



# PEOPLE POWERED CHANGE

## *2023 Impact & Growth Report*



*People power transforms*

**LIVES → COMMUNITIES → SOCIETIES → THE WORLD**

In 2023, thousands of regular people in 276 communities in 12 countries answered the question of whether change is possible. In a world under stress, people put their faith into action, using organizing tools to transform their lives, communities, and societies.

Your support helped us expand organizing to dozens of new communities in Central America, Haiti, East and West Africa, and Eastern Europe and begin new multi-faith organizing in Mexico, Tanzania, and Namibia.

Together, we're showing that people-power motivated and supported by faith values, leaders and institutions can change the root causes of poverty and suffering and help answer the greatest challenges facing our societies and the world.

### **Better lives**

In a world where too many children and families still don't have what they need to survive and thrive, people brought clean water, locally produced food, schools, health centers, affordable housing, and reforestation to their communities.

### **Accountability**

In a world where public resources are siphoned off by corruption and mismanagement, people held their governments accountable for investing in development in communities with the greatest need.

### **Democracy**

In a world where human rights abuses and authoritarian governments are on the rise, people joined together to restore and strengthen democracy in their countries.



## BY THE NUMBERS

**12**  
countries

**276**  
community teams

**7,475**  
grassroots leaders

### Locally-Led Development

In a world where international aid agencies are questioning the effectiveness of top-down project-based development, people set priorities for their own communities to achieve sustainable long-term change.

### Faith as a Source of Social Unity and Justice

In a world where social cohesion is threatened by religious polarization, people from different faiths and cultural traditions joined together to work for the common good. In 2023, Muslim participation in Faith in Action grew through multi-faith organizing in Ghana and Tanzania.

### Women Powering Social Transformation

In a world where men continue to dominate governments and other societal institutions, Faith in Action International affiliates created platforms for women to lead the transformation of their communities and countries.

### Global Learning

In a world facing unprecedented challenges, people with the most at stake from climate change, growing inequality, and large-scale migration were able to meet across countries, languages, and religions to share what they are learning and build a shared vision for the future.

### Building a Global Movement




Join us in building a world where everyone has what they need to thrive and a say over the decisions that shape their lives. Organize your community and country, raise funds to hire community organizers around the world, and advocate with your elected officials for policies that support democracy, human rights, and locally-led development.



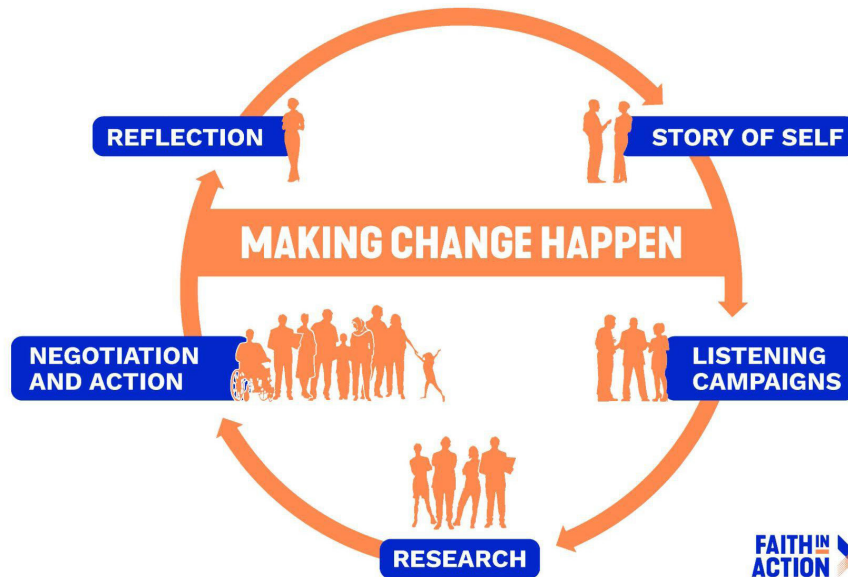
# THEORY OF CHANGE

Faith in Action International is building people-power to advance development and democracy that improves the lives of the most vulnerable children and families.

Here is how we think about how our work helps create a more just, equitable, and sustainable world.

