing Justice London**

**USD 181,762 (1 year)**

To strengthen the child sexual abuse prevention field through resilient leadership training and support for leaders in the Prevent Child Sexual Abuse Programme portfolio.

## **Legal Action Worldwide**

**USD 830,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to bring justice to child victims of conflict-related sexual violence around the world.

## **London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine**

**USD 499,316 (3 years)**

To support the Child Protection Research Group at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine to strengthen evidence on preventing child sexual abuse in and through schools in Uganda and Latvia.

## **Loughborough University**

**USD 272,766 (1.5 years)**

To identify and research ways to safeguard elite young footballers.

## **Makerere University College of Health Sciences**

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

To support Makerere University's Families, Parenting, and Children's Health Programme to become a leading centre for research and programme development in parenting and child violence prevention in Uganda.

## **Marie Collins Foundation**

**USD 525,316 (2 years)**

To provide core support to ensure that people who have experienced technology-assisted child sexual abuse will go on to live safe and fulfilling lives.

## **Molly Rose Foundation**

**USD 721,519 (3 years)**

To provide core support to ensure children and young people are protected from online harm.

## **Movember Europe Ltd**

**USD 500,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to Movember's Young Men and Media Collective to develop and share strategies for engaging young men online with positive masculinity narratives that promote health, strengthen relationships, and reduce exposure to harmful content.

## **New Venture Fund**

**USD 1,000,000 (2 years)**

To support Ignite Philanthropy's efforts to create a world where violence against children is eradicated and where children and youth exercise their rights, shape their futures, and live in peace.

## **No Means No Worldwide**

**USD 1,200,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to end sexual violence against women and children globally.

## **Oficina de Defensoría de los Derechos de la Infancia a.c.**

**USD 473,179 (3 years)**

To make schools in Mexico safe from sexual abuse and exploitation.

**Our Wave Inc****USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To improve online support for adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

**Physicians for Human Rights****USD 1,200,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to bring justice to survivors of child sexual violence.

**Plataforma de Infancia****USD 97,895 (1 year)**

To support the coordination of a civil society working group that champions measures to prevent child sexual abuse in Spain.

**Reset Tech UK Ltd****USD 1,195,797 (1 year)**

To help promote a safer online environment in the United Kingdom.

**Restless Development****USD 207,151 (1 year)**

To support youth-led research and solutions to prevent child sexual abuse in Kenya and Uganda.

**Save the Children Italy****USD 242,105 (2 years)**

To support efforts in the EU to combat online child sexual abuse while empowering children and professionals to build a safer internet for children.

**Secrets Worth Sharing****USD 100,000 (1.5 years)**

To provide core support for trauma-informed efforts that break the silence around child sexual abuse through safe, inclusive, and culturally sensitive discourse.

**Stichting Defence for Children****International Nederland – ECPAT Nederland****USD 1,031,579 (3 years)**

To help prevent child sexual abuse and exploitation online and offline across Europe.

**Stichting Sports & Rights Alliance****USD 937,121 (3 years)**

To provide core support for the Sport & Rights Alliance and unrestricted project support for the Athletes Network for Safer Sports.

**Stichting Terre des Hommes Nederland****USD 693,945 (3 years)**

To provide support to ensure online environments are safe for all children.

**Stichting Women Win****USD 2,500,000 (3 years)**

To launch the Elite Athlete Survivors and Allies Fund, supporting initiatives from survivors and allies.

**Survivors Network of those****Abused by Priests****USD 400,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests for its work to support survivors of child sexual abuse and to promote transparency and institutional responsibility within religious settings.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation****USD 775,000 (2 years)**

To support strong, resilient, representative networks to advance early childhood development through the Early Childhood Regional Networks Fund.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation****USD 2,000,000 (2 years)**

To support the Kids Online Safety Hub to empower civil society organisations to communicate more effectively about the importance of keeping children safe online.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation****USD 1,384,524 (1 year)**

To provide core support to To Zero to build momentum, support, and engagement for a sector-level vision to end childhood sexual violence.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation****USD 3,402,747 (3 years)**

To provide funding to groups working to prevent childhood sexual violence around the world.

**The Army of Survivors Inc****USD 680,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to raise awareness, accountability, and transparency on the issue of sexual violence against athletes in the United States and internationally.

**The National Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty To Children****USD 1,204,317 (3 years)**

To provide core support to transform the online world to make it safe for children.

**Together for Girls****USD 10,000,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to help end child sexual violence by advancing prevention, healing, and justice.

**UNICEF - UK****USD 249,367 (2 years)**

To promote child safety and wellbeing in sport academies, in particular football, through engagement with international sports bodies like FIFA and other relevant bodies.

**UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti****USD 100,000 (1 year)**

To explore the intersections between child sexual abuse and the role of online and offline harmful material that influence norms and behaviours associated with the perpetration of sexual violence.

**Universitat Oberta de Catalunya****USD 500,000 (3 years)**

To evaluate the impact of the Barnahus model in Catalonia, Spain, which works to make justice, protection, and care systems work in the best interests of child victims of violence.

**University of South Australia****USD 600,000 (3 years)**

To support the Australian Centre for Child Protection at the University of South Australia in evaluating the Barnahus model's impact on child sexual violence, partnering with the University of Edinburgh, University of Bedfordshire, and Bovernick Consulting on framework design.

**WeProtect Global Alliance****USD 2,368,421 (3 years)**

To provide core support to WeProtect Global Alliance, which works to build and support a cross-sector alliance to protect children from sexual abuse online.

**YLabs Studio****USD 349,548 (1 year)**

To support young people in Tanzania to lead local solutions that promote safety and prevent peer sexual violence.

# Special Interest



## Supporting a diverse range of organisations 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 grantees 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. 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.

Read our stories, both here and on our website, to see the diversity of grants within our programme, and to find out more.

# Trussell: reshaping the conversation on hunger



It started with a spark of compassion, a garage, and a garden shed. In 2000, aid workers Paddy and Carol Henderson received a call from a UK mother who was struggling to afford food. This inspired them to set up Salisbury Foodbank from their home, which offered three days' emergency food supplies to local people who did not have enough money to live on.

Called Trussell, the foodbank has since grown to support a community of more than 1,400 locations across the UK, where almost 40,000 volunteers offer emergency food with compassion, advice, and practical support. "I used to need food banks, but now I volunteer there," says Aaron. "It makes such a difference to people's lives. You can see people walk in sad and stressed, and then they leave with a smile."

In 12 months between April 2024 and March 2025, Trussell distributed 2.9 million emergency food parcels – one every 11 seconds.<sup>1</sup> This reflects dedication and kindness on a national scale, and it's also part of a pattern of increasing demand that's seen a 51 per cent increase in provision over the past five years.

