

GLOBAL POLICY In an outbreak that overwhelmingly affected gay, bisexual, and queer people, MPact provided community education on our social media platforms, amplified the voices of those impacted by Mpox.

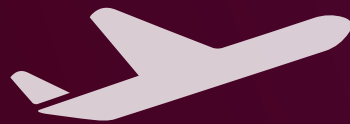
# 2020



## ANNUAL REPORT

### MIGRATION

We worked with our partners to ensure our community has access to frontline services



### PHILANTHROPY

We are on an ongoing dialogue about how to get badly needed resources to our community.





## Letter from Executive Director

To Our Friends and Colleagues around the World:

As I write this letter, reflecting on MPact's accomplishments in 2023, I am writing from a transformed organization. MPact went through profound positive changes last year which this report will highlight for you. The needs of our community continue to change as well. As I think back on my third year as Executive Director of this amazing organization, I look to the future clear eyed and eager to work with our team, Board, and partners to meet these challenges.

MPact Global Action began as the Global Forum on Men who have Sex with Men & HIV, closely affiliated with a large HIV provider in Los Angeles. In 2023, we completely separated from the local agency, recognizing that MPact had grown beyond that relationship and to serve our international partners and constituents better, we had to be fully independent. The Board of Directors and I are confident these changes will show our partners and constituents an even stronger MPact.

In 2023, MPact once again played an indispensable role in raising the voice of queer and trans people around the world. Our primary mission to ensure that queer and trans people have full access to health, dignity, safety, and liberation remains as urgent and important as ever. This informs every decision the Board makes and every programmatic priority we take on as an organization.

The challenges we faced in 2023 as a community were daunting and explosive but they were not new. We find ourselves the target of governments around the world eagerly looking for groups of people to blame and hold as distractions to the larger problems of poverty, war, inequity, and environmental collapse. We saw over 500 bills introduced in state legislatures across the U.S. purposefully designed to strip us of our access to gender affirming care, reproductive freedom, tools to educate young people on the most basic sexual health practices. Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2023 represents perhaps one of the most radical and brutal assaults on the safety of LGBTQ+ people in nearly a century. Other countries such as Kenya and Ghana have attempted to follow this path by considering similar legislation. An unprecedented global migration crisis has gravely jeopardized the safety of queer and trans people and stands between many people's ability to access lifesaving treatment.

MPact's ability to channel resources to advocates and grassroots efforts to resist these attacks remains an absolute lifeline for our community around the world. I am incredibly proud that \$1.3 million went to communities doing incredible, unapologetically queer-led work in more than 20 countries. As always, this funding is accompanied by other forms of assistance and support to ensure our movement remains visionary and strategic in the face of crisis.

Our staff remain fiercely committed to bringing our community's collective power to bear in the halls of power. Our teams brought our community's perspective to the European AIDS Conference and International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa. We remain actively involved in the Council for Global Equality, Funders Concerned about AIDS, and among other coalitions working to advance global health and LGBTQ+ rights.

Of course, our work would not be possible without the incredible support of our funders and donors. 2023 was among our most successful years to date. As you read this report, I hope you feel as proud of the work we have accomplished together as I do.

Thank you so much.

Sincerely,  
Andy Spieldenner, PhD  
Executive Director



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Migration: LGBTQ people are fleeing due to discrimination, political conflict, environmental upheaval and economics. In each region, migration has increased. In the face of scaled up aggressive discrimination against migrants and LGBTQ people, we remain committed to working with our partners to develop policy solutions that support the health and dignity of migrants and to ensure that queer and trans people are seen in the movement for migrants' rights.

## POLITICAL PERSECUTION & CRIMINALIZATION

Queer and trans people around the world faced an unprecedented level of persecution and attempts to criminalize same sex behavior and health status. This included passage of legislation and homophobic protests against our local partners in multiple countries. MPact supports our partners with strategic resourcing and communications.

## A VOICE ON THE GLOBAL POLICY

MPact continues to be a vital LGBT voice at the highest levels of advocacy and resource allocation in the global HIV and health response. Throughout 2023, our staff participated in crucial dialogues regarding multilateral funding priorities in order to ensure the needs of our community are represented in resource allocation decisions.

## CONVENOR & RESOURCE ADVOCATE

MPact's ability to bring people together remains integral to the global HIV response. MPact staff presented at the 2023 European AIDS Conference in Warsaw Poland as well as the International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA) in Zimbabwe. MPact encouraged a key HIV funder to develop an initiative for an under-resourced region.

