



## Message from Leah Ettarh, Executive Director

**'Faced with this obligation to act, let us make no small plans'.**

This small line, inside the first annual report of ACGC's predecessor Alberta Committee of International Agencies, has stuck with me ever since I discovered it in archival records.

Over the past few months, I have had the opportunity to spend some time chatting with folks about ACGC's history, as well as digging up archival records as I was compiling information to help mark the 50th anniversary of the network. The core values that brought people together in the early years continue to resonate today, as does the work to create awareness in Alberta of global issues, provide a platform for engaging with government, and take bold action to end poverty around the world.

While many of the documents are fascinating, those small words - "let us make no small plans" - stuck with me, perhaps as it feels like a motto for how you, Alberta's international cooperation agencies, work each and every day to further our collective mission for global social justice. You don't make small plans - you make bold, audacious plans, take risks, and innovate - and it is truly inspiring.

It was this amazing spirit of bold collaboration I inherited when I joined ACGC nine years ago and that I, as I end my term as executive director this summer, hope to impart to the next leader. After nine years at ACGC, four spent as executive director, I have decided to move on to new opportunities. I will forever treasure my time at ACGC and will continue to be an avid supporter of the network and international cooperation. The work will continue, as it has for the past 50 years, because of the strong conviction we share that everyone deserves to live a life of dignity.

Be sure to join us on August 23rd as we celebrate a new chapter in our collective story.

### INSIDE:

## Interim Executive Director

See page 2 for details

## Contents

- 2 ACGC 50th - From the Archives
- 3 Global Connect 2023
- 4 Promoting Global Education
- 5 New Website Project Launch
- 6 FIT Visit from Honduras
- 7 Roundtable with Global Affairs



## Board Appoints Interim Executive Director

The ACGC Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Rachel Levee as Interim Executive Director. Rachel has served as the Director of the Spur Change program at ACGC since July 2023, and will provide the much needed stability and continuity needed as the board continues its search for a permanent staff to replace outgoing executive director, Leah Ettarh.

After 9 years with the council, 4 of which as executive director, ACGC has seen incredible growth under Leah Ettarh's leadership, making an impact within our network and beyond. With a mix of both immense gratitude and sadness, we thank Leah for her service and dedication to international cooperation, and we wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

Leah will continue her role into the summer to support the transition to a new leader.

## From the Archives

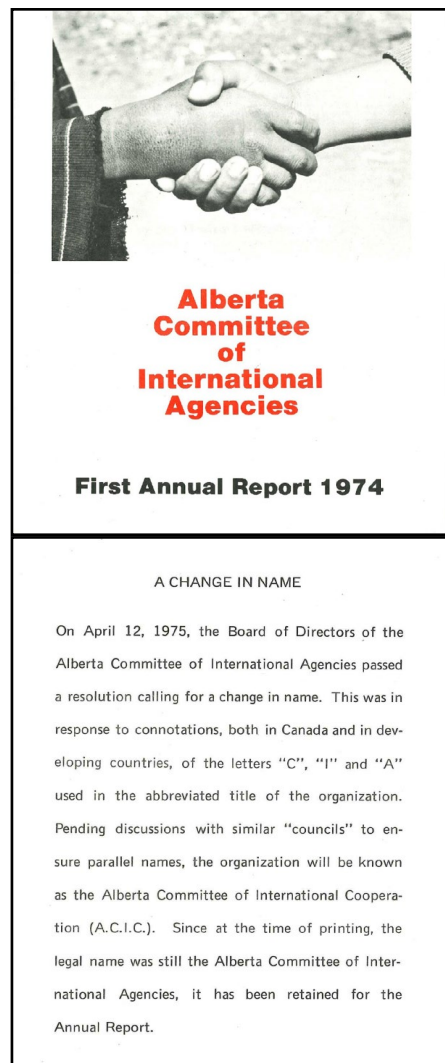
December 7th 2023 marks ACGC's 50th Anniversary as a network supporting international cooperation. Throughout the year, together with our members, we will look back at our history, celebrate our impact as a collective, working together to advance human rights and equality around the globe.

ACGC continues its work to research and compile the history of the network and the international cooperation sector in Alberta. In the spring, executive director Leah Ettarh worked with the Glenbow Western Research Center Archives at the University of Calgary to review and scan files that were donated by the family of ACGC's founder, Doreen Orman.