Trussell sees hunger in the UK as an income problem, not a food problem. "What was designed as a lifeline has become a long-term feature of society," says co-CEO at Trussell, Emma Revie. "It shouldn't be that way. While food banks

provide a lifeline for so many people facing hardship, they're rooted in financial insecurity. We know the building blocks needed to end hunger for good. To reach a future without foodbanks, it's important we don't just address urgent need, but empower people to boost their income and financial resilience."

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**“We know the building blocks needed to end hunger for good.”**

Emma Revie, Trussell

Today, the charity is bringing together its community of food banks, volunteers, and people with lived experience to help address the causes that prevent access to food.

Through that community, Trussell has developed a deep understanding of the drivers that bring people to food banks. These include: inability to access to the UK's social security (benefits) system; and challenging life experiences such as ill health, disability, or job insecurity. There are also wider factors that prevent people from increasing their income, such as a lack of affordable transport or access to childcare.

Trussell funds in-person advisers at food banks and a free Help through Hardship helpline, run in partnership with Citizens Advice and Mind, which give practical advice and emotional support. From advice on energy efficiency and benefits, to mental wellbeing and debt referrals, this holistic approach tackles the root causes of financial hardship and hunger. In 2024-25, the average income gain for each caller was GBP 1,494.

In 25 years, Trussell's impact has mushroomed from one Salisbury backyard to a reach of millions. But at its heart remains a belief in community – to meet urgent need with hope and dignity, and ultimately to help people long before they need a food bank.

“The power of community is recognising that sometimes people struggle, that it could be any one of us, and that the rest of us are there to help and walk alongside you,” says Stephanie, a learning lead at a local food bank.

While most 16-year-olds were preoccupied with friendships or exams, Freya already had her focus trained on a career in healthcare – and her heart set on volunteering.



**Caption:** Volunteers at a foodbank in Scotland distribute food parcels.

References: Please see page 58 of this report.

## Helpforce volunteers make a difference: the heart behind healthcare



Thanks to a supportive volunteer programme at Alder Hey Children’s Hospital in Liverpool in the north of England, she was able to gain work experience in a real hospital setting. “I went from being in school to suddenly being in a hospital environment, seeing what patients and families go through,” Freya says.

As the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Freya was even busier, helping on wards and in the emergency department, supporting families and covering for fellow volunteers when needed. “Volunteers were more important than ever,” she says. “We became an extra set of hands when staffing was stretched. It felt good to be genuinely useful.”

Within UK hospitals, community settings, and patients’ homes, volunteers like Freya are vital. With the right training, they take on non-clinical tasks such as ward housekeeping, delivering samples and equipment, helping patients eat and drink, and supporting rehab physio exercises. This eases pressure on healthcare professionals and frees up their stretched time to deliver the clinical procedures for which they’re trained, all while giving patients the extra care that can transform their recovery and long-term wellbeing.

Helpforce is a UK charity that supports NHS trusts and community organisations to grow and nurture their own volunteering programmes. It considers volunteering to be key to improving health outcomes.

“At our core, we’re about ensuring that volunteers are integral to healthcare being its very best,” says the chief executive Amerjit Chohan.

“Our first step is to find out about the challenges that healthcare organisations face. Once we understand their situation, we set about designing evidence-led volunteering solutions that enable services to thrive.”

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“We became an extra set of hands when staffing was stretched. It felt good to be genuinely useful.”

Freya, volunteer,  
Alder Hey Children’s Hospital

Together, Helpforce and its grantees design high-impact volunteering roles that complement clinical care and help patients get back to full health. Founded in 2017, the charity’s importance was turbocharged when COVID-19 hit. The pandemic was devastating to the delivery of free, universal healthcare by the NHS – increasing waiting lists, and leaving staff burned out.

Between 2022 and 2025, Helpforce’s Back to Health (B2H) campaign worked with more than 100 organisations to create high-impact

volunteering roles at scale in hospitals, communities, and patients’ homes.<sup>1</sup>

It reached over 1 million people (910,954 patients and service users, 130,850 health and care staff, and 77,677 volunteers). Some 92 per cent of patients agreed that volunteers improved their sense of wellbeing, while 86 per cent of staff agreed volunteer support improved the quality of the care they provided.<sup>2</sup>

As Freya got to know the Alder Hey teams, she came to feel like part of the family. Back at home, she even inspired her cousin and brother to get involved in volunteering. Today, she has completed her degree and is working as a paramedic full-time. She credits her volunteer experience with giving her an honest insight into the healthcare industry before she committed to going down that career path.

“It felt like the perfect way to say thank you, but also to get a taste of the real work behind the scenes. It gave me a head start, confidence, and a network of people who believed in me,” she says.



**Caption:** In UK hospitals, community settings, and patients’ homes, the help of volunteers is vital.

# From farm to folk: connecting communities with local food in Southern Appalachia

© Camilla Calnan, Camilla Calnan Photography



It's the weekend before Thanksgiving, and at Black Mountain in Buncombe County in western North Carolina, the Saturday morning market is bustling. All the ingredients for a hearty family celebration are here, direct from local farmers: organically grown vegetables, meat from grass-fed animals, eggs from chickens allowed to forage outdoors, dried and freshly cut flowers, artisanal crafts, dairy, and baked goods, all made with local ingredients.

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“When we reconnect with food and producers, we make healthier choices, all while strengthening our local economies, cultures and landscapes.”

Molly Nicholie, ASAP

Farmers markets like these aren't just a fun way to do the weekly shop – they are family events with a neighbourly feel that serve real needs in the Appalachian community. There are more than 100 independent farmers markets in the region, all supported by the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), a not-for-profit organisation that works to promote: strong local farms; thriving local food economies; and healthy communities in which people are connected, and food and farms are valued.

“We work to build healthy communities by connecting them to local food,” explains executive director Molly Nicholie. “When we reconnect with food and producers, we make healthier choices, all while strengthening our local economies, cultures, and landscapes.”

In the hilly, forested, and sparsely populated Southern Appalachian region, farmers markets are one of the most effective ways of getting food from farm to fork. ASAP strengthens and supports local farms through practical and business support, links them to clients such as local school cafeterias and restaurant suppliers, and engages educators to connect schoolchildren with food and farms.

In addition to promoting local food and farms through its Local Food Guide and its ‘Appalachian Grown’ branding, ASAP provides workshops, conferences, toolkits, peer connection, and one-to-one consultations to farmers starting up, to help them get established and so that their farm businesses can become quickly sustainable.

“By developing a whole system around local food, you create a range of viable markets and ensure people from all incomes can access quality produce,” says Molly. This is why farmers markets support fair access to local food for everyone, welcoming folks using food assistance programmes, and offering extra fruit and vegetables as an incentive to shop there.

When Hurricane Helene hit in September 2024, ASAP adapted its efforts to support farmers impacted by the disaster. The hurricane's impact was felt differently across farms: landslides left heavy cleanup work for some, while power cuts destroyed refrigerated produce for others. Apple-picking farms lost almost a whole year's income from one critical month. ASAP worked to understand these complex and evolving needs, gave advice on disaster recovery and resilience tactics, and helped farmers apply for disaster relief programmes and grants from local to federal levels.