## A LEADER IN GRANT-MAKING & MOVEMENT BUILDING

MPact's work as a grant-maker remains one of the most important things we do. We are a trusted partner of several funding mechanisms because of our relationship with communities around the world. In 2023, we provided more than \$1.3 million in funding alongside advocacy and technical assistance to organizations in over 20 countries.



# WORK BY REGION

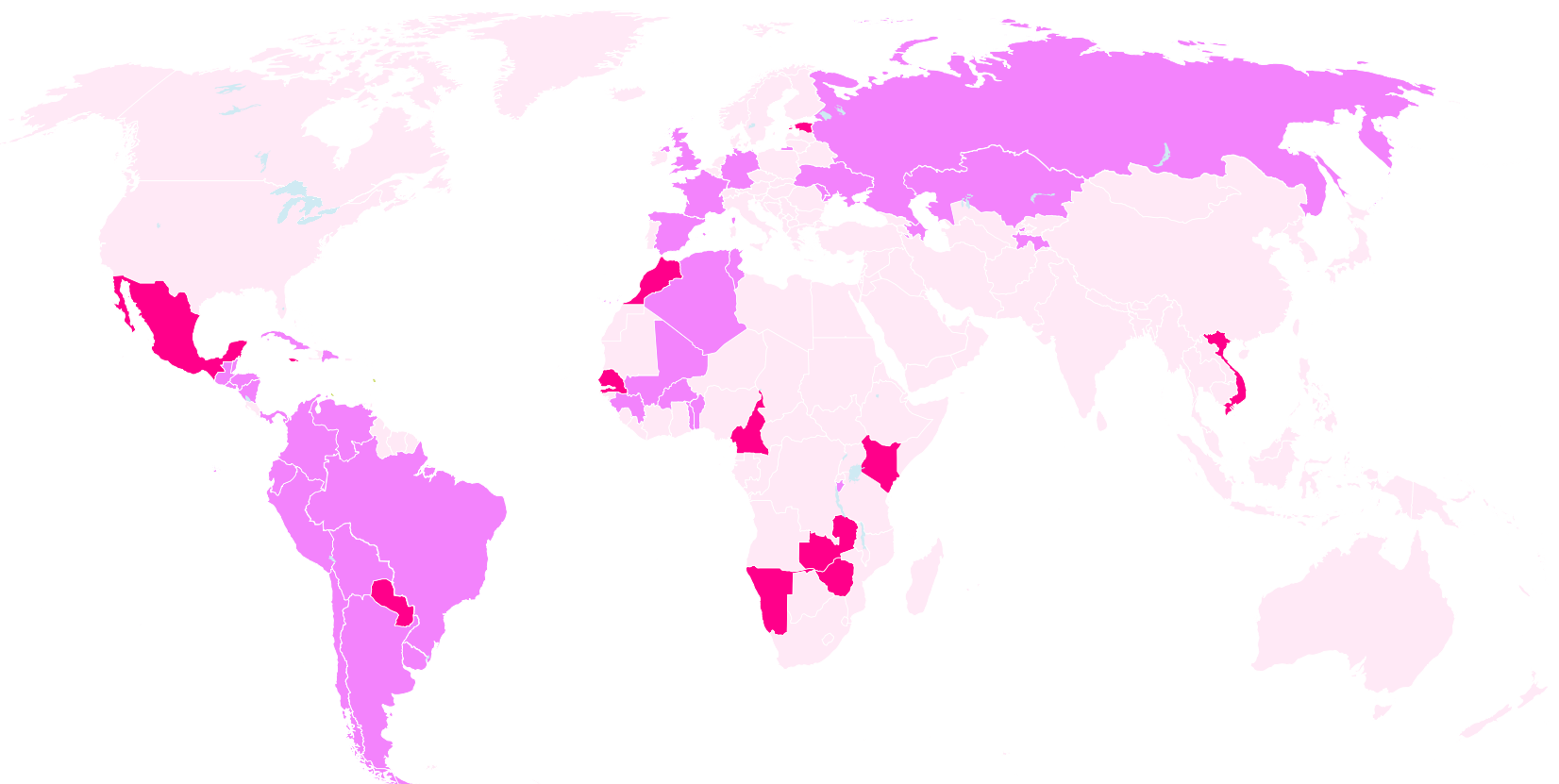
In 2023, MPact continued its work as a global trainer, convenor, and grant-maker. We partnered directly with advocates across the world to ensure our community has the resources and tools needed to effectively demand support for health and equity.

