

**2023**

ANNUAL REPORT



**Inter-Cultur**

# CONTENTS

Message from the Director

Institutional Identity

Social Impact Promise

Impact Framework

Social Impact Model

Development Cooperation Programs

Local Footprint

Education and Cultural Activities in Finland

Financial Summary

Partners

Foreword

---

# Message from the Director

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the accomplishments and challenges of the past year, it is with a sense of profound responsibility and commitment that we present **Inter-Cultur's Annual Report for 2023**. Hopefully, this document encapsulates our efforts, insights, and impacts as we pursue our mission of fostering positive social change through strategic development cooperation and local community engagement.

At Inter-Cultur, our work spans the creation and financing of development cooperation programs, offering our partners strategic guidance and capacity-building. Our focus areas include institutional sustainability, socio-economic development, and leadership. We actively address poverty and promote gender equality through vocational training, education, job creation, and entrepreneurship programs.

Our motivation stems from a deep-seated belief in the power of vocational training, job creation, and strategic guidance to empower individuals, uphold human dignity, and enhance community well-being. We are convinced that sustainable performance paves the way for a brighter future, and our dedication to supporting our partners in creating lasting positive impacts underscores this belief.

Our mission is to create positive social change by implementing impactful development programs and providing strategic support to our partners for achieving sustainable performance. We envision a world where dignity is enhanced, and individuals can reach their full potential, contributing to a more just and equal society. Our core values – dignity, excellence, and collaboration – guide every action we take, ensuring respect for all individuals, continuous improvement, and the power of partnerships.

Over the past fourteen years, Inter-Cultur has led development cooperation in regions such as Latin America, the Middle East, and East Africa. In 2023, we dedicated approximately 0.6 million EUR to projects in Bolivia, Kenya, and Lebanon, focusing on vocational training, job creation, gender equality, and economic growth.

In Bolivia, our partnership with AYNI has empowered Aymara women through education, economic activities, and enhanced health services. In Lebanon, our collaboration with PRODES has introduced a dual training model in hospitality, creating employment opportunities for women amid the country's ongoing crisis. In Kenya, our work with Strathmore Educational Trust has provided technical skills and entrepreneurship training to vulnerable populations, promoting sustainable economic development.

Our local initiatives in Finland are equally impactful. Collaborations with universities, corporations, and civil society organizations have strengthened our presence. Educational and cultural activities, including CSR project-based learning, workshops, and exhibitions, fostered professional and ethical development, cultural enrichment, and community engagement. We also focused on family and youth programs, recognizing their critical role in societal development.

As we present this report, we remain committed to our mission and values, striving for excellence and collaboration in every endeavor. We are grateful for the support of our partners, stakeholders, and communities, and we look forward to continuing our journey together toward a more just and equal society.

**Santi Martínez**  
Managing Director



---

# Institutional Identity

Inter-Cultur (IC) is a non-profit organization registered in Finland since 1987. We change the world of individuals to create social impact.

## What do we do?

On top of creating and financing development cooperation programs, we offer our partners strategic guidance and capacity-building on institutional sustainability, socio-economic development, and leadership.

The development cooperation programs we promote actively address poverty and prioritize gender equality. We design, finance, and evaluate social programs that focus on vocational training and education and the creation of decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Additionally, our professional services provide strategic guidance and capacity-building to our partners, focusing on maximizing their social impact through analyzing and managing their material sustainability aspects of their strategies.

## Why do we do it?

We are driven by the firm belief that by offering vocational training, job creation programs, and guidance in institutional sustainability, socio-economic development, and leadership, we can empower individuals, promote human dignity, and uplift the overall well-being of communities.

We are motivated by the conviction that sustainable performance is the path to a brighter future. Our unwavering dedication to accompanying our partners throughout their journey to create positive and lasting impact reflects this commitment.

## Mission

Our mission is to create positive social change by creating impactful development programs and providing strategic support to our partners, enabling them to achieve sustainable performance.