	LOCAL	NATIONAL	INTERNATIONAL
<b>Democracy</b> 	Creating democratic accountability between people and their elected officials.	Building multi-faith civic power to counter corruption and authoritarianism.	Building public support for international rules that protect democracy and human rights.
<b>Development</b> 	Driving development based on priorities set by local residents.	Channeling domestic resources into development prioritized by residents in the most marginalized communities	Changing how aid institutions operate to follow the lead of civic organizations with deep grassroots bases.
<b>Policy Change</b> 	Local organizing campaigns drive the design and implementation of national policy campaigns.	National campaigns on land rights, climate, and social spending reorient governments to inclusive development.	International campaigns re-focus U.S. and international policy on the root causes of poverty and migration.

Faith in Action International's approach to social change is deeply rooted in local communities and adapted to different cultural and social contexts. As a global movement of people of faith and compassion, we share a common commitment to simple processes and methods to nurture people's leadership and build powerful, democratic, and accountable organizations.

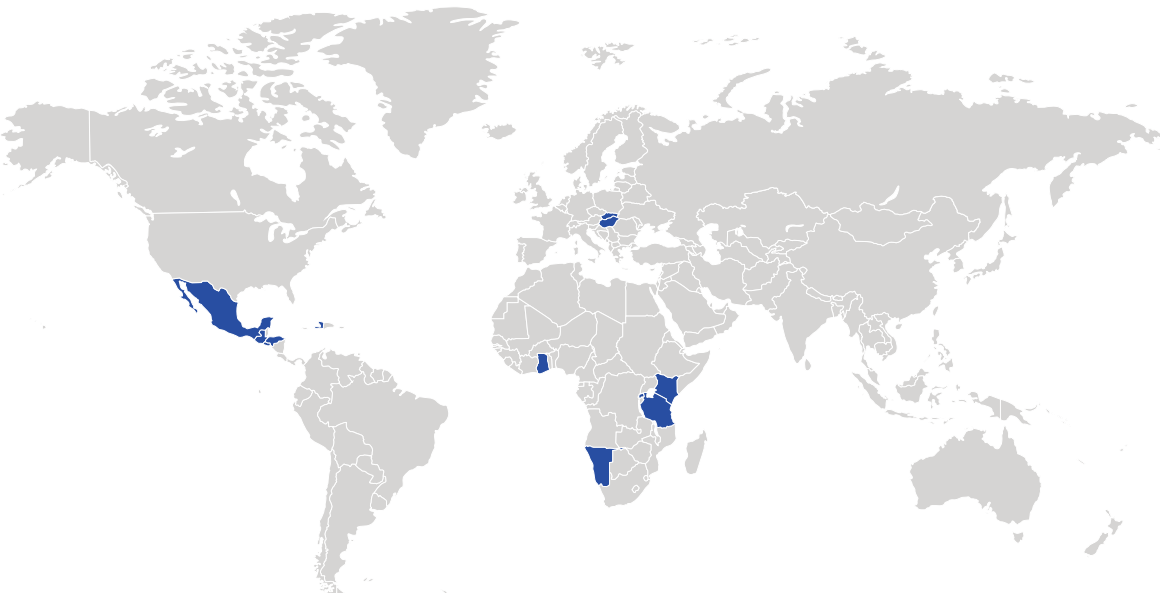


One-to-ones, team building, listening campaigns, research meetings, public actions, reflection, and evaluation are integral to our movement. These practices help people develop a collective identity and see themselves as active and powerful agents for social change.



## WHERE WE WORK

*El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Haiti  
Ghana, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Namibia  
Hungary and Slovakia.*





TOP: Rev. John Rutsindintwarane, founder of PICO Rwanda, never misses an opportunity to teach community organizing practice. BOTTOM: Two-day Leadership Training in Muleba, Tanzania, May 2023.

# AFRICA

Over the past four years, Faith in Action International's work in Africa has expanded from Rwanda to Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana, and Namibia.