We partnered directly with advocates in the following countries providing financial resources:

Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Cameroon, Estonia, Morocco, Paraguay, Senegal, Namibia, Vietnam, México, Jamaica

Through collaboration with regional partners, we indirectly supported advocacy networks in the following countries, providing training and technical assistance.

Cote D'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Burundi, Algeria, Tunisia, Guinea, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Venezuela, UK, France, Germany, Spain,





# PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTS



## MPACT AZIMA: A PARTNERSHIP WITH MPACT, AND ARASA

In 2023, MPact completed its final year of a landmark partnership with ARASA AIDS & Rights Alliance of Southern Africa (ARASA). The “AZIMA” Partnership conducted was supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS Tuberculosis and Malaria’s Community Engagement Strategic Investment Program.

MPact supported trainings and provided technical assistance to LGBTQ communities in Cameroon, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. The purpose of these trainings and the CE SI program is to ensure that populations most vulnerable to HIV, TB, and Malaria are well positioned to advocate to the country’s Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCM). MPact’s role as a key population technical assistance provider and convener ensures our community is not left behind in Global Fund resourcing decisions.

## VIDA POSITIVA: A PARTNERSHIP WITH INSPIRA CAMBIO, MÉXICO

In 2023, MPact built on the success of this project originally begun in 2022. We continued to provide support to queer communities in Central and South America. Throughout the year, we convened a historic series of meetings with queer advocates living with HIV throughout the regions.

Vida Positiva in Mexico strives to build community and empower queer people living with HIV. The lack of visibility of a community of sexually diverse people living with HIV can create fear, isolation and a lack of support. Although many gay, bisexual, and queer men are aware of the existence of peers living with HIV within their community they still retain negative association with those people. A Besoton Sidoso in Mexico City, was a collaboration of MPact and Inspira and it was a political and cultural act that demonstrated the value and existence of queer people living with HIV. This public display of sexuality of queer people living with HIV increased visibility, challenged HIV-related stigma, and generated strong discourse from various sectors of Mexican society.



## OUTLAST PROJECT

Currently, over half of adults living with HIV in the U.S. are over 50 years old. By 2023 more than 70% people living with HIV in the US will be over 50. MPact's Outlast project is focused on cultivating a vibrant and active community of people aging with HIV in the United States to become powerful advocates for policies that meet the needs of our community. In 2023, we held focus groups in Atlanta, GA and began building a cohort of Black and Latinx queer men living with HIV. MPact also convene a two-day Qualitative Bootcamp for 18 people to develop an understanding of best practices in data collection, program design, and evaluation with the goal of ensuring the research needs of this population are adequately met. A report on outcomes from the bootcamp will be released in 2024. We are incredibly grateful to our partners at Thrive S.S. in Atlanta for the collaboration on this project.

## OUTFRONT

MPact brought together partners from Jamaica and Kenya to the crisis of the criminalization of same sex behavior. Both countries have existing laws that make same sex behavior a crime, imperiling the safety of queer people and creating barriers to accessing life-saving medical care and HIV treatment. Our two partners both proposed novel approaches to engaging the community to understand the consequences of criminalization and developed tailored public education to highlight the stories of those affected. The result was the development of multi-pronged “roadmaps” that build on the experiences of queer and trans people affected by criminalization of identity and health status and create multi-year strategic plan for change.

Our partners in this project were the Jamaican Network of Seropositives in Jamaica and Ishtar MSM in Kenya.

## PREP PLUS

Biomedical interventions for HIV prevention play a crucial role in ending the HIV epidemic. It is crucial that providers are equipped with the latest knowledge and treatment options and that communities vulnerable to HIV have access to the best prevention options available. MPact partnered with organizations in three countries to assess community and provider knowledge, identify barriers, and develop campaigns to ensure queer and trans people have access to Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). Our partners in Kenya, Mexico, and Vietnam were funded to develop country specific programs to expand PrEP access and develop strategic plans to expand access. Each partner held focus groups, facilitated town halls, interviewed providers, and conducted policy research to understand barriers to PrEP.

Partners on this project included Lighthouse of Vietnam, Ishtar MSM of Kenya, and Inspira of Mexico.