## Vision

We are dedicated to enhancing dignity and enabling persons to reach their full potential contributing to a more just and equal society.

## Values

### Dignity

It signifies respect for the inherent worth and equality of all individuals, promoting inclusivity, empowerment, and the protection of human rights.

### Excellence

It signifies a drive for continuous improvement, professionalism, and achievement of meaningful outcomes for all our stakeholders.

### Collaboration

It signifies our belief in the power of partnerships, teamwork, and cooperation to achieve greater impact.

---

# Social Impact Promise

Our value proposition extends beyond creating and funding development cooperation programs – we provide comprehensive support to our partners, in both non-profit and corporate sectors, to achieve lasting social impact.

## Non-Profit Organizations

Our services support non-profit organizations to increase impact and effectiveness in achieving a more just and equal society.



Design and evaluation of social projects



Organizational growth and development



Escalation of social business models



Strategic guidance focused on leadership and sustainability

- At the core of our portfolio is the **design and evaluation of social projects**: we collaborate closely with our partners to develop innovative and sustainable solutions that address pressing social challenges.
- Our expertise in **leadership and sustainability** ensures that our partners have the necessary tools and knowledge to seize growth opportunities.
- We work collaboratively with our **institutional partners** to create tailored plans that foster their organizational resilience, build effective teams, and enhance governance structures.
- Through **capacity-building programs, mentorship, and coaching**, we provide tailored support to our partners in cultivating strong and resilient organizations.

## Businesses and corporations

Our services for businesses focus on driving social impact by offering customized solutions aligned with ESG principles and legislation.



Identification of impact investment opportunities



Assessment of social sustainability strategy



Impact evaluation of corporate social responsibility programs

- As part of our commitment to **social sustainability**, we specialize in identifying **impactful investment opportunities** and assisting companies in aligning their financial investments with their social and environmental goals.
- We aim to foster a **culture of social responsibility** and **sustainable business practices**, which is why we provide assessment services for the sustainability strategies of businesses and corporations.
- Collaborating closely with businesses and corporations, we assist in designing and implementing **social initiatives** that align with their values and strategic objectives. Detailed plans encompass a range of activities, including community engagement, employee volunteering programs, and supply chain sustainability.
- Through **workshops, training sessions, and educational materials**, we promote awareness and understanding of sustainability topics among employees, management, and directives, empowering individuals to become change agents within their organizations.



---

# Impact Framework

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a robust reflection of global priorities and serve as a guiding framework that informs our program design, ensuring that our efforts are strategic, impactful, and aligned with the global vision for a more sustainable and equitable future.

We consider **SDG 1 (No Poverty)** and **SDG 5 (Gender Equality)** as cross-cutting objectives integral to our mission. By addressing the root causes of poverty and advancing gender equality, we aim to create a sustainable positive transformative impact.



## End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Our programs emphasize vocational training, education, and the promotion of decent jobs and entrepreneurship, directly targeting the root causes of poverty. Providing individuals with the necessary tools and support enables them to uplift their lives and create pathways out of poverty.



## Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Through our emphasis on vocational training and education, we actively promote gender equality by empowering women with the skills and knowledge necessary to overcome gender barriers and achieve economic independence.

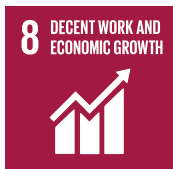


Our programs at Inter-Cultur directly advocate and specifically impact **SDG 4 (Quality Education)** and **SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)**. By aligning our impact framework with these SDGs and their specific targets, we create a comprehensive social impact that drives positive change across multiple dimensions of sustainable development.



### **Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

- Equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical and vocational education (Target 4.3)
- Substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship (Target 4.4)
- Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples (Target 4.5)



### **Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

- Decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (Target 8.3)
- Full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities (Target 8.5)
- Substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (Target 8.6)



# Social Impact Model

At the core of our mission, our Impact Model illustrates the dynamics through which our initiatives catalyze sustainable change.