One year on, the destruction of local infrastructure still leaves some residents a one-hour round trip from the nearest supermarket, and business at the farmers markets is thriving all the more.

Back in Black Mountain, stallholders pack up and families head home with pre-ordered turkeys, bright bunches of Swiss chard, and armfuls of sweet potato. It is the end of market season but the growers and artisans head back to their farms to rest for the winter, preparing to return in the spring, ready to serve their community with the new season's freshest produce.

To find out more about ASAP, watch the video on our website.



**Caption:** The Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project works with local food markets in North Carolina to promote strong local farms and thriving local food economies.

# From craft to community: building sustainable futures through hand crafts

For North Carolina artist Mary Hemby, her calling to join the handcraft tradition came from home – the place she grew up discovering “the love of creating through the women who loved it before me”.

Today, Mary is the founder of her very own studio-store in Charlotte, North Carolina, where shoppers sip on house chai, browse beautiful handmade jewellery and home décor, and view the production space where she and her team bring these pieces to life.

Mary is a member of Nest, a US-based not-for-profit organisation that seeks to expand economic opportunity through craft. Nest works on both the supply and demand side of the global marketplace, supporting artisans on the one hand to build viable and sustainable ways of life from their craft, and helping to create pipelines for markets for hand-crafted products on the other. Mary has benefited enormously from Nest’s support, which helped link her to a wide network of other crafters, supported her to hire other staff to meet increased demand, and helped her build and grow a thriving, sustainable business.

“A big part of Nest is building community with – and among – makers,” says Nest founder and executive director, Rebecca van Bergen. “Not only is craft a livelihood, it’s telling the life story of many of the people we support. That’s why we provide creative entrepreneurs with thoughtfully designed training, resources, and opportunities free of charge, so that those stories can continue.”

Practically speaking, Nest helps craft workers earn an independent living from home, which allows women in particular to earn an income while attending to other demands such as childcare or education, helps keep communities and cultures intact, and allows art, craft, and businesses in rural communities to flourish.

Nest negotiates good deals for artisans with supply chains, helps

grow demand for their brand, and it also works with global companies to support them to adopt appropriate policies that ensure home-based production can be incorporated into their supply chains in a responsible, ethical way. To this end, Nest has worked with makers and global brands to devise a set of ethical standards – supported by a training and certification system – in a bid to uphold fairness, transparency, rights, and wellbeing for workers in homes and informal workshops. Partnering with major global brands, this approach has reached supply chains across five continents.

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“Art is a way to be able to get beauty out into a world that really needs it.”

Leti Bueno, Nest

Leti Bueno is Nest’s director of philanthropy for global programmes. While she is not a crafter herself, she feels passionately about supporting crafters around the world through her work. “[Art] is a way to be able to get beauty out into a world that really needs it,” she says. “Our funding helps artisans grow and thrive, and become beautiful enterprises that support communities – art saves us, and I see my work as a way to support that art in such a beautiful, impactful, and wonderful way.”

To find out more about Nest’s work, watch the video on our website.



**Caption:** The photos on the right illustrate the craft workers in the United States that Nest supports to make an independent living from home. This allows women in particular to earn an income while attending to other demands such as childcare or education, helps keep communities and cultures intact, and allows art, craft, and businesses in rural communities to flourish.



© Nest/Mamasun Ceramics



© Nest/Sunhouse Craft



© Nest/Franca NYC

# Putting down new roots: refugee farmers are flourishing in Chapel Hill

Since the 1960s, about 322,000 refugees and asylum seekers from Myanmar (formerly known as Burma\*) have resettled in the US.<sup>1</sup>

This new life offers a sense of permanence after years in makeshift camps in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries. But even with a place to call home, growing new roots isn't easy. Families are expected to adapt to new ways of life within months, learning a new language and navigating new systems with only short-term financial support.

Many refugees from Burma come from farming heritage and dream of working the land again, but without access to land, this is not possible. In the Piedmont region of North Carolina, eight acres of farmland hold some of the answers.

On the Transplanting Traditions Community Farm (TTCF), people who have resettled from Burma can access land, education, and new opportunities. From the ground up, it's become a powerful cultural space for elders to recreate home, and the next generation to rediscover their roots through mentorship and training.

"Farmers bring with them a strong cultural tradition that goes back generations," explains Kelly Owensby, who founded TTCF in 2010. "We see our role as translating those traditions so they can be successful here."

The farm's Education programme helps farmers from Burma adapt their deep knowledge and skills to North Carolina's crops and climate, while improving their English and learning how to run thriving businesses. To date, the farmers have grown over 600,000 lbs of produce and generated more than USD 2 million in income by cultivating and selling an organic mix of local vegetables, flowers, and traditional Southeast Asian produce.<sup>2</sup> This helps families to become more financially resilient and move towards working full-time in a job they love.

"Farming here reminds me of back home, and how my parents passed down their passion and knowledge of farming to me," says Ha Na, one of the members of the Transplanting Traditions Community Farm.

“

"I love it so much. Working on the farm outdoors in the sun, and eating healthy, organically grown food has helped heal my body, reduce my stress, and give me strength."

Ha Na, member of Transplanting Traditions

Produce from TTCF is sold in local farmers markets, and via Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) initiatives, where subscribers support a farmer like Ha Na directly and receive a weekly veg box full of fresh, organic produce in return.

More farmers are taking leadership roles in the organisation, supported by its Farmer Manager pathway, and the Youth programme has seen one of its co-founders – Ree Ree Wei – return to the organisation as executive director. Born in a refugee camp in Thailand, Ree Ree moved to the US with her family in 2006. By 2009, her parents were TTCF farmers.

"I remember seeing them come home, their hands dirt-streaked and their spirits renewed," Ree Ree says. "I knew then that farming was more than just a way to grow food. After graduation, I returned. I'm proud to be uplifting the TTCF mission to radically transform how we eat, live, and make decisions as a community."

To find out more about Transplanting Traditions, watch the video on our website.



#### Captions:

The photos on pages 39 and 44 of this report illustrate the work of the Transplanting Traditions Community Farm in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, to provide people who have resettled from Burma with access to land, education, and new opportunities.

\*The refugees prefer to be described as coming "from Burma".

References: Please see page 58 of this report.

## Confidence from community: coaching success at Durham Tech



“At community college, we meet you where you’re at,” says Tiffany Robinson, who works as lead coach in student development and support at Durham Technical Community College in North Carolina.

Across two counties, Durham Tech’s seven campuses welcome 18,000 students from all education and life experiences. They can study both credentialled courses and continuing education classes in everything from art to tech, designed to lead to further education or more fulfilling, living-wage jobs. It’s part of the state’s 58-strong network of community colleges, which ensures no one is more than 50 miles from the opportunity of further education.