## SEXUAL HEALTH ADVOCACY WITH GAY MEN (SHAG) CONSORTIUM:

MPact is a longtime global consortium partner of the Robert Carr Fund. Through RCF, we are able to provide urgently needed core support to networks of organizations serving gay, bi, queer, and trans men around the world. Réseau Africagay Contre le Sida (AGCS) in West and Central Africa; the Eurasian Coalition on Male Health (ECOM) in Eastern Europe and Central Asia; GayLatino in Latin America; and MENA Community in the Middle East and North Africa.

## ESA NETWORK

Beginning in 2023, MPact began working with a group of advocates across Eastern and Southern Africa to assess the viability of creating a new regional network serving gay, bi, and queer men. MPact facilitated meetings in Marrakesh and Istanbul, and also conducted a community engagement meeting at the International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Zimbabwe. Partners from Uganda, Kenya, Mozambique, Ghana, and Zimbabwe worked with MPact to develop a mission, vision, and values base for an organization that can work across borders and resource the grassroots movements of gay, bi, and queer men. The Network is scheduled to launch in 2024.



# PUBLICATIONS

Spieldenner, A. R. & Escoffier, J. (Eds.) (2023). A pill for promiscuity: Gay sex in a pharmaceutical age. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. (2024 Lambda Literary Award Finalist)

Cooke-Jackson, A., Rubinsky, V., Gunning, J., Gerlikovski, E., Holman, A., Manning, J., Nieto, B., Noland, C., Spieldenner, A., De Los Santos Upton, S., & Zelaya, C. (2023). Elaborating on 'the talk' in 'sex talks': An interdisciplinary exploration of the place of Communication Science in sexuality education and advocacy. American Journal of Sexuality Education. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15546128.2023.2256654>

Spieldenner, A. R. & Patton, C. (2023). Funny thing about pandemics: Queer histories, interventions and communities in HIV, COVID-19 and mpox. QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking, 10(1), 191-201. <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/904876>.

Hawkins, D., Spieldenner, A., Ray, V., Ford, O. & Terry, M. (2023). "Dismantle or step aside": The road to HIV Racial Justice Now! and the push for racial liberation in the domestic HIV movement. Rhetoric of Health & Medicine, 6(2), 143-170. <https://doi.org/10.5744/rhm.2023.6012>

Spieldenner, A. R. (2023). The motion of invisible objects: Aging queer desires. Text & Performance Quarterly. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10462937.2023.2171104>

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Spieldenner, A. R. & Escoffier, J. (2023). Promiscuity for the non-promiscuous, in A. Spieldenner and J. Escoffier (Eds.), A Pill for Promiscuity (p. 131-135). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

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Hong, C., Stephenson, R., Santos, G. M., Garner, A., Howell, S., & Holloway, I. (2023). Intimate partner violence victimization during the COVID-19 pandemic among a global online sample of sexual minority men. Journal of family violence, 38(8), 1535-1544.

Arreola S, Santos G-M, Solares D, Tohme J, Ayala G (2023) Barriers to and enablers of the HIV services continuum among gay and bisexual men worldwide: Findings from the Global Men's Health and Rights Study. PLoS ONE 18(5): e0281578. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0281578>





# DONOR LIST

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2023 INSTITUTIONAL FUNDERS:

AIDS Healthcare Foundation

Lazy Bear Foundation

Robert Carr Fund

Global Fund to Fight HIV, Tuberculosis & Malaria

GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals SA (GSK)