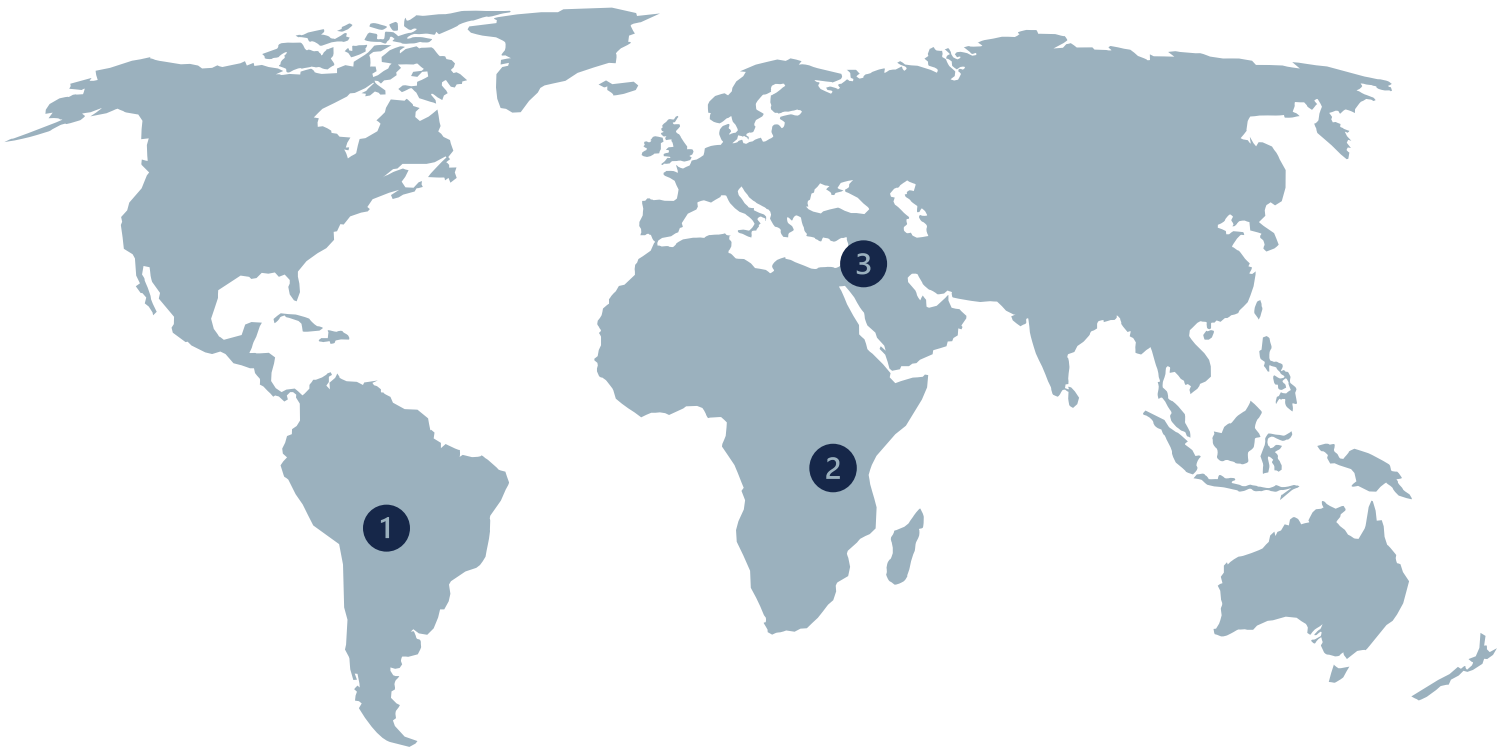




---

# Development Cooperation Programs

Over the past fourteen years, Inter-Cultur has spearheaded development cooperation, targeting regions such as Latin America, the Middle East, and East Africa. In 2023, our dedication to these activities enabled us to allocate approximately 0.6 million EUR for projects in **(1)** Bolivia, **(2)** Kenya, and **(3)** Lebanon.