“It doesn’t matter if you’re an A student in high school or a returning adult wanting a fresh start – the whole community is here and we embrace everyone,” says Tiffany. “In turn, we have our whole community to depend on to help our students with resources. It’s a wonderful thing.”

This ‘open-door’ admissions policy creates a diverse student community, whose success depends on equally diverse support. That’s where the holistic, person-centred approach of Success Coaching comes in. Eight success coaches advise students throughout their time at Durham Tech. Their tailored approach helps students to align their everyday actions to short- and long-term goals for their academic, professional, and personal development.

“The success coach serves as a mentor, guide, and venting point for any student,” says Dr Abe Dones, VP and Chief of Student Services. “We ensure students have what they need and help eliminate any barriers to pursuing their academic dreams.”

People often start out by joining the free Summer Success Academy. Here, prospective students learn the steps to a successful college experience. They explore guided career pathways, meet teaching staff, get support with financial aid and wraparound services, and have a taste of campus life before term starts.

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“Knowing you have a person who’s there for you [...] was the most helpful. It pushed me to want to do better.”

Ellis Brown, technology student

After developing a self-taught interest in tech, student Ellis Brown found the academy gave him the focus to follow that passion into an IT career. He’s now on his way to getting a university degree.

“It was hard to navigate which path I wanted to go on, but I built the confidence to pursue further education,” he says. “Knowing you have a person who’s there for you,

who won’t leave you high and dry, was the most helpful. It pushed me to want to do better.”

The Success Coaching Framework ensures students move through the curriculum and connect with job opportunities in their chosen fields. From enrolment and studying, to keeping them on course with goal-setting, planning, and practical resources, as well as helping students manage the transition to university or a career, coaches are there for every stage.

Coaches bring a deep knowledge of the college and wider community, which helps them connect students to outside resources – such as childcare or housing assistance – and the in-college network of tutors, clubs, and events that make the college experience successful and fulfilling. Reflecting on her role, Tiffany’s view of ‘success’ is as diverse as the community that makes up the college. For some, it may be the accomplishment of passing a class. For others, it’s transferring to university.

“Seeing students at graduation makes my heart smile,” she says. “When you see the student who you referred to the food pantry or to tutoring walk across the stage – that’s the real reward.”

To find out more about the Durham Tech Success Coaching programme, watch the video on our website.

# Grants

## Acosta Dance Foundation Ltd

**USD 2,500,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to develop and operate the dance company in Cuba and the UK.

## Advance Community Health

**USD 2,000,000 (1 year)**

To provide support to the Fertile Ground Food Cooperative to create a community-owned grocery store in Southeast Raleigh, North Carolina that will increase food security, create living-wage jobs, and serve as a safe community gathering space.

## Alinea Network Organisation Limited

**USD 400,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to enable the Proactive Wildlife Protection Trust to build its organisational capacity to protect endangered wildlife populations in Zimbabwe.

## American Civil Liberties

### Union Foundation Inc

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

To provide core support to the ACLU Foundation, which works to protect civil rights, civil liberties, and the rule of law in the United States.

## Beaver Trust

**USD 379,747 (3 years)**

To provide core support to implement a beaver restoration strategy across Scotland, England, and Wales.

## Billion Oyster Project

**USD 600,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to restore one billion oysters to New York Harbor by 2030 — while engaging one million New Yorkers in the revival of their city's waterfront.

## Bloomsbury Football Foundation

**USD 1,265,823 (3 years)**

To provide core support for its work to improve the health, wellbeing, and social benefits of girls and young women furthest from opportunity through football.

## Borealis Philanthropy

**USD 1,000,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support for flexible, unrestricted, and rapid response grants that empower community-based organisations to build vibrant, resilient communities.

## Canterbury Cantata Trust

**USD 379,747 (5 years)**

To provide core support to Canterbury Cantata Trust, based in the UK, which teaches singing to people with Parkinson's disease, their carers and families, and many others to improve health and wellbeing.

## Chapel & York US Foundation, Inc.

**USD 400,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to AgWild to strengthen community-led conservation work in Kenya.

## Climate-KIC International Foundation

**USD 5,000,000 (2 years)**

To support Climate KIC and the Systemic Climate Action Collaborative in their efforts to create a resilient, equitable, and regenerative future for all.

## ClimateWorks Foundation, USA

**USD 12,000,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to help amplify the power of philanthropy to drive solutions that benefit people and the planet.

## Colorado Plateau Foundation

**USD 600,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to the Colorado Plateau Foundation for its work to support communities across the Colorado Plateau region.

## Common Goal USA

**USD 800,000 (3 years)**

To provide unrestricted programme support to a mental health initiative linked to football (i.e., soccer) across the US and North America.

## Commonweal

**USD 500,000 (18 months)**

To provide core support for the Omega Resilience Awards project, which empowers young people, through fellowships and research grants, to craft new ways of living, sharing, and coming together to address challenges.

## Community Connections for Youth

**USD 1,134,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to foster community-led alternatives to incarceration and empower families and young people.

## Conservation International Asia Pacific Ltd

**USD 2,000,000 (3 years)**

To pilot nature conservation and development models in community-conserved areas of the Poyang Lake Basin, and restore forest ecosystems and improve local livelihoods in Yuxi, Yunnan Province.

## Downs Syndrome Diamond

### Foundation Limited

**USD 2,250,000 (3 years)**

To enable children with Down syndrome and their families worldwide to access personalised, evidence-based digital education and support, empowering lifelong learning and inclusion.

## Durham Technical Community

### College Foundation

**USD 300,000 (3 years)**

To advance the Success Coach Programme at Durham Technical Community College in North Carolina, which provides personalised support to students.

## Ex Cathedra

**USD 379,747 (3 years)**

To support Ex Cathedra's Singing Medicine project, which provides singing for wellbeing to children, families, and staff at Birmingham Children's Hospital in the UK.

## Fondation de l'Ecole Internationale de Genève

**USD 681,818 (2 years)**

To support the construction of a sustainable Campus Hub at the Ecolint La Châtaigneraie campus in the canton of Vaud, Switzerland, to enable collaborative learning, wellbeing, and community engagement for over 1,500 students.

## Fondation privée des HUG

**USD 882,958 (4 years)**

To support a research collaboration with Fondation privée des HUG, Geneva University Medical School, and Geneva University Hospital to investigate the biological mechanisms of osteoarthritis and inform future strategies for treatment and prevention.

## Fondation Resonance

**USD 340,909 (3 years)**

To provide core support to bring classical piano music to public places, to manage Fondation Resonance's music school, and share its pedagogy through masterclasses, online and in person.

## Fund for the City of New York

**USD 800,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to Terra Firma National, which seeks to protect children and families across the US by bringing together healthcare and legal services.

## Global Rewilding Alliance

**USD 350,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support for nature's recovery and to contribute to a thriving future for people, nature, and the planet.

## Goals for Girls

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

To provide core support to help empower girls to become confident leaders and changemakers through football-based leadership development.