Gilead

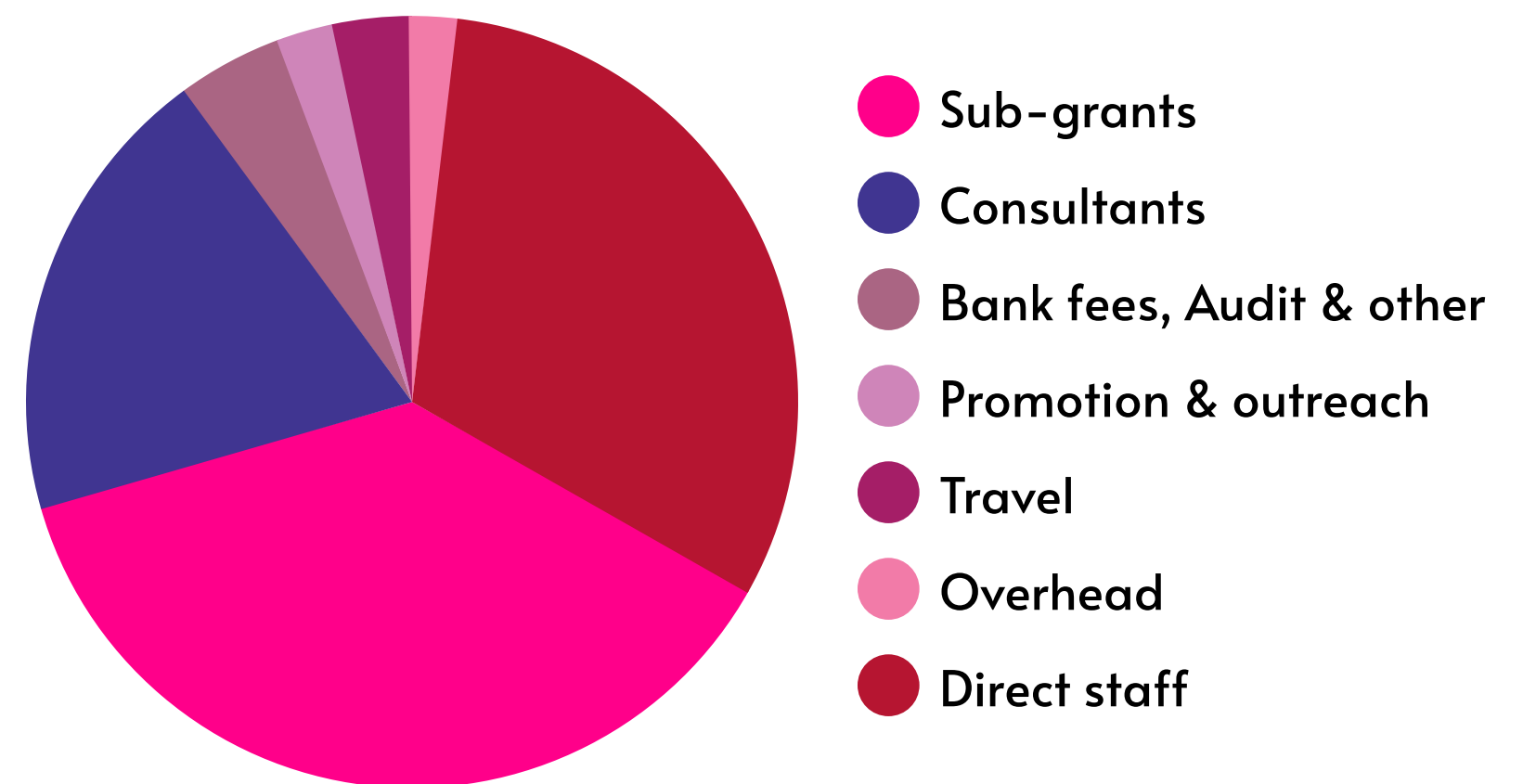
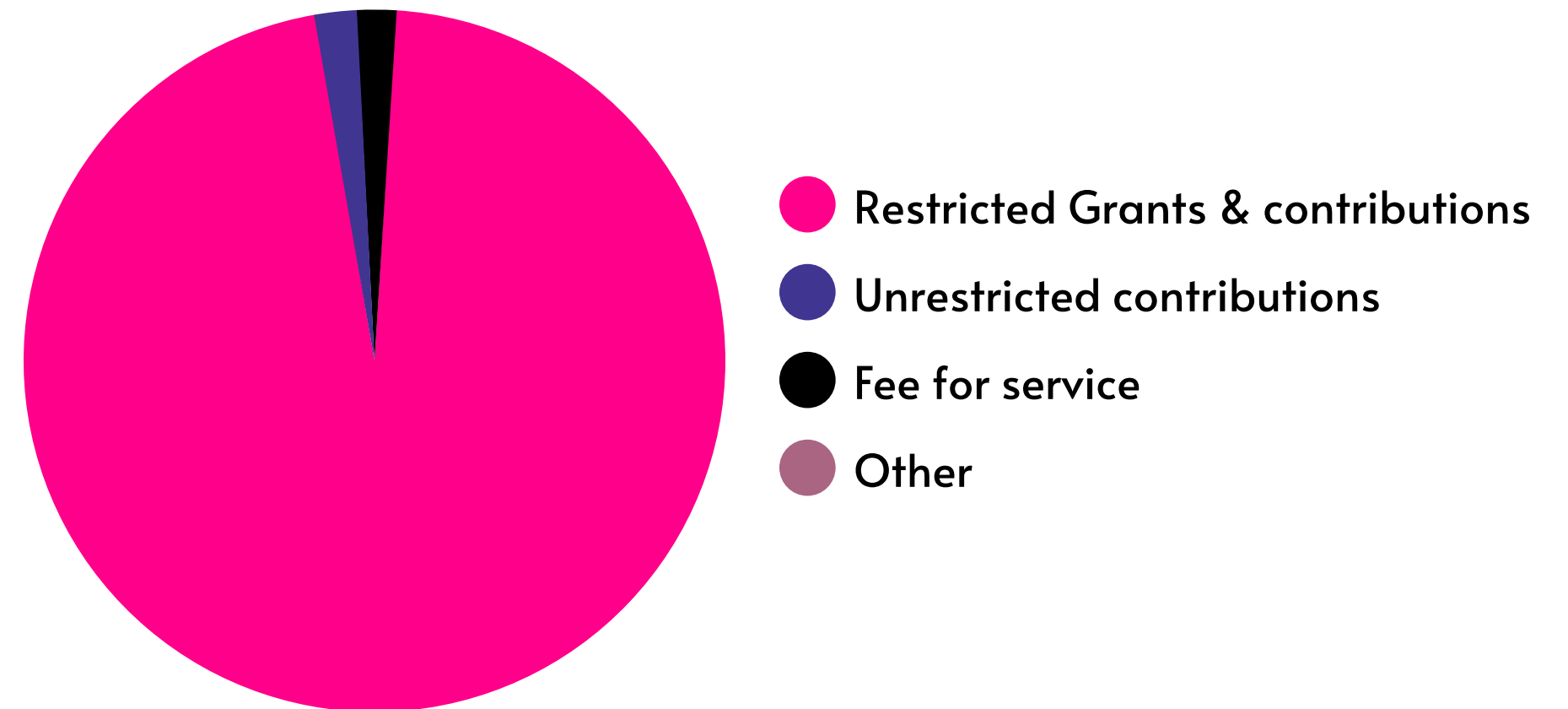
ViiV Healthcare