The archives contained a significant amount of early documents of the network; however, one of the most precious documents was a full-colour copy of the network's first annual report. The report not only outlined the network's first year but also its prehistory, including context surrounding the organization's first name change from Alberta Committee of International Agencies to the Alberta Committee of International Cooperation [ACIC].

Excerpts are provided here. The full report can be found on our website <https://acgc.ca/about-us/our-story/>

**Do you have any records or photos of past ACGC activities?**  
Please email [info@acgc.ca](mailto:info@acgc.ca)



# Engaging with the Public

## Global Connect 2023

This year's Global Connect took place from May 22 to June 1 with an intimate group of six youth: Somtu, Precious, Favour, Esther and Harveen of Alberta; and Karla from Honduras. Karla, with support from the Inter-Council Network's Fund for Innovation and Transformation (FIT) through Sombrilla International Development Society, flew all the way from Honduras to join the program and to engage in a tour across Alberta to speak about her work as a lawyer. Karla is also one of ACGC's 2023 Top 30 Under 30.

The youth visited several international cooperation and social justice organizations, many of whom are ACGC members, to learn about their work in Alberta and internationally. Keeping up with tradition, the youth went to Painted Warriors Ranch for their mid-program retreat, where they learned archery and Métis beading, went on a medicine walk, and had a tea ceremony. New this year, the youth went on a hike in Canmore with Patricia Peña, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Global Affairs Canada, while learning about environmental stewardship. They later had the rare opportunity to sit in on a round table meeting with ACGC members and ADM Peña. However, the program was not just all work. There was lots of time to play, in the form of board games, journaling, strolling through parks, and filming TikTok dances! In addition to networking with all the organizations and strengthening their leadership skills, the youth engaged the public through the use of social media and storytelling.

**Thank you to all the organizations who made this an incredibly memorable program for our youth: Operation Eyesight Universal, Engineers with Borders Canada, CAUSE Canada, St. Stephen's Protomartyr Ukrainians Catholic Church, Villages Calgary, Mennonite Central Committee Alberta, The Wilder Institute, The Biosphere Institute, Painted Warriors Ranch, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Dignity Network, Islamic Relief Canada, Expand Hope, Sihle-Sizwe Vineyard Foundation, End FGM Canada, Sombrilla IDS, and Global Affairs Canada.**

## Insight 360 Video kits sent to schools around the province



Since 2020, ACGC has been working with SCIC and MCIC on a large regional project titled, A Better World is InSight, which focused on showcasing 360 videos to schools across the region, through a traveling dome. To complete the initiative in Alberta, ACGC created 40 school kits, each containing fifteen 360 video cardboard viewers, so that the free content can still be enjoyed using individual cell phones in classrooms, even though the dome is no longer available.

*A demonstration of the Insight360 video cardboard viewer that provides users an immersive experience in understanding the challenges people in the Global South face. Learn more about Insight 360 at <https://www.insightproject.ca/>*

*The Global Connect 2023 cohort: (from top left) Karla Marquez, Esther Muloki, Precious Majekodunmi, Wajed El-Halabi (ACGC Staff), Hope Salim (ACGC Staff); (from bottom left) Harveen Saini, Favour Ajakaiye, Somtochukwu Ezeigwe*



*Assistant Deputy Minister Patricia Peña (top left) speaking with the Global Connect youth on a hike in Canmore.*



*Global Connect youth learning about the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and Mennonite Central Committee's Grow Hope project near Fort Saskatchewan.*





ACGC staff in front of an Edmonton Transit Service [ETS]-piloted hydrogen-powered bus at the University of Alberta's Together|Ensemble 2023 conference.

View the 2023 conference schedule and speakers at <https://togetherensemble.ca/>

## Together|Ensemble 2023

Every year since 2017, the Together|Ensemble conference brings private sector, academia, government, and civil society together to address Canada's toughest sustainable development challenges. Together|Ensemble 2023 took place in hybrid fashion on June 7-9 with a theme focused on how we can accelerate Canada's SDGs progress and what needs to be done differently to achieve them. Along with live streamed sessions, five satellite events were held across the country.