**Goldsmiths, University of London****USD 12,658,228 (5 years)**

To foster opportunities for positive dialogue and create more hopeful futures for migrants and the communities that host them.

**Good Shepherd Services****USD 5,000,000 (5 years)**

To provide core support to help more than 30,000 children, youth, and family members annually through a network of over 100 community-based, education, vocational, and child welfare programmes located across New York City.

**Guys & St Thomas' Foundation****USD 253,165 (2 years)**

To improve the experience of care and holistic health outcomes for young people who need to transition from Evelina London paediatric services into Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust adult services.

**Helpforce Community Trust****USD 1,518,987 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Helpforce Community to innovate, evaluate, and scale new and proven volunteer schemes that integrate NHS and community-based services in the UK.

**High Point University****USD 1,600,000 (3 years)**

To support the Bonner Leader Program, a scholarship and leadership development programme designed to help low-income students go to college, ensuring that all students have the chance to succeed.

**Housing for New Hope Inc.****USD 500,000 (5 years)**

To address homelessness for families and individuals living in Durham, North Carolina, the US.

**Instituto Geni****USD 157,500 (1 year)**

To support the strengthening of the financial sustainability of 21 not-for-profit organisations in Brazil.

**International Non-Profit****Reporting Foundation****USD 400,000 (3 years)**

To promote and harmonise not-for-profit financial reporting globally.

**Kings Against Violence Initiative, Inc.****USD 800,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support for youth programmes in schools, communities, and hospitals in Brooklyn, New York, to prevent interpersonal violence.

**Kommuneqarfik Sermersooq****USD 6,241,135 (2 years)**

To build a shelter to provide accommodation for women experiencing homelessness in Nuuk, Greenland.

**Marie Curie****USD 1,280,694 (3 years)**

To improve end-of-life care for residents in care homes within identified primary care networks.

**Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center****USD 500,000 (2 years)**

To build capacity in cancer research and clinical oncology in Nigeria by providing training and mentoring opportunities to Nigerian physicians.

**MiracleFeet****USD 800,000 (3 years)**

To expand MiracleFeet's national clubfoot programme in Zimbabwe to reach more children in need.

**National Center for Youth Law****USD 1,000,000 (3 years)**

To help ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive and achieve the future they envision.

**Oak Hill School Foundation****USD 1,000,000 (1.5 years)**

To provide core support to the Oak Hill school in Switzerland to support more children with learning differences.

**Oceana Inc****USD 11,000,000 (3 years)**

To rebuild ocean abundance and ensure that it benefits local small-scale fishing communities in countries including the Philippines, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Peru, Belize, Ghana, Senegal, and Malaysia.

**Pancreatic Cancer UK****USD 949,367 (3 years)**

To provide core support to improve detection, treatment, and care for patients with pancreatic cancer.

**Public foundation Uplift****USD 400,000 (5 years)**

To strengthen family support so that children can stay with their families.

**Queensland Ballet Company****USD 2,000,000 (4 years)**

To support the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme, a year-long apprenticeship that offers young talented dancers a career pathway in professional dance.

**Re:wild****USD 450,000 (4 years)**

To provide core support to advance Rewilding Argentina's mission to restore ecosystems, reintroduce native species, and promote sustainable development.

**Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.****USD 4,000,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to the Global Commons Alliance to expand into a more diverse Alliance, and to establish a new fund that aims to create a just world on a safe planet.

**Royal College of Music****USD 379,747 (3 years)**

To provide core support to widen access to music education in the UK, support talent, and promote musical innovation.

**Self-Help (Center for Community Self-Help)****USD 1,200,000 (3 years)**

To support affordable housing in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and provide home mortgages to single heads of households throughout the state.

**Southern Vision Alliance****USD 500,000 (1 year)**

To strengthen the capacity of leaders and organisations in North Carolina, the US.

**Student U****USD 1,000,000 (4 years)**

To help students and families in Durham thrive through ongoing academic and personal support.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation****USD 2,000,000 (2 years)**

To enable Partners for a New Economy (P4NE) to fund work to catalyse a new economy that serves people and nature.

**Swiss Philanthropy Foundation****USD 8,000,000 (4 years)**

To support efforts that protect ecosystems globally.

**The African Climate Foundation Trust****USD 1,000,000 (3 years)**

To scope and build out a programme of work to support climate resilience in Zimbabwe.

**The HALO Trust****USD 3,500,000 (2 years)**

To support landmine clearance in Southern Africa to achieve 'mine free Zimbabwe' and to further the clearance of the Angolan Okavango region.

**The James Hutton Institute****USD 800,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to the James Hutton Institute to engage in new ways of working across disciplines to connect land and people, improve crop resilience and sustainability, and protect and enhance natural capital.

#### **The Sacconi Trust**

**USD 632,911 (5 years)**

To provide core support to help make classical music in the UK more accessible and engaging to appeal to a wider audience.

#### **The Trussell Trust**

**USD 949,367 (3 years)**

To provide core support to enable people facing financial hardship to access dignified, community-based assistance.

#### **Triangle Community Foundation**

**USD 450,000 (1 year)**

To provide capacity strengthening support to Oak grantees in the Triangle Community Foundation cohort of North Carolina-based not-for-profit organisations.

#### **Trout Unlimited**

**USD 300,000 (2 years)**

To strengthen wildfire resilience across the Western United States by supporting efforts to bring people together that restore and care for rivers and their surrounding landscapes.

#### **Trust Africa**

**USD 400,000 (3 years)**

To strengthen the capacity of the East Africa Regional Agroecology Fund, which seeks to reach and support community networks and organisations across the East African region.

#### **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

**USD 300,000 (2 years)**

To increase access to high-quality teaching methods and materials on contemporary African culture among middle- and high-school students in the US.

#### **US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants**

**USD 1,100,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support for pro-bono legal services for children.

#### **Winchester Churches Nightshelter dba The Winchester Beacon**

**USD 525,316 (4 years)**

To provide core support to expand and enhance accommodation services and tailored assistance for residents and individuals at risk of homelessness in Winchester, UK.

#### **World Resources Institute**

**USD 800,000 (3 years)**

To help improve how food is grown, shared, and accessed in Rwanda, so communities can continue to thrive in ways that are healthier for people and the planet.

## **Brazil**

#### **Brazil Fund for Human Rights**

**USD 2,629,000 (4 years)**

To provide final support to a small cohort of grantees in Brazil due to the closure of Oak Foundation's Brazil Programme.

#### **Comissão Pastoral da Terra - Regional Bahia**

**USD 390,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Comissão Pastoral da Terra - Regional Bahia, which supports rural and traditional communities in western Bahia, Brazil.

#### **Instituto Brasileiro de Direito Urbanístico (Brazilian Institute for Urbanistic Law)**

**USD 210,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to improve access to information and support urban land governance in Brazil.