ViiV Healthcare UK

AidsFonds

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

| ASSETS                                  | AMOUNT              |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Cash                                    | \$ 537,857          |
| Accounts receivable                     | -                   |
| Grants receivable                       | -                   |
| Contributions receivable                | \$ 515,327          |
| Prepaid expenses and other assets       | \$ 10,174           |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                     | <b>\$ 1,063,358</b> |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                      |                     |
| Accounts payable                        | \$ 16,935           |
| Accrued expenses                        | \$ 60,377           |
| Due to affiliate                        | -                   |
| Deferred revenue                        | \$ 335,204          |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>                | <b>\$ 412,516</b>   |
| <b>Net assets</b>                       | <b>\$ 650,842</b>   |
| <b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b> | <b>\$ 1,063,358</b> |





# OUR 2023 STAFF

## ANDREW SPIELDENNER, PHD

### Executive Director

A longtime HIV activist, Andrew Spieldenner currently serves as Member of the Developed Countries Delegation of the Board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Openly living with HIV, Dr. Spieldenner has worked as a nonprofit leader for 30 years. His research focuses on HIV and the LGBTQ community.

## ALEX GARNER

### Director Of Community Engagement

Alex Garner was most recently the Senior Health Innovation Strategist at Hornet, the gay social networking app. He crafted all sexual health messaging, developed social marketing campaigns, created digital content for a global audience, and led Hornet's research efforts. Alex has over 25 years of experience working as a community organizer. He has been a freelance writer for over two decades, capturing the experiences and perspectives of the queer community. As a writer and an artist, he has utilized the cultural arts to advance the narratives of LGBT communities.

## MATTHEW BLINSTRUBAS

### Deputy Executive Director

Matt Blinstrubas has worked in the LGBTQIA+ rights movement and HIV response for 15 years. Starting as an organizer for same-sex marriage and as a HIV prevention specialist in Connecticut, he then spent a decade at the Elton John AIDS Foundation, eventually leading their U.S. grant-making program until 2019. Recently, Matt worked as a special project consultant for the Center for HIV Law & Policy, helping lead the creation of a national multi-stakeholder program addressing the criminalization of HIV, health status and sexual behavior in the United States. Matt is the Founding Executive Director of Equality Connecticut, an organization working to advance a queer-led social justice agenda on the state level. When not home in Brooklyn or eating pizza in New Haven, Matt and his husband can be found fixing up their old farmhouse in Upstate New York.

