



Embracing the Future: Re-Inventing Community



As another year ends, and a new century nears, our thoughts increasingly turn to the symbolism of the "millennium", as though time rather than history determines the future. Entering the last five years of the twentieth century we inevitably look back at the recent past with some pain and confusion, and to the future with uncertainty and anxiety. To what present has the past brought us, and what are the prospects for the future? These are questions that preoccupy all of us committed to creating a world of peace, equality and justice.

It is difficult to avoid the apocalyptic tone in contemporary commentary on what the future holds. There appears to be a more ready ear for predictions of doom than for images of activism and hope. And why not feel despair, in a world that offers such examples of terror as Bosnia and Rwanda? Where can we find hope in the folly of Bhopal, Clayquot Sound and the burning Amazon, or the deadly deterioration of life for millions — including many right here in Canada — swamped by deepening global poverty?

These things are real and serious, dangerous and deadly. But are wars, environmental catastrophe and economic strife all that the present offers, and the future holds? Our experience tells us that the answer is "No". Even those whose daily lives are directly affected by these events share other realities as well: the daily human experience of people transcending the folly of their leaders and the stark reality of poverty. They are re-creating communities of mutual support and reciprocity, working together to forge a different future than the present they inhabit. Our experience is that tens of thousands of Canadians identify with this struggle, not least because they are also witness to it in their own lives, and in their communities.

Yet, even with this appreciation of struggle, we do not promote false optimism. Certainly there is a feeling of profound abandonment in the world. Radical cuts in government spending have been carried out at the direct

expense of the poor. Everywhere the state is removing itself from support for basic social services such as health and housing, and even from the investments in education and national infrastructure that are most critical for the dynamic development of societies and nations.

As a result, the poorest and most marginal populations are losing ground in spite of their best efforts. Attempts to advocate for rights to basic social services, or to promote programs that benefit local communities, are met with hostility by the wealthy and by the state. The abdication by governments of their responsibility to promote basic human development is undoing the social gains of the past 30 years and can only further undermine societies as they face the challenges of the 21st century.

How do we, as concerned Canadians and world citizens, respond to these realities? It is individuals making the choice to act that will make a difference. The worst element of social and economic alienation is despair and powerlessness. Action creates power and, when carried out with others, breaks down fear, isolation and abandonment.

Inter Pares is working around the world with people's organizations that are acting to bring about positive and permanent changes in their societies. Inter Pares' program assists people to re-invent communities and create alternative strategies to promote their interests. Social transformation demands social equity, and state institutions that earn their political credibility and moral authority directly from

the governed themselves. The actions that Inter Pares supports promote community development and self-sufficiency in the shortterm, while challenging societies and governments to develop policies that ensure the participation of all citizens in the process of governing and social renewal.

If there are few certainties left in the new world as we approach the millennium, at least two conclusions remain. The first is that we do face a crisis in global development, and it is a false optimism to deny it. The second is that a new phase of human history is beginning, a history whose tale, as it always has been, will be the way that human society — including each and every one of us — faces the future and creates a new world.

It is a time when we all have an opportunity to make the future our own, and share it with others. This will mean re-inventing community and, perhaps, re-inventing ourselves along with it. In this challenge, Inter Pares seeks and invites the participation and assistance of Canadians who share our vision of the future, and a faith in humankind that transcends despair, and embraces the future with action and hope.

Wherever Inter Pares works, we are confronted with a profound sense of abandonment. Yet throughout the world, citizen's groups are confronting this abandonment by organizing themselves.

Inter Pares supports people's efforts to rebuild community, creating the social cohesion and development of sustainable livelihoods that meet the needs of all community members. We work to make governments accountable, promoting democratic social and economic policies, and bringing about social change.

What is Inter Pares?

When Inter Pares was founded in 1975, our philosophy was that rather than setting up overseas offices and implementing our own program, we would build relationships with existing Third World groups, supporting their community-based programs. Twenty years later, we continue to develop these kinds of relationships with people who share an analysis that poverty and underdevelopment are caused by structural inequalities between nations and within nations.

Many of the groups we support are organizations led by the people whose interests they represent, usually the poorest of the poor. These groups know that they are not poor by nature, but by design. They want our solidarity, not our charity. We support their efforts to challenge structural obstacles to change, their struggle for self-determination, and their alternative development approaches. We attempt to learn from these efforts, make them known to Canadians, and advocate nationally and internationally for global justice and equitable development.