## Rwanda

In 2023, PICO Rwanda hired five long-time experienced grassroots leaders as community organizers to expand organizing into new communities and regions. Grassroots leaders began meeting nationally to develop a shared vision and strategy for growing their work. To help Rwanda become more resilient to climate change, PICO Rwanda leaders carried out reforestation projects, planting more than 45,000 trees in their communities. With support from Catholic Bishop Anaclet Mwumvaneza, PICO Rwanda is beginning a new organizing effort in the Nyundo Diocese in Western Rwanda and is working to support emerging organizing efforts in Tanzania, Kenya, and Namibia.

### LASTING IMPACT IN RWANDA



**43**  
villages organized



**57,000**  
people served annually by three  
community health centers



**\$1.44 million**  
in investment in local  
communities



**55,000**  
trees planted for climate  
change resilience

## A new school in Nyarubuye

In 2023, grassroots leaders in Nyarubuye, Rwanda, celebrated the completion of a new school that will serve 75 students. The school is staffed by government-funded teachers and next to a health clinic that leaders brought to their community in 2022. Students can now attend school near home and finish their primary education. In May 2023, Charlotte Muteteli gave the regional Mayor a tour of the new school and clinic and explained how these were just the first steps in transforming their community, which was the site of some of the worst mass murders during Rwanda's 2004 genocide.



*RIGHT: Charlotte Muteteli and a team of 12 grassroots leaders from Nyarubuye led an organizing campaign that has resulted in a new health center, primary school, and hope for their rural community.*

## Tanzania

Clergy and lay leaders are building two new organizations in the Kagera Region of Western Tanzania, near the border with Rwanda. Anglican Bishop Godfrey Mbelwa began the organizing process in Muleba, Tanzania. Now, Muslim and other Christian clergy and lay people are participating. They have begun doing 1:1 listening in six communities in a part of the country



*FAITH in Ghana Learning Festival, Damango, Ghana, November 2023.*

where the Central Government has not invested in education and health. With no regional college, young people must leave the region for higher education and often do not return, which continues to impoverish their families and communities.

Clergy and grassroots leaders from Ngara, at the other end of the Kagera Region, have begun a similar process. Their communities have rich farmland but lack access to credit and markets and are now under pressure from a massive nickel-mining project. Through organizing, people are coming together to develop a shared vision and strategy to promote local agriculture, raise their incomes, and protect the fragile environment and water supply.

## **Kenya**

Fr. Innocent Rugaragu from PICO Rwanda is continuing to work with Maasai communities in Kenya to provide training in community organizing and leadership development. With that support, the Maasai Empowerment and Transformation Organization (MATRO) is working to ensure that Maasai leaders have a say over government decisions that affect their families and land.

## **Ghana**

In 2023, the FAITH in Ghana Alliance brought its unique approach to multi-faith cooperation to local communities across Ghana. In a region under political stress, eight of the largest Muslim, Catholic, Pentecostal, and Mainline Protestant religious bodies are working together to advance social cohesion and justice in Ghana.

With support from Faith in Action International, the FAITH in Ghana Alliance formed two new regional multi-faith alliances, bringing the organization's work to ten of the sixteen regions in the country, and began piloting local organizing in eighteen communities across Ghana. As of September 2023, these local multi-faith alliances had listened to more than 3,000 of their neighbors about changes they wanted in their communities. As a result, local teams are now organizing to address a broad set of development issues ranging from opening a technical high school to clean water, roads, bridges, and sanitation.

With the Ghana economy in turmoil and national elections scheduled for December 2024, the FAITH in Ghana Alliance is developing a shared agenda for decentralizing development and increasing investment in education, jobs, and health care. FAITH in Ghana's Regional Teams are working to begin grassroots organizing in twelve new communities in 2024 to make a total of 30 communities.

Efforts are also being made to enhance the participation of Catholic Religious Women in both national and grassroots organizing, reinforcing the critical leadership role that the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations (FOMWAG) is playing in the Alliance. These efforts at expansion are expected to culminate in a multifaith Religious Women's conference in September 2024.

## **Namibia**

At the invitation of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Pastor John Rutsindintwarane from PICO Rwanda is working with faith leaders in Namibia to begin organizing in the city of Rehoboth and surrounding rural areas.



TOP: OPODNE Presidents Meeting, Cap-Haitien, Haiti, August, 2023; BOTTOM: Local Organizing Committee meeting in El Salvador.

# LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN

## Haiti

Amid widespread hunger and government collapse, Haitian grassroots leaders continue to organize to survive and rebuild. In 2023, the boards of OPODNE in Northeast Haiti and OPODNO in North Haiti decided to build a Haiti-wide organization - OPODH. The organization now supports grassroots teams in 62 communities in Northeast and North Haiti. Twenty-two of these communities have organized mutual solidarity loan funds to help people start small businesses and pay for school fees.

OPODH's **We Plant Today So We Can Feed Ourselves Tomorrow** campaign is making it possible for small-scale farmers to harvest crops to feed their families and neighbors. In 2023, farmers in seven communities planted high-quality seeds with guidance from agronomists from the St. Barnabas Agriculture Center as a result of the new **Northeast Haiti Community Seed Bank**. In December 2023, sixteen USAID officials and contractors traveled to OPODH's office in Terrier-Rouge to discuss how USAID can change its approach to agriculture in Haiti to help small-scale farmers adapt to drought and climate change.

### LASTING IMPACT IN HAITI



**64**  
communities organized



**4,000**  
small farmers consulted to develop agriculture campaign



**22**  
solidarity loan funds

## El Salvador

*Communities of Faith Organizing for Action (COFOA)* continued to play a crucial role in Salvadoran society, holding the government of El Salvador accountable to the most vulnerable communities and defending the country's democracy. COFOA now supports grassroots organizing teams that meet weekly in 146 local communities in 12 of 14 departments.

COFOA's **RENACER** land rights campaign was a national story during 2023. COFOA leaders held multiple large public events attended by more than 1,000 people each to press Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele, his Housing Minister, and the national legislature to correct flaws in national property laws to enable 350,000 families to obtain title to their land. In 2023, 267 additional families received their titles, worth an estimated \$173,500. **COFOA estimates that the success of its land rights campaign would result in the poorest families in El Salvador gaining more than \$1 billion dollars in wealth.**

Since COFOA launched the organization's second large-scale national organizing campaign in 2022 to pressure the Salvadoran government to invest in local projects prioritized by residents, community teams have presented development priorities worth an estimated \$22.6 million USD. Of these, \$1,302,482 in improvements have been implemented. COFOA leaders are continuing to work with local mayors and national government agencies to advance the other projects.

In 2023, COFOA leaders brought electricity to the community of San Cayetano, in San Salvador; a community health promoter to El Carrizal, Cuscatlán; school construction in Citalá; potable water in Los Planes y San Silvestre, Chalatenango, and Caserío Veracruz; and many road building and paving projects, all financed by Salvadoran government funds.

In the run-up to national elections, COFOA trained more than 250 of its most active grassroots leaders to organize candidate forums, turn out voters, and serve as election observers.

### Guatemala

Through the Root Causes Initiative, Faith in Action International worked with faith communities in the U.S., Mexico, and Central America to support Guatemalans who successfully organized to ensure that their newly-elected President could take office. Thousands of people pressed the Biden-Harris Administration and the Organization of American States to speak out more forcefully in support of democracy in Guatemala. At the request of Cardinal Álvaro Ramazzini, we worked with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to organize an international delegation of faith leaders to Guatemala for the second round of voting in August 2023 and then brought religious leaders to Washington, DC, in November 2023 to meet with high-level officials at the State Department, White House, and OAS.

Working with Catholic Bishop Domingo Buezo and indigenous community leaders, COFOA supported grassroots organizing in four communities in Sololá, Guatemala. As part of nationwide efforts to protect democracy, young people in Sololá developed a platform for environmental and development issues and held candidate forums with local candidates.

### Honduras

In 2023, COFOA worked closely with the new Archbishop of Tegucigalpa, José Vicente Nácher to organize local organizing teams in eight rural communities. COFOA grassroots leaders in Honduras organized to improve health services in their communities. They met with government officials to build support for a regional hospital to serve rural areas where people currently have to travel 6-7 hours on bad roads for hospital care.

### Mexico

In 2023, under the leadership of long-time community organizer Emma Paulino, Faith in Action International began to work with clergy and grassroots leaders in Guadalajara, Mexico.