#### **Marco Zero Conteúdo**

**USD 99,000 (1 year)**

To provide core funding to Marco Zero Conteúdo for its journalism that serves as a platform for public dialogue in Brazil's Northeast.

#### **Reporters Without Borders Latin America**

**USD 330,000 (3 years)**

To support the safety and professional development of journalists in Brazil.

## **India**

#### **Swiss Philanthropy Foundation**

**USD 2,958,763 (4 years)**

To provide exit grants to grantees of Oak's former India Programme.

## **Other grants**

#### **Nonprofit Builder LLC**

**USD 249,474 (2 years)**

To provide Oak grantees access to tailored, high-impact organisational strengthening support.

#### **Centre for Public Health in Greenland**

**USD 103,030 (1 year)**

To research effective strategies for implementing child safeguarding practices across Greenland.

#### **The Resource Alliance**

**USD 322,348 (1 year)**

To strengthen the financial resilience of Oak partners through a collaborative learning and networking programme.

# 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 provides grants to not-for-profit organisations that work to support people in Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands who are furthest from opportunity and often face difficult life circumstances. This includes people who are undocumented migrants, individuals living in shelters, people experiencing homelessness, and those earning a living through street-based sex work.

We recognise the dignity, strength, and potential of every person and aim to support their efforts to build safer, more stable lives. We believe that real understanding comes from real connection. That's why we listen carefully and stay in conversation with the people and communities most affected by the issues we care about. Their experiences and ideas guide our grant-making.

In this year's annual report, we highlight the work of NuQi, a dance organisation working across Greenland to bring the joy of dance to communities living in some of the most far-flung corners of the world. Read on to find out more.

## Building bridges through dance in Greenland



In Greenland, where towns are separated by mountains, ice, and sea, and no two cities are linked by roads, opportunities for cultural activities can be scarce, especially for children living outside the capital, Nuuk. For children outside of Nuuk, there are no local dance classes to join, no studios to visit, and no dancers to learn from in their own communities.

But Greenland's first dedicated dance centre – NuQi – is changing that. NuQi is short for Nunatta Inuisa Qiteqatigiittarfiat, which roughly translates to 'Greenland's space for dancing together'. This sense of togetherness and collective ownership is at the heart of its work. NuQi blends professional dance training with cultural traditions. From free family workshops to online classes that reach remote towns, NuQi creates a new and accessible space for community and cultural expression across the entire country.

### Preserving cultural tradition

Dance is a form of cultural expression, and NuQi is rooted in Greenland's local dance traditions. "In the same way that a dance studio in Texas would offer flamenco or mariachi, NuQi reflects Greenland's local dance culture," says Ruth Ann Montgomery-Andersen, head of NuQi's board. "Dance in Greenland is as equally relevant to the culture."

At the oldest sports hall in Nuuk, NuQi provides free family workshops for traditional Greenlandic dances, including Uajaernejq (masked dance),

Qilaatersorneq (drum dance), and Qulleq (oil lamp rituals). NuQi's workshops welcome people of all ages, allowing all generations to experience and enjoy the dances together. And, by blending these traditions with ballet, as well as contemporary and urban styles of dance, NuQi ensures that young dancers can relate to the art form and their own culture, while also building their dancing skills.

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**"You can participate on your own terms, move in and out, and open up only when you feel ready."**

Ruth Ann Montgomery-Andersen,  
NuQi

One of the ways that NuQi gets around the enormous and impassable distances is by live-streaming dance classes to preschools and community institutions. Called the Internetdans programme, it even reaches remote places like Tasiilaq, Uummannaq, and Upernavik. For many children, Internetdans is often their first glimpse of what a dance class looks like and the first step into a wider world of creative expression.

"Our goal is simple," says Ruth. "We want every child in Greenland to know that there's a place for them

where they can move, create, and feel safe. And if they choose, they can take what they've learned and pass it on."

### A safe space for movement and growth

Dance is also a pathway to healing and confidence. For children who have experienced neglect or abuse, traditional team sports can sometimes feel overwhelming, as they require constant interaction and group coordination. Dance offers a different rhythm.

"You can participate on your own terms, move in and out, and open up only when you feel ready," explains Ruth. "That flexibility makes it especially powerful for kids who have been through trauma."

In addition, NuQi's Each One Teach One mentorship model encourages older students to become teachers and organisers. One young leader, after months of shadowing professionals and completing a study trip to Norway, is now producing the NuQi's annual dance show with more than 100 performers. "Next year she will be able to do it on her own," says Ruth. "It's so important to give young people the tools they need, and to build up the next generation of leaders."

To learn more about NuQi, please check out its Facebook page.

## Grants

### Bryd Tavsheden

**USD 106,383 (1 year)**

To support and strengthen Bryd Tavsheden's capacity to counsel children and youth affected by violence in Denmark.

### Det Nationale Sorgcenter

**USD 375,887 (3 years)**

To establish and support a grief therapy programme for children, adolescents, young adults, and families in Greenland.

### FAKTI

**USD 158,440 (3 years)**

To secure the first floor of the current building, strengthen the organisation's financial sustainability, continue delivering existing programmes, expand exercise classes, increase community initiatives, and create spaces for members of the community.

### Fonden for Socialt Ansvar

**USD 893,617 (3 years)**

To foster cross-sector collaboration that benefits people in need through a platform for voluntary social work.

### Foreningen Oplysning om Gadeliv

**USD 295,715 (3 years)**

To strengthen the 'Active Neighbourhoods' initiative in Sydhavnen, which seeks to actively involve communities in the city's development projects.

### Frelsens Hær

**USD 282,270 (1 year)**

To renovate and equip a day shelter for people experiencing homelessness in central Nuuk, Greenland.

### Hjemløsnings

**USD 736,363 (2 years)**

To prevent people from becoming homeless and ensure that those who do are able to regain a safe, stable home.

### I Tråd Med Verden

**USD 419,858 (3 years)**

To create more job opportunities, strengthen networks, and improve the quality of life for people who have lost their place in the labour market.

### Maskine Maskine Amager

**USD 532,624 (2 years)**

To provide support to help people with severe mental illness in Denmark.

### Nextstep Foreningen

**USD 212,766 (2 years)**

To provide support to mental health professionals and improve the lives of people with mental health diagnoses, and their families.

### NuQi

**USD 144,681 (2 years)**

To provide dance classes throughout Greenland to help children and young people gain bodily awareness and confidence through dance, strengthen their participation in cultural and social communities, and support the role of dance in the Arctic region.

### Røde Kors Danmark

**USD 638,298 (3 years)**

To provide core support to improve the health outcomes and quality of life of people in Denmark without a Danish CPR number, through the provision of basic health services.

### Sermersooq Kommune

**USD 172,394 (2 years)**

To repair the ski lift in Tasiilaq in Greenland and create a safe and active meeting place for the winter months.

### Stenbroens Jurister

**USD 491,631 (2 years)**

To provide core support for legal aid to vulnerable groups in Denmark.