Inter Pares also addresses social and economic issues in Canada, linking social action at home with social change in the Third World.

Inter Pares applies four principles:

Participation

People and communities actively participate in creating solutions to the poverty and injustice that affect them.

Sustainability

Development efforts make communities more self-sufficient and are environmentally and financially sound.

Leadership by women

Women make decisions and create change, and their central role in development is recognized.

Respect for cultural values

Efforts for change build on the culture and values of the people concerned.

The name Inter Pares — among equals — conveys our approach. It also describes how we work internally. Inter Pares staff form a cooperative management team working on the principle of parity — parity of salary and parity of responsibility.

In our approach to the public, instead of spending time and resources on large fundraising and publicity campaigns, we have chosen to develop more slowly, building a solid core of committed supporters over the years. This strategy has not made Inter Pares a household name, but it is respectful of the type of commitment our donors and partners expect from us.

Building Community

People on every continent, faced with the challenge of reconstruction after years of economic disintegration, political repression, and war, are injecting new life and energy into communities. Building community involves strengthening physical infrastructure, social programs and an economic base, and developing relationships based on trust, common values and a shared vision for the future.

In northern Rwanda, the reintegration of 10,000 displaced Hutus and Tutsis into local communities is a complex process. Working together on repairs to water supply, roads and bridges, and on the regeneration of economic activities, are some of the ways that Rwandan organizations are recreating the mutual trust and social cohesion needed to ensure a peaceful future.

The Corporation of Rural Communities for the Development of El Salvador represents 160 poor rural communities. CRIPDES strengthens community development by helping citizens' groups relate directly with municipal governments. CRIPDES also provides local people, particularly women, leadership training to ensure their active participation in community life.

The people of the Apelo Cruz squatters community in Manila are taking a creative approach to their economic, social and political concerns by building their own alternatives. The Apelo Cruz Women's Health Association runs a small clinic with a focus on pre- and post-natal care, manages a revolving loan fund for small economic projects, and provides training in health care, savings programs and advocacy skills.

For 100,000 Burmese refugees living in makeshift camps along the border with Thailand, hope for the future lies in the capacity of refugee organizations to advocate for change, while equipping refugees with the skills to rebuild their former communities. The Burmese Relief Centre assists refugee organizations to assert their rights and provides training in primary health care.



Peter Bennett



Sustaining Livelihoods

In order to build the capacity for communities to create and sustain life and culture, it is essential that people have access to local resources to produce and exchange the basic goods and services they need.

Through legal assistance, a small association of lawyers in Guatemala, called COJUPO, helps indigenous and peasant communities exercise their right to land titles and access to land for agriculture. COJUPO also supports rural workers to gain experience in promoting and establishing labour rights on issues such as minimum wage and equal wages for women.

The Community Loan Association of Montreal has set up a community loan fund to provide loans at affordable rates for community development. Loans are granted for activities such as worker-owned enterprises, small businesses and co-operatives, which create employment in the community and allow capital to be re-invested locally.

Tiniguéna, which translates as *this land is ours*, works with rural and urban communities in Guinea Bissau, West Africa, to promote people's participation in the decisions affecting the use of their resources, such as land and water. Tiniguéna helps women's groups set up community-based projects such as vegetable gardening and rice milling to ensure local autonomy through projects that are environmentally sound and viable.

The Women's Federation of Yauli, in Peru, supports actions that increase women's capacity to influence government on issues such as education, health, and women's standard of living. Recognizing that women's economic status is central to healthy local economies, the Federation also helps women set up cooperatives in areas such as raising small livestock, weaving and farming.

— abandonment by the state, by the community, even by the family.
ing to transform their societies.

necessary for healthy and caring societies. Inter Pares assists in the
And Inter Pares accompanies people in their efforts to hold their
ging about the real possibility of change.



Pedro Isztin

What is Development?

When we speak of development, we refer to the development of people and their communities. This is an historical process in which people act together, learn together, make political and economic choices together, and create the world for themselves. Development is a permanent, ongoing process of cultural invention, and of directed and dynamic social change.