## LASTING IMPACT IN EL SALVADOR



**146**  
communities organized



**\$22.6 million USD**  
Value of development priorities presented in 2023



**\$1.03 million**  
Value of development priorities completed



**\$173,500**  
Value of land titles received in 2023



**\$1 billion**  
Value of land titles at-stake



*TOP: Guatemalans celebrate the swearing in of their new democratically-elected President; BOTTOM: Leaders meet in Honduras to plan a listening campaign in their community.*

# EASTERN EUROPE

## Hungary

With support from a Lutheran Church in Budapest, Hungary, and Faith in Action International, public housing tenants are organizing to improve the conditions in their buildings, which are home to 3,500 families. In 2023, the Józsefváros Tenant Community won new management and customer service practices at the agency responsible for managing 130 public housing buildings. In June, Faith in Action International organized a delegation of U.S. organizers and clergy to Hungary to share lessons about organizing and power-building in authoritarian contexts.

## Slovakia

Faith in Action International is working with the Center for Community Organizing (CKO) in Slovakia to build a platform for clergy and lay people to work together across religious traditions for social justice. In 2023, the inter-faith platform worked with Roma community leaders and students to lead a campaign for an affordable housing policy that addresses homelessness and housing insecurity in the city of Banská Bystrica.



# A WAY FORWARD IN HAITI

In 2023, we expanded our organizing with Haitian and Central American diaspora communities in the U.S. We believe that organizing diaspora communities in close connection with grassroots leaders in their home countries is an important key to shifting U.S. foreign policy. Through **A Way Forward in Haiti**, Faith in Action federations in U.S. states with large Haitian diaspora populations worked with OPODH in Haiti, and allies, including the National Haitian-American Elected Officials Network, the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti, and the Haiti Advocacy Working Group to push the U.S. State Department to support Haitian civil society efforts to restore democracy to Haiti.



In September, we hosted a National Day of Action to Support the Haitian People in Washington, DC. Seventy-five people from 16 organizations participated, including 37 grassroots leaders and clergy from Faith in Action federations in Massachusetts, Florida, New Jersey, Colorado, and New York. We met with 33 Members of Congress and their staff, including Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer. We also supported OPODH by urging Congress and the U.S. Agency for International Development to shift its approach toward agriculture in Haiti from a focus on private contractors and export crops to help small-scale farmers so they can lead the response to hunger in Haiti.

**A Way Forward in Haiti** has also been a catalyst for a long-overdue effort to better include Black immigrants in Faith in Action's U.S. immigrant organizing. In September, before our National Day of Action, grassroots leaders, clergy, and organizers from five Faith in Action U.S. federations gathered for a retreat to discuss how anti-Black racism and anti-immigrant policies intersect to cause added pain and suffering in Black immigrant communities. Faith in Action's Faith for Liberation immigrant rights campaign is committed to investing more effort in base building and leadership development in Haitian and other Black immigrant communities and to connecting the dots between U.S. immigrant policies and the root causes of migration.

## → ROOT CAUSES OF MIGRATION

Much of our work to address the Root Causes of Migration in 2023 focused on supporting pro-democracy movements in Central America, especially in Guatemala. As with Haiti, a key element of our strategy has been to work with Faith in Action federations in the U.S. to engage more Salvadoran, Guatemalan, and Honduran-Americans in their organizations. Our diaspora organizing is helping bring new energy and creativity to longstanding efforts to change U.S. policy toward Central America and Haiti.

With our partners at the HOPE Border Institute and across Mexico and Central America, we led efforts to press the Biden-Harris Administration to apply targeted financial sanctions on corrupt officials and elites. In April 2023, we released our second annual assessment of the U.S. Administration's Root Causes Strategy, *Resetting U.S. Priorities Toward Central America*. In partnership with COFOA, we're helping grassroots leaders and faith-based organizations join together across Northern Central America to build a shared analysis, vision, and agenda for the future of their region.



## → GLOBAL LEARNING

Monthly global learning calls and delegations to Hungary and El Salvador in 2023 gave organizers and grassroots leaders from different countries a chance to learn from each other about building community power through organizing. The great diversity of countries in which Faith in Action International supports organizing creates many opportunities to understand how organizing practices can be adapted to different social and political contexts.