Through vocational training and job creation, we tackle poverty by enhancing livelihoods, improving access to quality education to unlock potential, advancing gender equality by empowering women and girls, and contributing to economic growth by preparing a skilled workforce for the market. Our programs, closely aligned with Finland's Development Policy, emphasize our commitment to fostering sustainable and equitable social impact. Approximately 60% of this budget is funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Additionally, we have made smaller investments in other parts of Central America using funds from other sources, further extending our reach and impact in the region.

# Bolivia

Promoting Gender Equality in Aymara Communities



**Implementing Partner:**

Asociación Civil AYNI

**Location:**

Bolivian Altiplano, La Paz

**Annual Investment:**

314 157 EUR

## Focus areas and key objectives

Construct **drinking water** systems for communities

Enhance **health and hygiene** services for women and families

Promote **cultural and socioeconomic activities** for women's groups

Advocate for women's **political rights** and empowerment

Provide **basic and digital education** for women and girls

Empower women's **economic and productive activities**

## Key highlights during 2023

1

Empowered 115 women with basic **literacy** and 101 women with **digital skills**, significantly enhancing their education and communication abilities.

2

Provided ~100 families from two communities with **access to safe drinking water** through the construction and expansion of water systems.

3

Trained 119 women in **sewing and knitting**, enabling them to create their own clothing and foster economic independence.

4

Educated 109 women on gender equity and **household co-responsibility**, resulting in 50 signed Family Equity Agreements.

5

Equipped community health post, conducted disease prevention campaigns, and offered ophthalmological check-ups, promoting **community health**.

# Pathways of Empowerment

Promoting Gender Equality in Aymara Communities

The population in the targeted communities is predominantly Aymara with a rich cultural heritage. The project aims to enhance the participation and equal opportunities for vulnerable Bolivian-Aymara women, ensuring their economic rights and access to resources in both private and public spheres. It also focuses on strengthening their leadership roles in political, economic, and public life.

This year, the project has significantly improved women's participation in decision-making spaces, such as women's groups and water committees. Through comprehensive training in rights, leadership, gender issues, and primary and digital education, women have gained greater self-esteem and leadership skills. They now confidently present their interests in community meetings and actively participate in project activities. This has fostered a shift from dependency on male counterparts, particularly in establishing relationships with the health center and securing teachers for literacy classes.

Empowered women's groups have secured and managed municipal funds, leading to successful water system constructions in their communities. Drinking water conditions have significantly improved, and women are closing the literacy gap compared to men, enhancing their prestige. Additionally, the Health Center, equipped by this project, now includes an intercultural delivery room, providing culturally sensitive healthcare services.

The project has restored self-confidence among women through training courses in reading, writing, cell phone use, and human and economic rights. Strengthening community institutions like women's groups and the health center has contributed to the sustainability of these groups and a stronger civil society. Improved access to clean drinking water has reduced health risks and saved time, allowing women and children to engage in other productive activities. This project has laid a foundation for long-term social and economic development, despite the ongoing threat of poverty.



# Lebanon



Dual Model Unleashes Women's Potential in Hospitality

**Implementing Partner:**

Promotion et Developpement Social

**Location:**

Mount Lebanon Rural Area

**Annual Investment:**

119 411 EUR

## Focus areas and key objectives

Build a network of **partner companies** for dual training

Train implementing partner's staff and develop a **dual curriculum**

Establish a **network of educational institutions** for dual training advocacy

Create a foundation for **women's employability** development

Set up a **Job Center** to facilitate connections employment

Promote sustainable impact through **dual training and job placement**

## Key highlights during 2023

1

Fourteen companies signed agreements to become Training Companies, committing to **improved labor conditions for women**.

2

The **Hospitality-PRO dual model** has been successfully customized and transferred to Lebanon, aligning with national legal, educational, and labor systems.

3

A **Steering Council** has been established to govern the training center at a strategic level, with a sustainability strategy being developed, including various income-generating activities.