The University of Alberta's Sustainability Council hosted an onsite event dedicated to Alberta's transportation future and transit sustainability and equity. Our executive director Leah Ettarh opened the floor with some inspiring spoken word poetry and was followed by presentations from Edmonton City Councillor Michael Janz and researchers, city planners, analysts, and senior leaders from the UofA, Pembina Institute, Emissions Reduction Alberta, Edmonton Transit Service, the City of Calgary, the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, and Paths for People.

## Promoting National Conversations on Global Citizenship Education

The Inter-council Network (ICN) continues its work to promote global citizenship education as a critical tool to ensuring citizens have the skills and knowledge required to understand and play an active role in addressing complex global challenges in ways that inform change without (re) producing harmful practices. In May, the ICN hosted two sets of webinars and discussions on Global Citizenship Education, one highlighting the many local and regional activities of the council, and the second, with Spur Change, highlighting the role teachers can play in advocacy.



The webinar recording on Global Citizenship Education can be found on the [ICN's YouTube page](#).



The webinar recording on Advocacy by Teachers can be found on [Spur Change's Youtube page](#)

## Website project launch

ACGC received funding from the [Government of Alberta's Civil Society Fund](#) to build up to 15 websites for Alberta-based, cultural-community organizations. This new 'Improving Digital Infrastructure for Community Impact' project aims to build the capacity of community-based organizations to address the diverse social challenges their communities face by equipping them with easy-to-manage websites to better tell their story of impact, engage their communities, and attract and sustain much-deserved support. This project launched publicly in early June 2023 and work will continue with participating organizations until March 2024.

Learn more and stay updated at <https://acgc.ca/website-project>



The Building Equity Training workshop in Edmonton was held at the Skills Society and facilitated by [JN Clarke Consulting](#).

## Spur Change: Building Equity Training for Small and Medium Organizations

The Building Equity: Resource for Mobilization Training was a three-month series where SMOs were able to build their capacity and confidence in developing a diversified, ethical, and equity-centered fundraising and resource mobilization strategy through four main learning units.

The first 3 learning units were a combination of Spur created online content in combination with the [Change the Game Academy Online Modules](#). In addition to the online component, Spur hosted 6 additional in-person trainings as part of Unit 4 in order to integrate learnings into practice, network and identify new fundraising strategies.

The in-person workshops were done in collaboration with Inter-Council Network members in different locations across the country including Charlottetown, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Saskatoon.

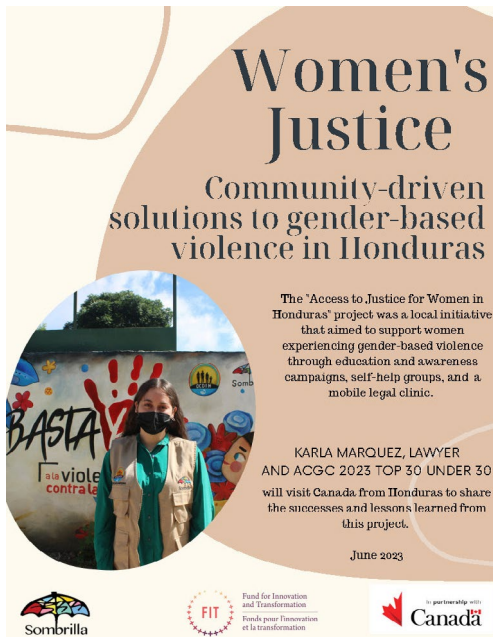
## Spur Sparks!

This year's Spur Change annual national conference is being held as eight separate, smaller regional events in response to participants' call for a space for deep, relationship-based exploration and peer knowledge sharing. Each event, or "Spark," has its own main themes, programming and feel, but centers around the theme of 'People and Planet,' in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP).

Our first three Spur Sparks events were held in May and June 2023, led by Canadian small and medium organizations (SMOs) and educators in the Canadian global cooperation sector based in Quebec, Manitoba and Alberta. Alberta's Spark was led by Change for Children in collaboration with the Alberta Teachers Association, was a one-day workshop on the integration of Indigenous knowledge into climate change education in the classroom.

spur!  
sparks  
people  
and  
planet





## Fund for Innovation and Transformation: Project Lawyer from Honduras visits Alberta

Sombrilla International Development Society, in partnership with ACGC, brought lawyer Karla Marquez from Honduras to Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary, to speak about the 'Access to Justice for Women of Honduras' project and to talk about her experience operating a mobile legal clinic serving women affected by gender-based violence. In this FIT-supported project, Sombrilla partnered with Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (OCDIH) to test the concept of these clinics in making legal, psychological and other support services available and to empower women and girls in their ability to protect their rights.