This process usually takes place in the context of national development, but its essence is the free participation of citizens in the creation and expression of their communities and their society. People are the agents of development and change. People develop themselves, their societies, and their nations. This is the essence of democracy, and democracy is the heart and engine of authentic development.

Holding Governments Accountable

Development requires the free and active participation of people in the creation of their communities and societies. Around the world, citizens are demanding responsible and responsive governments that promote justice, equality and democracy as the birthright of all.

The Civic Alliance, a coalition of Mexican NGOs and peoples' organizations, promotes participation in the democratization process in Mexico and defends the right of people to fair elections, free of fraud, intimidation and violence.

In Bangladesh, a network of social justice organizations carries out village-level research to document the needs and concerns of ordinary people, bringing these issues to the attention of politicians and decision-makers. This work strengthens people's participation and makes an important contribution to the establishment of democracy after years of military rule.

The Caribbean Policy Development Centre based in Barbados links local and international action and promotes alternative social and economic policies. In a period that has seen the withdrawal of international support for development initiatives in the Caribbean, the CPDC encourages regional approaches to solving the challenges facing the countries of the region.



David Barbour



Molly Kane

This vision of development sees the true national interest to be the interests of all people and their communities, including the poor. National development benefits the poor when the goal is not simply the creation of wealth, but also the redistribution of wealth, and the social transformation that this implies. National development protects and assists all citizens only when its goal is to nurture communities and the economies that sustain them.

Thousands of young women leave the Philippines each year in search of work in foreign countries. Migrante and GABRIELA help migrant women to organize to reduce their vulnerability, advocate for basic human and labour rights in host countries, and educate the public about the economic conditions that cause these women to leave their families in the first place.

The Third World Network is an international forum of NGOs and social justice activists in Asia, Africa, and Latin America promoting alternative ways for people to achieve secure and sustainable livelihoods. The Network supports research on the impact of social and economic policies and challenges national and international policies that undermine human development.

Staff

Linda Challes, Larry Frazer, Peter Gillespie, Molly Kane, Lise Latrémouille, Brian Murphy, Bibiana Nalwindi Seaborn, Nathalie Parent, Rita Parikh, Karen Seabrooke, Jean Symes, Roch Tassé, Sheila Whyte

Board

Penny Bertrand: Organizer, PSAC; child care advocate.

Lyse Blanchard: Activist, animator, former Executive Director of CUSO.

Sel Burrows: Community economic development organizer in Manitoba.

Paul Langelier: Community organizer and adult educator in Québec.

Nathan Gilbert: Executive Director, Laidlaw Foundation.

Yew Lee: Consultant, specializing in community and organizational development.

Deborah McIntosh: Lawyer, specializing in human rights.

Shree Mulay: Professor, McGill University, and women's health activist.

Sharon Moon: Minister, Ottawa First United Church.

Phoebe Nahanni: Researcher/organizer with aboriginal organizations.

Margaret Phillips: Social development consultant and researcher in northwestern Ontario.

Bill Singleton: Consultant to voluntary sector.

Mark Stiles: Consultant, communications and human resource development.

Doug Ward: Director of Radio, CBC Radio, Ottawa.

Florence Woolner: Consultant to aboriginal organizations.

Supporters

In addition to the generous support of thousands of individuals and local community groups, the work of Inter Pares was assisted in 1995 by contributions from:

Battleford United Church • Keith & Betty Beedie Foundation • Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) Social Justice Fund • Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC) • Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) • CUPE Local 2323 • The EJLB Foundation • Filles de la Sagesse d'Ontario • Fitzhenry Family Foundation • Fleming Foundation • Fondation Internationale Roncalli • The Howard C. Green Memorial Fund • Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception • Holcombe Rogus Enterprises • Hope International Development Agency • The K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation • Clifford E. Lee Foundation • Manitoba Tools for Peace • The McLean Foundation • Mennonite Foundation of Canada • The P. & P. Murray Foundation • Nicaragua Children's Fund • Nancy's Very Own Foundation • Outil de Paix - Québec • OXFAM-Canada • Partnership Africa Canada • The Sa-Hali Fund • SEI Industries • Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie • Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of London • Steelworkers Humanity Fund • The Trillium Foundation • Wild Rose Foundation

And we are also grateful to those who have chosen to support our work through a bequest:

The Estate of Clare M. Slater
The Estate of Evelyn M. Wardropper

Auditors' Report

To the Members,

Inter Pares.