4

Our implementing partner's staff received **technical and strategic support** from international organizations; as a result, a dual curriculum has been designed, with the training of trainers as Tutors underway.

5

A **network** of 14 **companies** and 6 **educational institutions** has been established, engaging businesses and technical schools in Mount Lebanon Rural Area.



# Bridging Opportunities

Dual Model Unleashes Women's Potential in Hospitality

The ongoing financial crisis in Lebanon has continued through 2023. Additionally, the unexpected war in neighboring countries since October last year further disrupted both the educational and hospitality sectors. These disruptions affected politics, economics, and safety. Despite these challenges, our implementing partner, PRODES through the training center, IMS used its public relations to arrange meetings with school directors, ensuring the program's promotion. IMS team showed resilience, seeking solutions and adapting to the changing conditions in Lebanon.

A positive outcome this year was the increased enrollment of women in technical schools specializing in hospitality. This development is expected to positively influence the enrollment and selection of participants in our program, ensuring efficient implementation and greater impact. Collaborating with companies has proven beneficial for the social and educational mission of our local partner and is pivotal for achieving long-term sustainability. Customizing the European Dual methodology to fit Lebanon's legal, educational, and labor structures has been crucial.

A network of educational institutions with trained coordinators was established, achieving 50% of the project's target. The student selection process has begun, with 19 students already selected to attend the immersion program in early 2024, and ongoing selection will continue through the first trimester of 2024.

Capacity building for the local partner was strengthened through strategic collaborations and expert visits. These visits provided valuable insights into IMS's strengths and weaknesses, identifying areas for improvement and offering tailored support. IMS staff received high-quality training from IC and DESK-Hospitality, with more training planned for new team members. Training provided to the local partner has established clear communication channels, clarified roles through an organized structure, and enhanced communication. Developing a corporate image has further refined the institution's identity and external communication.



# Kenya

A Dual Training Initiative for Technical Excellence



**Implementing Partner:**

Strathmore Educational Trust

**Location:**

Donholm Area, Nairobi

**Annual Investment:**

73 228 EUR

## Focus areas and key objectives

Equip young people excluded from the school system with quality technical and **professional skills**

Develop skills for vulnerable men and women in slums to manage **sustainable ventures**

Promote vocational and technical training among **formal and informal sector workers**

Provide **specialized training** for young people in technical fields

Enhance the **employability of vulnerable populations** through targeted training programs

Support sustainable economic development through **skill-building initiatives**

## Key highlights during 2023

- 1 Administered the **Dual Training program to 505 students**, with 282 women (56%) gaining technical skills and industry placement.
- 2 Provided **comprehensive entrepreneurship training** to 226 micro-entrepreneurs, 59% of whom were women.
- 3 Advanced technical and business **skills development** for 226 vulnerable men and women in slums, enabling them to manage sustainable ventures.
- 4 Conducted **career orientation** for over 800 young people in Nairobi, upgrading the skills of 48 formal and informal sector workers in technical fields.
- 5 Observed a significant increase in **enrollment of students from informal settlements**, particularly women, in the Dual methodology programs.

# Equipping Youth for Success

A Dual Training Initiative for Technical Excellence

The targeted communities in Kenya primarily consist of vulnerable populations from informal settlements. The project aims to enhance their participation and equal opportunities by providing technical skills, economic resources, and leadership training. This year, the project has significantly improved the engagement of women and young people in vocational and technical training programs.

Through the Dual Training program, 505 youths, including 282 women (56%), acquired quality technical and professional skills. Additionally, 226 micro-entrepreneurs, 59% of whom were women, participated in a comprehensive entrepreneurship program. Moreover, 110 local industry employees attended specialized courses in electrical and electronic systems engineering, welding, and motor vehicle engineering, with 34% being women.

Despite the challenges the project faced such as economic instability and political tensions, it successfully increased the enrollment of students from informal settlements, particularly women, in the Dual methodology programs. This positive trend is expected to yield long-term benefits in terms of gender equality and economic empowerment. The vocational training institutions (VTIs) effectively collaborated, sharing best practices and resources, which further strengthened the program's impact.