Karla Marquez was also selected as one of the 2023 ACGC Top 30 under 30 for her role as the project lawyer and participated in our Global Connect 2023 program.

Learn more about the project at <https://www.fit-fit.ca/funded-innovations/search/29/sombrilla-international-development-society>

## Other FIT-funded projects

[CAUSE Canada's Wi Lead by Sabi \[We Lead by Example\]](#) in Sierra Leone tested the appointment of women with disabilities as champions in their communities to support other schoolgirls with disabilities and their families and to address discrimination at the intersection of gender and disability. In October, CAUSE will be hosting an event, including global café-style conversations, in Calgary to share learnings and spark discussions with SMOs, diaspora communities, and people interested in international development.

[Change for Children's Local Knowledge: Global Goals](#) project in Nicaragua is connecting the Bosawas Biosphere Reserve to conservation efforts worldwide in order to foster traditional indigenous knowledge and nature-based solutions, and strengthen indigenous governance with a focus on gender equality to improve the sustainable management of Bosawas. Change for Children will be hosting networking and knowledge exchange events in July and September with other NGOs and First Nations working with global Indigenous communities to share results and learnings related to how Indigenous knowledge contributes to effective climate change responses in Miskito communities in Nicaragua.

[Girls of Tomorrow \[GOT\] Foundation's Combatting Menstrual Stigma Through Female-Centred Permaculture Garden](#) project in Uganda is testing the establishment of Female-Centered Permaculture Gardens, where all plants are picked specifically for female health and experiences, to combat menstrual stigma and increase female empowerment. GOT will be hosting knowledge sharing events in Alberta and Yukon in August and October.

[Real Canadian's \[formerly Canadian Humanitarian\] Holistic Gender-Based Violence Prevention & Response](#) project tested the impact and effectiveness of a holistic, family-centered, gender equity focused violence prevention and response program in Guatemala, as a way of reducing rates of sexual and domestic violence in Guatemala and improving recovery for survivors of violence. Together with [], Real Humanitarian will host participatory and data-driven workshops in September and October that will provide useful tools, methodologies, and guidance on how to work with entire families and incorporate healing-based approaches into gender-based violence prevention and response work.

Since the program launched in 2019, FIT has awarded \$11 Million to over 50 projects. Made possible through Global Affairs Canada, funding supports the testing of innovative solutions to challenges in the Global South that aim to advance gender equality. <https://icn-rcc.ca/en/fit/>

# Research and Advocacy

## Alberta Roundtable with Global Affairs Canada

ACGC continues to play an important role in convening the sector, and providing a platform for dialogue with government on matters related to Canada's international cooperation efforts. As part of this work, we were pleased to host Patricia Peña, the new Assistant Deputy Minister - Partnerships for Development Innovation, Global Affairs Canada, for a roundtable in Canmore on 26 May 2023. Since starting in this role in September 2022, Patricia has been visiting regions across Canada to meet with partners and discuss Canada's international assistance priorities. Representatives from 16 Alberta organizations, ACGC staff, and the Global Connect youth, including our international guest from Honduras, were in attendance.

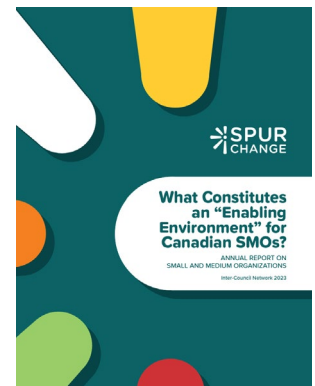


Participants of the roundtable hosted by ACGC and featuring Assistant Deputy Minister - Partnerships for Development Innovation, Global Affairs Canada, Patricia Peña.