In June, a delegation of U.S. state directors and organizers traveled to Hungary for a four-day exchange on organizing in the context of rising authoritarianism and White Christian Nationalism. In August, a delegation of mostly Salvadoran organizers, leaders, and clergy from the U.S. traveled to El Salvador to participate in a regional meeting of grassroots leaders from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Both study trips helped create a sense of shared identity and relationships that make cross-border learning possible and relevant.



## SAFEGUARDING

Faith in Action International and its member organizations approved a safeguarding policy to promote a culture of respect and safety across our international network and prevent all forms of abuse. This policy spells out who is covered by the policy, what behavior is prohibited, how potential violations can be reported and resolved, the consequences for violations, and the safeguarding commitments Faith in Action International Member Organizations make to their members, participants, and staff.

## DONORS

### Foundations

The Raskob Foundation  
The Boston Foundation  
Vista Hermosa Foundation  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation -  
Global Ideas for U.S. Solutions  
The Democracy Fund  
Loyola Foundation  
The Boston Foundation - Ansara  
Family Foundation

### Organizations

Adorers of the Blood of Christ  
Ascension Lutheran Church, Thousand  
Oaks  
Faith in Action Bay Area  
Inland Congregations United for  
Change  
ISAIAH - Minnesota  
Loyola Jesuit Community, S.F.  
PACT San Jose  
Peace Lutheran, Grass Valley  
PICO California  
Sisters of Holy Names of Jesus & Mary  
Sisters of Holy Spirit & Mary  
Immaculate  
St. Mark's Lutheran, San Francisco  
Zion Lutheran, Oshkosh

### Individuals

Claudia Albano  
Elaine Alvarez  
Anthony Amarante  
Camille Anacabe  
Colleen & Bill Anderson  
Jeanne & David Anderson-West  
Lydia & Manuel Arias  
Julie Armstrong  
Lieve Bain  
John Baker  
Patricia Baker  
Maggi & Frank Baker-Riley  
Sr. Ruth Barreda, CHS  
Rick Barto  
Keith Barton  
Elise & Robert Baumann  
John Baumann, S.J.  
Karen & Robert Baumann  
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Judy & Martin Baumann  
Susan & Larry Baumann

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Beatris Bernstine  
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Mandy Bratt  
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Catherine & Dennis Buege  
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Stephen Callahan  
Shakiya Canty  
Mary & Dino Certa  
Dominic Cirincione  
John Claassen  
James Clair  
Monica Clark  
Rabbi Hillel Cohn  
Edith Cole  
June Marie Conlon  
Joselyn Coogler  
Celeste Cooper  
Kate Levinson & Steve Costa  
Rebecca Cramer  
Kathryn Culp  
Dr. George Cummings  
Bishop John S. Cummins  
Lisa & Fred Dalton  
Irma Dalton  
Ruth Davis  
Pauline & Jose Debasa  
Rosemary Delaney, SNJM  
Maureen Delaney, SNJM  
Kathleen Desmond  
Christel Detsch  
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Virginia & William Dolan  
Robert Dolan, S.J.  
Patricia Doyle, SNJM  
Joan Doyle, SNJM  
Joan & Dennis Duffell  
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Sharon & Bob Eichinger  
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Kathy O'Kane & Peter Ferraro  
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John Firth  
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Deborah Floyd  
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Marilyn & Glenn Frizzell  
Moriah Hall & William Fuller  
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 Patty Lawless  
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 Lauren Martens  
 Fr. Jack Martin  
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 Stacia & William Masterson  
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 Susan Price-Jang  
 Robert Rahl  
 Danny Rauda  
 Arlene Reed  
 Eileen Timmins & Scott Reed  
 Pat & David Renslow  
 Ruth Reynolds  
 Mary Ritter  
 Fr. Michael Roach  
 Diane Roche  
 Jenaro Rodriguez  
 Wendy & Richard Romano  
 Mary Romo  
 Jacob Ross  
 Teresita Saavedra, SSS  
 Kristin Sachen  
 Karen Saenger  
 Gilbert Saint Jean  
 Maggie Snyder & Victor Salgado  
 Sherri & Peter Sawaya  
 Sharry & Barry Schatmeier  
 Jolene Schmitz  
 William Schulze