### Caption:

The photos in the Denmark section of the report showcase Greenland's first dedicated dance centre – NuQi – which blends professional dance training with cultural traditions, in order to create a new and accessible space for community and cultural expression across the entire country.

# 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; and supporting children and others with special needs. We align our grant-making to government and international development goals.

The stories on the following pages demonstrate the reach and scope of our grantees, through the Zimbabwe Programme and the Environment Programme, to make a real difference in the lives of Zimbabwean people.

## Island Hospice: bringing comfort through palliative support



In a leafy suburb of Harare, Zimbabwe, a gentle glow fills the evening air as families and friends gather for a candlelit vigil. Some light candles in memory of loved ones, while others share heartfelt notes and stories. Hosted each year by Island Hospice and Healthcare, the vigil celebrates connection and offers a space for reflection and comfort.

Island Hospice, the first hospice centre established in Africa, has been pioneering palliative care and bereavement services in Zimbabwe since 1979. Its approach goes beyond symptom control, offering holistic care that addresses physical pain as well as emotional, social, and spiritual needs. This support complements routine healthcare and extends care to families and caregivers, recognising that illness affects entire households. Island Hospice provides pain relief through access to essential medications, psychosocial and spiritual support, and practical assistance. Through its Tuma services, Island Hospice helps with groceries, hygiene items, and the collection of prescriptions and medications. It also offers community counselling and serves as a respite centre, particularly during public holidays when other services may be limited.

For people living with serious health conditions such as cancer,

cardiovascular diseases, chronic illnesses, or HIV/AIDS, this care reinforces resilience and fosters hope. “Island Hospice gave me dignity when I thought all hope was lost,” says one patient. “The nurses treated me like family.”

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“Island Hospice gave me dignity when I thought all hope was lost.”

Patient, Island Hospice

Recognising the urgent need for accessible palliative care in Zimbabwe, Island Hospice designed its model to ensure that no family is turned away because of financial constraints. To sustain this commitment, the organisation operates social enterprises including a nursing agency, a medical equipment hire service, and programme. The surplus generated by these enterprises then subsidises care for patients who are unable to pay.

Over time, the organisation has expanded its reach to ensure patients in rural areas are not left behind, delivering services through home

visits and roadside outreach clinics, bringing care closer to those who need it most.

Building on decades of meaningful work done in neighbouring countries like Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zambia, and South Africa, Island Hospice continues to share culturally responsive approaches to palliative care while strengthening regional collaboration.

The organisation has also broadened its focus to address emerging needs. It now offers mental health and stress management training to build resilience and coping skills, and has introduced a Young Carers Project, recognising the unique challenges faced by children and adolescents who care for ill or disabled family members. In partnership with the Ministry of Health and Child Care, Island Hospice is actively supporting the integration of palliative care into the public health system and strengthening referral pathways within hospitals.

Through care that goes beyond medical treatment alone, Island Hospice's team of dedicated health workers are working to restore hope, uphold dignity, and strengthen communities.

## Life after landmines: land and livelihoods in northeast Zimbabwe

In 2021, the remote border village of Chisecha, four hours north of Harare in Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe, hosted a landmark moment in the country's demining efforts.

Chisecha is located in a heavily mined part of the country. Its children used to have to cross a minefield to get to school. Yet this district of Mount Darwin has become the first on the border with Mozambique to be declared mine-free. In an emotional ceremony, the land was handed back to the local community.

The handover of the newly demined land in Chisecha isn't the end of the story. When land is returned to the stewardship of local communities, they are free to forge hopeful futures with improved livelihoods.

"We will be able to expand our plot by another hectare or two so we can grow a cash crop," says Sarudzai Kamoyo, a mother to three sons who lives next to land that was recently demined in 2019. "With one more hectare we can make around 200 dollars per harvest, which would allow us to buy domestic products and pay for school fees much more easily."<sup>1</sup>

The work of The HALO Trust – the international humanitarian demining charity whose local teams have destroyed more than 235,000 mines in Zimbabwe since 2013<sup>2</sup> – doesn't end when land is declared safe. HALO has been making sure that local men and women employed on demining projects have also been learning transferrable literacy, language, numeracy, accounting, and IT skills.

"We're working with local organisations to pilot training schemes for staff and local communities," says James Cowan, CEO of HALO. The schemes support their career progression within the Trust, as well as their long-term job prospects beyond HALO.

Land is precious in the Mount Darwin district, and every acre is needed to raise cattle and grow crops. This is why, as land opens up, regenerative agriculture techniques can truly help it thrive.

"Small farms built alongside remote minefield camps provide ongoing training in sustainable and regenerative farming practices for camp staff," says James. "This approach allows soil, water, nutrients, and other natural resources to recover naturally, thereby improving biodiversity and boosting harvests. It also helps rural communities become more resilient – both financially and in response to changes in the climate."

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"Small farms built alongside remote minefield camps provide ongoing training in sustainable and regenerative farming practices [...] this approach allows [...] natural resources to recover..."

James Cowan, The HALO Trust

Two Zimbabwean organisations are working to improve food and financial security in Mount Darwin's and Mutoko farming communities.

One of the organisations is the Agricultural Partnerships Trust (APT), which was formed in 2010 to support the development of rural communities in Zimbabwe, with a focus on smallholder agriculture. APT has trained more than 150 smallholders in Mount Darwin in regenerative farming methods. Local farmers now have access to mechanised equipment like two-wheel tractors, which reduce the need to till the soil. Farmers have



References: Please see page 58 of this report.



©Zimbabwe Women's Bureau

also learned how to plant, harvest, bale, and store fodder. “We’re helping to improve farming methods, reduce labour, and improve cattle health, which all increases earnings,” says director Michael Dawes. “APT has also been supporting local communities to start businesses, including a community-owned dairy scheme and a wild fruits processing venture.”

For the first time since the 1970s, Mount Darwin is free from the fear of landmines, and at last its communities can look towards the future. Livelihoods are starting to thrive once again, and as rural communities transform, new micro-businesses pop up to meet their needs, including animal care, fodder supply, and dairy marketing. With 20 new saving and lending schemes, farmers can plan for and invest in future years’ yields.

The second organisation is the Zimbabwe Women’s Bureau (ZWB). Although it is not working on demined land, the organisation is working to advance the rights and socio-economic empowerment of local women. Its programmes promote regenerative agriculture, food security, and sustainable livelihoods.

For example, in neighbouring Mashonaland East Province, on five hectares once abandoned to drought, ZWB supports a cooperative of 36 women farmers who are bringing the land back to life.

Two boreholes and a solar-powered water pump support the Women’s Agroecological Garden, and the women looking after the garden have learned techniques such as crop rotation, composting, mulching, and drip-irrigation to minimise erosion, improve fertility, and conserve water.

“The women are working hand-in-hand with nature to create a food production system that’s sustainable for future generations.”