## Spur Change 2023 SMO Report

This year's report on Canadian small and medium organizations (SMOs) from Spur Change asks: What Constitutes an "Enabling Environment" for Canadian SMOs? SMOs have long played a critical role within Canada's international cooperation landscape. The report is meant to serve as a learning tool for all Canadian international cooperation actors. In analyzing both the challenges and benefits associated with Canada's enabling environment through a community-informed approach, it identifies ways to strengthen and facilitate the crucial international cooperation work carried out by Canadian SMOs.

Read the report: <https://bit.ly/42fc4R8>



## Advocacy in Support of International Cooperation



ACGC continues its work to engage governments to support international cooperation efforts. In the lead up to Alberta's General Election in May 2023, ACGC produced a message guide to support members' in speaking to candidates about the importance of Alberta's international cooperation sector, and to ask for the reinstatement of Alberta's long-standing funding for international cooperation. ACGC also participated in a joint sector statement expressing disappointment in the federal governments' 2023-2024 budget which decreased aid by 15%. We encourage all members to join collective advocacy efforts to ensure an enabling environment for civil society, with stable and predictable funding for international cooperation.

Read the joint sector statement responding to the 2023-2024 federal budget: <https://www.biggerthanourborders.ca/en/resources>

## ACGC Annual General Meeting 2023


Our AGM is happening on Aug 23, 2023! Members and the public are invited to register for our annual business meeting as we reflect on the past year, welcome new board members, and say thank you to our outgoing executive director and board members. Visit our events page and register by August 16th! <https://acgc.ca/engage/events/>

## Coming Up



[www.acgc.ca](http://www.acgc.ca)

 [facebook.com/acgcnow](https://facebook.com/acgcnow)

 [@acgcnow](https://twitter.com/acgcnow)

 [youtube.com/acgcnow](https://youtube.com/acgcnow)

 [@acgc\\_now](https://instagram.com/acgc_now)

 [Alberta Council for Global Cooperation](https://Alberta Council for Global Cooperation)

To keep informed of all upcoming ACGC events, as well as the events and activities of our members, subscribe to our biweekly [e-Bulletin newsletter](#).

ACGC Connect is published by the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation [ACGC] with the financial assistance of Global Affairs Canada. ACGC is a network of organizations and individuals, located in Alberta, working locally and globally to advance sustainable development and global citizenship. We envision that all people can fulfill their potential and prosper, become engaged citizens in peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, and thrive in a healthy, sustainable world.

**E: [info@acgc.ca](mailto:info@acgc.ca)**

**P: 780.988.0200**

**#205, 10816A 82 Ave,  
Edmonton AB T6E 2B3**

## ACGC Current Membership

Alberta Immigrant Women and Children Centre • Alberta Teacher's Association • Bow Valley College, International Education • Bridges of Hope International Network of Development Agencies • Business and Professional Women Alberta • Calgary Board of Education • Canadian Humanitarian Organization for International Relief • Canadian Peacemakers International • Canadian Volunteers United in Action Society • Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan • CAUSE Canada • Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology • Centre for Global Education • Change for Children Association • Covenant International • Development and Peace - CARITAS CAN • Edmonton Public School Board • Embrace International Foundation • Engineers Without Borders, Calgary City Chapter • Foundation for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Initiatives • FOCAS Canada • Expand Hope Foundation • Give A Hand Charity Canada Inc. • Global Education Program, University of Alberta • Hopethiopia • Humanity Auxilium • Institute for Cross-Cultural Exchange • Islamic Relief Canada • Junior Global Citizen Club • Keiskamma Canada Foundation • Light Up the World • Literacy Without Borders • Mahatma Gandhi Canadian Foundation for World Peace • Mennonite Central Committee • Micah Center, The King's University • Nafasi Opportunity Society • NILECAPD (Nile Care Advocacy for Peace and Development) • Norquest International • One Child's Village • One! International Poverty Relief • One Step Learning Opportunities Centre • Operation Eyesight Universal • Pamir Canadian Multiculturalism Council • Rainbow of Hope for Children • Sihle-Sizwe Vineyard Foundation • Sikunia Community Development Organization • Sombrilla International Development Society • Teach Peace Development • Trebi Kuma Ollenu Foundation for Community Development • Ubuntu - Mobilizing Central Alberta • United Nations Association in Canada - Calgary Branch • University of Calgary International

*This project was funded with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through Global Affairs Canada.*

Canada 