Significant achievements included securing placement opportunities for students, leading to full employment for some and valuable real-world experience for others. The Dual Training approach made students more marketable to industries due to the skills and exposure they gained. Additionally, many students who did not secure employment started their own ventures or worked as freelancers, thereby improving their standards of living and those of their families.

Our partner also conducted career guidance talks, mentorship programs, and life skills sessions, which helped market their courses and recruit students.





Vocational training empowers women in Guatemala City to overcome gender-based discrimination and economic disparities. By enhancing their employability and economic independence, this initiative fosters societal progress and strengthens the social fabric. (Guatemala, 2023)



Aymara women, equipped with new skills and confidence, are stepping into leadership roles and ensuring their voices are heard. Our program has enhanced their economic rights and access to vital resources, fostering long-term development. (Bolivia, 2023)

---

# Local Footprint

Collaborations with universities, corporations, and organizations of civil society (CSOs) have enabled us to strengthen our local presence.

## Corporate-Social Responsibility (CSR) Project-Based Learning Course

In collaboration with **Hanken School of Economics** (Finland) and **FUNDAP** (Guatemala), Inter-Cultur engaged in a project to raise awareness about social challenges in Latin America and provide a case-based learning opportunity for students in the Corporate Social Responsibility course at Hanken.

Over 10 weeks, students participated in this initiative, analyzing data sets and benchmarking global and regional best practices. The goal was to gather a set of recommendations and industry best practices.

The deliverable was an executive report that included a comprehensive benchmark of best practices and recommendations. These recommendations focused on retaining current beneficiaries and attracting new ones, based on insights from the data analysis and benchmarking study.

This initiative not only provided valuable strategies for improving engagement and support for our programs but also offered students practical experience in analyzing and addressing real-world challenges.



## Multidimensional Discrimination Workshop and Photo Exhibition

In collaboration with **Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences** (Jamk), Inter-Cultur provided students with real-life opportunities to apply a user-oriented design method through project-based learning. Students acted as active development team members, ideating ways to tackle multidimensional discrimination and learning about the human rights situation of impoverished women in Central America.

In late autumn, Inter-Cultur participated in Jamk's InnoFlash week. We challenged students to explore how companies can prevent multidimensional discrimination in recruitment and working life. Using a customer-oriented design method, students conducted interviews with local companies and organizations in Jyväskylä, examining how equality is promoted and discrimination is prevented.

As part of our collaboration with Jamk, we hosted a photo exhibition to highlight the human rights situation in Central America and raise awareness among the general audience. This communication campaign aims to promote Finland's efforts in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on a global scale.



---

# Educational and Cultural Activities in Finland

While our efforts abroad aim to foster sustainable development and global understanding, locally, we are equally committed to enriching our local society through a broad array of cultural and educational programs.

## Professional and ethical development

Our programs enhance professional skills and ethical understanding through lectures, seminars, and discussion forums on topics relevant to today's global challenges.

## Cultural enrichment and personal growth

We offer activities that deepen cultural appreciation and personal reflection, including cultural seminars, leadership workshops, and retreats.

## Community engagement and solidarity work

Our initiatives focus on social contribution through community service projects addressing local needs, such as visiting the elderly and distributing food to those in need.

## Family and youth programs

We provide seminars and forums aimed at strengthening family bonds and empowering youth, recognizing the importance of family and youth in shaping the future.

We are committed to offering a suite of programs that enrich the intellect and cultivate a sense of community and shared humanity. Our initiatives promote professional and personal development and encourage active engagement in societal betterment. Through a thoughtful blend of educational forums, cultural enrichment programs, leadership development, and voluntary service, Inter-Cultur aims to empower individuals.