Ronika Mumbire

The women have been making an income from selling vegetables since late 2024, helping them to pay school fees and become financially independent. They have just secured a one-year contract to grow chillis, and found ways to add market value to raw products, such as solar driers for fruits like banana and mango.

“The women are excited to be doing this work,” says Ronika Mumbire, executive director of ZWB. “The women are working hand-in-hand with nature to create a food production system that’s sustainable

for future generations, through unity, hard work, and a deep connection to the land.”

The combined efforts of APT and ZWB are making a positive impact on several fronts. Sustainable farming practices along with locally adapted livestock breeds and drought-resistant crops are improving farmers’ success rates and their family’s food security. Deforestation is reduced and biodiversity improved, as communities with diverse livelihoods have less need to cut down trees to make charcoal for cooking, or to hunt illegal bushmeat.

Oak supports projects in northeast Zimbabwe by The HALO Trust, Zimbabwe Women’s Bureau, and the Agricultural Partnerships Trust. We support grantees to reverse land degradation and increase prosperity by adopting sustainable, regenerative practices. Find out more on our website.



**Captions:**

The photos throughout this section of the annual report represent the work being carried out in Zimbabwe by our grantees, supported by our Environment Programme and our Zimbabwe Programme.

## It takes a village: FOST's approach to kinship care in Zimbabwe



The Mutamba tree is found across Zimbabwe, flourishing even in the country's driest regions. Treasured for its use in traditional medicine to treat illness, it is regarded as a tree that belongs to everyone in the community and, therefore, should not be cut down.

This powerful symbol has been adopted as the logo of the Farm Orphan Support Trust (FOST), a not-for-profit organisation providing community-based care for children who have lost one or both of their parents. Just as the Mutamba tree is shared by all, FOST works under the belief that these children are the responsibility of the entire community.

Guided by this ethos, FOST supports 'kinship care' for children – care provided by grandparents, relatives, or close family friends. And this care is needed – in some cases, grandmothers take care of as many as 13 children, which can be very challenging, especially as they age. "If it hadn't been for FOST, I don't know what I would have done with my grandchildren," says one grandmother.

By strengthening kinship care, FOST helps ensure that children who have lost one or both parents can remain connected to their communities and siblings, and build on their strengths to thrive.

Kinship care is already widespread across sub-Saharan Africa. According to World Bank Development Indicators data, approximately 510,000 children in Zimbabwe have lost their mother or both parents to AIDS before age 15.<sup>1</sup> Most of these children are cared for within kinship networks. To support these families, FOST runs initiatives such as sports and recreational activities, reproductive health education, entrepreneurship training, and other group-based programmes.

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“We are looking at how we can support [these households] to support themselves, and to build their own household security.”

Lynn Walker, Trustee, FOST

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“At FOST, we are looking at sustainable ways of addressing the problem...we don't want people to be dependent on material support from organisations like ourselves,” says Lynn Walker, Trustee of FOST, Zimbabwe. “So we are looking at how we can support [these households] to support themselves, and to build their own household security.”

Founded in 1995, FOST initially focused on children who have lost parents living in commercial farming communities. These communities often face unique challenges in accessing services and infrastructure, as they are remote, difficult to reach, and isolated from urban centres.

In recent years, the organisation has broadened its scope to support everyone living in farming communities, particularly by promoting food security and sustainable livelihoods. This includes teaching agricultural techniques, encouraging household vegetable gardens, and establishing women's self-help groups, which provide space for dialogue on parenting, income generation strategies, and other social issues. Since 2003, FOST has enabled over 15,700 children who have lost parents to attend school and supported 15,000 women in establishing small to medium sized businesses through its self-help group approach.<sup>2</sup>

Rooted in the same resilience and generosity as the Mutamba tree, FOST continues to nurture communities from within, strengthening the networks that already care for their most vulnerable members. By building on local knowledge, shared responsibility, and collective action, the organisation helps ensure that children who have lost parents are not defined by loss, but supported to grow with dignity, opportunity, and hope – firmly grounded in their communities.

## Grants

### Agricultural Partnership Trust

**USD 225,000 (2 years)**

To support local efforts to train farmers, grow small businesses, and improve access to markets for communities in the Dande Valley of Mount Darwin, Zimbabwe.

### Development Aid From People to People in Zimbabwe

**USD 450,000 (3 years)**

To empower young people in Bindura district with sustainable livelihood skills, environmental awareness, and leadership capacity.

### Farm Orphan Support Trust of Zimbabwe

**USD 450,000 (3 years)**

To protect children and empower communities through sustainable livelihoods initiatives in Zimbabwe.

### Fondazione Terre des Hommes Italia

**USD 900,000 (2 years)**

To strengthen food and livelihood security for communities in the Buhera and Chipinge districts of Zimbabwe through agroecological food production and vocational training.

### Island Hospice Service

**USD 450,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to increase access to palliative care services by scaling up existing services in Zimbabwe.

### J.F. Kapnek Trust

**USD 164,913 (1 year)**

To protect the wellbeing of vulnerable children and adults by strengthening child safeguarding measures within Zimcare, an organisation that provides support to persons with learning disabilities.

### Kidzcan

**USD 300,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support for chemotherapy, diagnostics, transportation, psychosocial care, home services, and nutritional support for children with cancer treated in Zimbabwe's public hospitals.

### Mashambanzou Care Trust

**USD 450,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to strengthen family resilience and wellbeing through services in health, education, economics, and child protection.

### Multi Aid Support Organisation

**USD 500,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to innovate, adapt, and respond effectively to emerging community needs.

### Ntengwe for Community Development

**USD 450,000 (3 years)**

To strengthen smallholder farming in Matabeleland North through agribusiness and climate-smart farming practices.

### NZEVE Deaf Children's Centre

**USD 420,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to strengthen inclusive rehabilitation and community-based services for children and people with hearing-related disabilities in Manicaland, Zimbabwe.

### Restless Development Zimbabwe

**USD 420,000 (2 years)**

To equip young people in Greater Harare and Nyanga, Zimbabwe, with skills and resources to launch and grow agricultural enterprises.

### Simukai Child Protection Program

**USD 450,000 (3 years)**

To provide core support to Simukai, which seeks to scale up its case management work and skills training to help children reach their full potential.

### The Bethany Project

**USD 400,000 (3 years)**

To increase community engagement in the support and care for children and young people.

### The Elephant Crew Foundation

**USD 250,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to address plastic pollution, poverty, and livelihoods development in the Victoria Falls area of Zimbabwe.

### Youth Advocates

**USD 700,000 (2 years)**

To provide core support to equip young people in Zimbabwe with the tools and opportunities they need to build sustainable livelihoods and long-term resilience.

### Zimcare Trust

**USD 908,348 (2 years)**

To support salaries of non-teaching staff so that Zimcare can continue providing specialised education to children with learning differences in Zimbabwe.



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The editors have tried to ensure the accuracy of this report but cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.

In some cases names have been changed to protect the identity of individuals.