## JOHNNY TOHME, MS

### Senior Community Mobilization Manager

Johnny came to MPact from directing M-Coalition (the first network of MSM & HIV activists in the MENA region) in Beirut, Lebanon. Started as an LGBT rights activist, he's a clinical psychology graduate who worked in sexual health service delivery, community behavioral research and community organizing. In his role at MPact, Johnny has been coordinating multiple partnerships such as the Sustainable Health Advocacy for Gay Men (SHAG), the Global Fund Consortium (AZIMA), and network development work in MENA and Eastern and Southern Africa Regions. Johnny is also involved in policy and fund mobilization advocacy with PEPFAR and Global Fund.



## TONY NGUYEN,MPA

### Administrative And Contracts Coordinator

A recent graduate in Public Administration from San Diego State University, Tony Nguyen gained experience from a multitude of sectors. He has worked on studies focused on LGBTQ+ Liaison Police Officers and affordable housing. Administratively, he has provided support to both the City Manager's Office in the City of El Cajon and the Planning Department for the City of National City. As a Service Administrator, he managed a multi-family housing construction project affiliated with Stanford University's Faculty and Staff Housing Program. Tony brings his organizational and administrative skills to provide support to various departments in MPact.

## AXEL BAUTISTA

### Community Mobilization Coordinator

Axel was born and raised in Mexico City, Mexico, which is where he currently lives. He studied sociology at UNAM and has been working in the HIV field since 2016, with a particular focus on human rights, healthcare access, community building and empowerment, activism, and social media content. Axel previously served on MPact's Steering Committee. He likes walks, watching movies, and big cities.

## ARIA SHAHBAZPOUR

### Community Mobilization Coordinator

Aria was born and raised in Iran. The experience of force migration in 2010, lead him on a hard journey that ignited the desire to advocate for LGBTQ &human rights. He spent 5 years working as an outreach worker for a Positive Living Association in Turkey which gave him the opportunity to work closely with the most vulnerable groups and fueled his passion for justice and equality. Aria is determined more than ever to continue to advocate for the rights of underrepresented groups including LGBTQ refugees and people living with HIV all around the world, shining a light on their endless struggles for basic human rights and dignity



# 2023 BOARD

## JORGE SAAVEDRA, MD

### Chairman

Currently Executive Director of the AHF Global Public Health Institute at the University of Miami and Global Public Health Ambassador for AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), Member of the Board of Trustees of IAPAC and is also a Member of the Strategy Committee of the Global Fund representing the Developing Country NGOs, Member of the Executive Committee GayLatino Network and of the MSMGF Steering Committee. Dr. Saavedra based in Mexico, is a Medical Doctor from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) with two Master's degrees— one in Public Health and another in Health Policy and Management both from Harvard University. He has been Director General of the National AIDS Program of Mexico (2003-2009), where he was the first openly gay person to achieve a high-level position inside Mexico's federal government. He has also been Deputy Director General of Planning and Innovation at the Ministry of Health of Mexico (2001-2003). Since Jorge's times as Head of the National AIDS Program in Mexico, where he arrived through an open merit-based contest, he was in charge of launching the universal access to ART program in 2003, the first time a developing country did it entirely with domestic resources. He has several publications mainly related with AIDS Economics and the latest ones on the global response to Ebola (Lancet Nov 23, 2015 and BMJ May 19, 2016). Dr. Saavedra's permanent residency is in Mexico.

## OTHMAN MELLOUK

### Vice-Chair

An orthodontist by profession, Othoman Mellouk joined the Association de Lutte Contre le Sida (ALCS) in Morocco in 1994, where he participated in the development of the first prevention program targeting men having sex with men in North Africa and the Middle East.

From 2002 to 2010 he was the chair of the Marrakech city branch of ALCS, and was in charge of international relations of ALCS. He is also one of the most active advocates for access to treatment in the MENA region with a particular focus on the question of intellectual property rights and their effect on access to treatment. In January 2010, Othoman Mellouk became co-chair of MPact.