---

# Financial Summary

Inter-Cultur's financial summary provides an overview of its financial activities during the reporting period. To fulfill its mission and deliver impactful programs, we received over 1.5 million EUR and spent 40% on development cooperation programs in Finland and abroad. Inter-Cultur strives to create a meaningful and lasting impact that changes lives by allocating resources effectively and efficiently.

## **Income** **1 577 502 EUR**

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland	379 629
Private donors	1 036 591
Cultural activities in Finland	161 282

## **Expenditures** **- 885 718 EUR**

Development Cooperation Programs	641 897
Bolivia	314 157
Kenya	73 228
Lebanon	119 411
Communication and Global Education	38 502
Other programs and activities	96 599
Cultural activities in Finland	243 821

## **Net Surplus** **691 783 EUR**



---

# Cooperation Partners

At Inter-Cultur, we understand the power of collaboration and the importance of strong partnerships in driving sustainable change. We are proud to work hand in hand with a diverse range of organizations and institutions that share our vision of a more equitable world. Through these valued partnerships, we are able to leverage expertise, resources, and networks to amplify our impact.

Our collaboration encompasses a diverse range of international development agencies, private foundations, local nonprofits, academic institutions, and businesses that prioritize social impact.

We are proud to be more than just a source of funding to the Global South. We provide full support, helping them achieve institutional sustainability, socio-economic development, and strong leadership. We help our partners increase their social impact through strategic advice and capacity-building.



We are thrilled to share testimonials from our esteemed partners, showcasing the transformative impact of our collaborative efforts.

Over the past year, IMS has seen significant advancements in our strategic initiatives due to the ongoing capacity building, dedicated follow-up, and financial support from Inter-Cultur (IC). Their commitment has been crucial as we continue to develop and expand our institution. This year alone, thanks to IC's support from the planning stages through to fundraising and implementation, we have successfully improved the livelihoods of the women beneficiaries we serve.

**Juliana Najem**

Executive Director - IMS (Lebanon)



In 2023, Junkabal achieved remarkable progress in our transformative project focused on implementing a new strategic direction through DUAL learning, with invaluable support from Inter-Cultur (IC). We deeply appreciate the commitment and expertise of the IC team, whose dedication has significantly expanded our outreach, facilitating access to vital funding opportunities and technical assistance.

**María Rodríguez**

Project Manager - Fundación Junkabal (Guatemala)

Since 2014, we have collaborated with Inter-Cultur (IC) to provide sustained support to women entrepreneurs. Over the past year, IC's optimism and commitment to quality have been instrumental in addressing the unique challenges of community development among rural women in Bolivia through impactful social and economic projects. Thanks to IC, AYNI ensures that the beneficiary women are the protagonists of their own progress.

**Javier Gastelú**

Executive Director - Asociación Civil AYNI (Bolivia)



---

# Foreword

As we look back on 2023, we are filled with a sense of gratitude and determination. The past year has been a testament to our collective resilience and commitment to creating a more just and equal society. It is with this spirit that I introduce our Annual Report, highlighting the significant strides we have made and the challenges we have overcome. Inter-Cultur's journey in 2023 has been shaped by our unwavering dedication to empowering communities and promoting human dignity. Our development cooperation programs have made tangible impacts, enhancing livelihoods, advancing gender equality, and fostering economic growth. These achievements are not just statistics; they represent the lives transformed and the hope rekindled in some of the world's most vulnerable regions.

Looking ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission to create positive social change. Our vision of a world where dignity and equality are paramount continues to guide us. The values of dignity, excellence, and collaboration are the cornerstones of our work, inspiring us to pursue continuous improvement and meaningful outcomes. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all our partners, supporters, and stakeholders. Your unwavering support and collaboration have been instrumental in our successes. Together, we will continue to navigate the complexities of our world, striving for a brighter and more equitable future.







# Inter-Cultur

We change the world of individuals

[www.inter-cultur.fi](http://www.inter-cultur.fi)  
[info@inter-cultur.fi](mailto:info@inter-cultur.fi)

Paciuksenkatu 27  
00270 Helsinki  
FINLAND