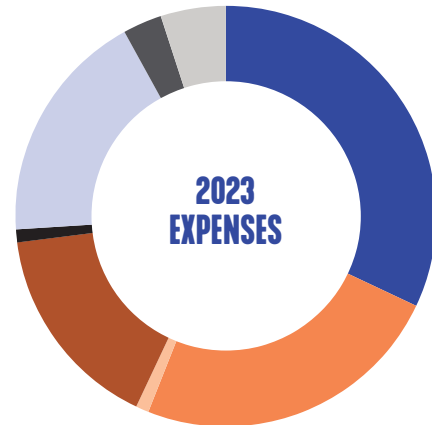
Josie Schweizer  
 Gloria & Greg Shean  
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 Anna Marie Franco & Chuck  
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 Felicia & Alex Yoda  
 Carol Yost  
 Alia & Jon Zaki-Ludwig  
 Darlene Zane  
 Ana Zentella

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Faith in Action International's budget grew by 23 percent in 2023, making it possible for us to support organizing in more communities and countries. We had \$1,719,370 in expenses and income in 2023 and ended the year with assets of \$2,479,439 in cash and cash equivalents.

Approximately 43% of our revenue in 2023 came from individual donations, concentrated during our annual end-of-year appeal. Family foundations, such as the Raskob Foundation and Vista Hermosa, were also important sources of funding. Our largest foundation grant is currently from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, supporting our International Learning Exchange.

In 2023, 74 percent of the funds we raised went directly to support grassroots organizing in Haiti, Central America, Mexico, East and West Africa, and Eastern Europe. In order to stay focused on our mission of supporting grassroots organizing worldwide, we have a target of three out of every four dollars we raise going to local organizations, limiting shared network costs to one-quarter of our budget.



Haiti support	32%
Central America support	24%
Mexico Expansion	1%
Africa support	16%
Eastern Europe support	1%
Personnel	18%
Office Expenses	3%
Travel & Meetings	5%

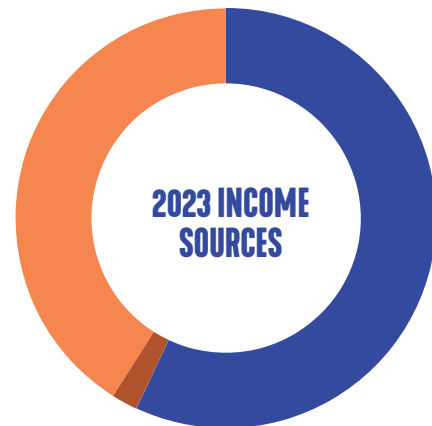
## 2023 Income & Expenses

### Income

Contributions from Individuals	\$ 708,380
Contributions from Organizations	\$ 30,566
Foundation Grants	\$ 980,424
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,719,370</b>

### Expenses

Personnel	\$ 317,425
Office Expenses	\$ 49,179
Travel & Meetings	\$ 78,444
Haiti support	\$ 543,594
Central America support	\$ 421,000
Mexico Expansion	\$ 15,400
Africa support	\$ 280,328
Eastern Europe support	\$ 14,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,719,370</b>



Foundation Grants	57%
Contributions from Organizations	2%
Contributions from Individuals	41%



## YOUR ROLE

Here are three ways you can help Faith in Action International grow in 2024:

1

### Organize your community and country:

We are always looking to partner with people in new communities and countries who are interested in multi-faith grassroots organizing. If you'd like to talk, contact Gordon Whitman at [gwhitman@faithinaction.org](mailto:gwhitman@faithinaction.org).

2

### Raise funds to hire community organizers across the world:

Most of the funds for the community organizing we support in Africa, Haiti, Central America, and Eastern Europe come from individuals. Please become a monthly donor and consider organizing a giving circle. Please contact Fr. John Baumann at [jbaumann@faithinactionl.org](mailto:jbaumann@faithinactionl.org) for more information. We're also happy to talk to you about planned giving.

3

### Ask your elected officials to support democracy, human rights, and locally-led development:

Check our website [www.faithinactioninternational.org](http://www.faithinactioninternational.org) for opportunities to change U.S. policy toward Haiti and Central America through A Way Forward in Haiti and the Root Causes Initiative.