## ETHAN ARROW

### Treasurer

Ethan Arrow is a public policy specialist with over 12 years of experience as a financial controller and regulatory compliance specialist within the banking sector. He is currently a vice president at Goldman Sachs where his responsibilities include regulatory and financial policy for the firm. Prior to that he worked for the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in its regulatory policy and strategy function. Ethan has a Master's in International Affairs with a concentration in financial and economic policy from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA). He is a Chartered Financial Analyst and received a teaching fellowship from Fulbright. When not at home in Brooklyn Ethan is an avid traveler and enjoys camping, hiking and trekking, especially with his dog Charlie.



## NAJEEB AHMAD FOKERBUX

### Secretary

Najeeb Ahmad Fokeerbux is the Founder and President of Young Queer Alliance (YQA) and has over 5 years' experience working with LGBT youth. Since 2005, he has been passionate and engaged in initiatives that aim to empower young people and previously held positions of responsibility in various organizations such as the Rivière-du-Rempart Youth Centre Advisory Committee, the Youth Action Movement, the Organisation Miss-Roi D'Été, We Help You and Jeunesse Militante. Currently, Najeeb is enrolled as student in master's in business administration (specialization in Public Administration) at the Open University of Mauritius. He enjoys hiking, badminton, Zumba, playing chess and online games.

## SEAN HOWELL

Sean is an activist turned entrepreneur as co-founder, he services as CEO at the LGBT Foundation, which works to leverage the LGBT Token and the benefits of blockchain technology for the empowerment of the LGBT community. Prior to the LGBT Foundation he served as President of Hornet ; where, he built a 25 million user gay social network and the largest LGBT newsroom in the world publishing daily in 7 languages on five continents. Previously, he was a fellow of the World Affairs Council, trustee, and President of the Young Professional International Network. He helps many organizations leverage technology to expand their impact; serves on various nonprofit boards and committees: UNAIDS, E-CDC, PFLAG and co-chair at the Center for Public Health and Human Rights at John Hopkins; is a founding member of the UN Global Coalition for HIV Prevention and technical advisor to UNDPs and the World Bank LGBTI Index.

## INAD QUINONES RENDON

Inad is a gay man, a person living with HIV, a lawyer, an artist, a baker, a cyclist, a writer, a storyteller, a hopelessly romantic, and a part-time lover. Hailing from the Philippines and residing in Thailand, he is working with APCOM as Organisational Sustainability and Strengthening Consultant. He strengthens the organization's regional and global advocacy, key population, and community engagements and programs. These programs include creating legal environments, technical assistance to key population networks, capacity building, community monitoring, and country program review, among others.

He is a member of U=U Global Community Board. The UGCB will work closely with the Prevention Access Campaign to integrate U=U into national and global HIV/AIDS responses to greatly improve the lives of people living with HIV. He sits on MPact Global's Board of Directors. MPact advocates for equitable access to effective HIV prevention, care, treatment, and support services for gay men and bisexual men, including those living with HIV, while promoting their health and human rights worldwide.

For Inad, there is a gap in the HIV movement and programming. He believes that we need to go beyond the awareness and knowledge and start cultivating empathy. Although theoretical knowledge in HIV is very crucial and important, HIV programs should also foster emotional understanding and achieve a certain level of empathy.



## JOHANAN RIVERA

Johanan has over 15 years of experience in international development working on poverty reduction projects in Latin America and South Asia. He is currently the COO of Imago Global Grassroots, a capacity-building organization that works with social enterprises, nonprofits and grassroots organizations to scale-up their impact. The challenges he faced from growing up in the closet in Mexico are at the core of his passion for improving access to resources for the for LGBTQ+ community in developing countries. He is an economist from the Harvard Kennedy School, a member of the LGBTQ Victory Campaign Board and currently lives in Washington DC.

## DON BAXTER

### Emeritus

Don Baxter is a founding Co-Chair of the Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF) since its establishment in 2006. He served as the Executive Director of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), the national federation for the HIV community response in Australia, for the period 2001-2011. During that decade and the years subsequently he has been involved in a range of board director positions with global and Asia Pacific HIV agencies, with a particular focus on MSM in the HIV pandemic. In addition to the MSMGF (2006 – 2021) these include the board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB & Malaria (2011-14) and its Communities, Rights & Gender Advisory Group (2014-2016) and on-going roles with the board of APCASO (2002–), ICASO (2005 – 2017) and AIDS Project Los Angeles (2015 – 2018). Don's early HIV involvement was in the initial grass-roots HIV community response in Sydney's gay community from 1983 – from which he subsequently served in national leadership positions and as a member of key advisory and decision-making bodies in Australia's national HIV response – in both elected positions and Ministerially-appointed ones.