We have audited the balance sheet of Inter Pares as at December 31, 1995 and the statements of members' equity and income for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Organization's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects the financial position of the Organization as at December 31, 1995 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Ottawa, Ontario,
February 7, 1996.

McCay, Duff & Company
Chartered Accountants

Inter Pares, 58 Arthur Street, Ottawa, Canada K1R 7B9
(613) 563-4801 Fax (613) 594-4704
Charitable registration number 0447771-09

Balance Sheet as at December 31, 1995

ASSETS	1995	1994
Current		
Cash	\$ 728,132	\$ 347,765
Accounts receivable	250,227	91,699
Investments	100,189	20,000
Prepaid expenses	-	56,022
	1,078,548	515,486
CAPITAL (note 2)	-	18,020
	\$1,078,548	\$533,506
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Advances on projects	\$ 649,330	\$191,289
Accounts payable	113,500	91,693
	762,830	282,982
MEMBERS' EQUITY		
Accumulated Surplus	69,736	80,524
Reserve Fund (note 3)	225,265	170,000
Endowment Fund (note 4)	20,717	-
	315,718	250,524
	\$1,078,548	\$533,506

Statement of Members' Equity for the Year Ended December 31, 1995

	1995	1994
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS		
Balance - Beginning of Year	\$80,524	\$76,654
Net income for the year	65,194	73,870
	145,718	150,524
Allocation to reserve fund	55,265	70,000
Designated to endowment fund	20,717	-
Balance - End of Year	\$69,736	\$80,524
Reserve Fund		
Balance - Beginning of Year	\$170,000	\$100,000
Allocation from accumulated surplus	50,000	70,000
Accumulated interest	5,265	-
Balance - End of Year	\$225,265	\$170,000
Endowment Fund		
Balance - Beginning of Year	\$ -	\$ -
Designated endowment gifts	20,000	-
Accumulated interest	717	-
Balance - End of Year	\$ 20,717	\$ -

Statement of Income for the Year Ended December 31, 1995

	1995	1994
REVENUE		
Donations (note 4)	\$ 983,447	\$ 919,683
C.I.D.A. - N.G.O. projects	1,112,514	941,474
- Other projects	561,002	286,247
Project generated grants	1,453,602	978,428
Interest and miscellaneous	31,093	7,476
	4,141,658	3,133,308
EXPENSES		
Administrative		
Salaries	124,397	120,699
Travel and communications	19,288	16,652
Office and miscellaneous	41,417	38,453
Amortization	7,508	3,927
	192,610	179,731
Fundraising	380,005	226,759
Publications	23,291	54,870
Programs		
Projects	2,998,318	2,154,805
Operations	482,240	443,273
	3,480,558	2,598,078
	4,076,464	3,059,438
Net Income for the Year	\$ 65,194	\$ 73,870

Notes to Financial Statements December 31, 1995

1. Significant Accounting Policies

- Basis of Accounting** - Revenue and expenses are recorded on the accrual basis, whereby they are reflected in the accounts in the period in which they have been earned and incurred respectively, whether or not such transactions have been finally settled by the receipt or payment of money.
- Amortization** - Amortization is provided on a straight line basis over five years. Capital assets were fully amortized in 1995.
- Tax Status** - Inter Pares was incorporated without share capital under Part II of the Canada Business Corporation Act. The Corporation is registered as a non-profit organization under Section 149 (1) (c) of the Income Tax Act and accordingly is not liable for income tax.

2. Capital Assets

	1995		1994	
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net	Net
Furniture and equipment	\$100,740	\$100,740	\$ -	\$18,020

3. Reserve Fund

Inter Pares maintains an unrestricted operational reserve to assure that obligations are honoured in the event of unanticipated changes in external funding.

4. Endowment Fund

The Margaret McKay Endowment Fund has been created to receive gifts whose principal will be invested and held for a minimum of ten years. In 1995, donation income to Inter Pares included gifts totalling \$20,000 that were designated to the Endowment Fund.

5. Statement of Changes in Financial Position

This statement has not been provided as it would not provide additional useful information.

