Newsletter – Fall 2024

Season's greetings to all!



Welcome to our last newsletter of 2024!

As we continue to pursue our mission and work with our projects, we are pleased to share some exciting updates with you. This is the first newsletter since our General Assembly in April, where important decisions were made for the year ahead. One of the key outcomes of the assembly was the election of our new (and partly renewed) board.

We are excited to introduce the members who will help lead the organization in the coming year.

Our new board.

- Johannes Nordentoft, Chairperson
- Dea Kopp Jensen, Vice chairperson
- Flor Nuñez, Treasurer
- Erik Wendt, Board member
- Arely Alvarado, Board member
- Miroslava Fonseca, Board member
- Peter Vedel Kessing, Board member
- Sofia Maria Mata, 1. substitute

This new board comprise a diverse range of expertise and experiences, and we are confident that their leadership will help propel our organization to new heights. We've already had several productive meetings, and we look forward to continuing this momentum throughout the year. Their dedication and vision are integral to advancing our work and achieving the impact we strive for in the communities we serve.



Honoring Peter Polatin

We would like to take a moment to remember Peter Polatin, one of the founders of Nunca Más, who passed away on August 17, 2024, at the age of 81. Peter's dedication to global mental health and his tireless work supporting refugees left a lasting impact on the lives of many. His contributions to Nunca Más and his humble yet profound approach to improving the world will always be remembered with deep gratitude. We feel grateful for having had the honour and pleasure of knowing and working with him. If only there were more people like Peter, the world would be a much better place.

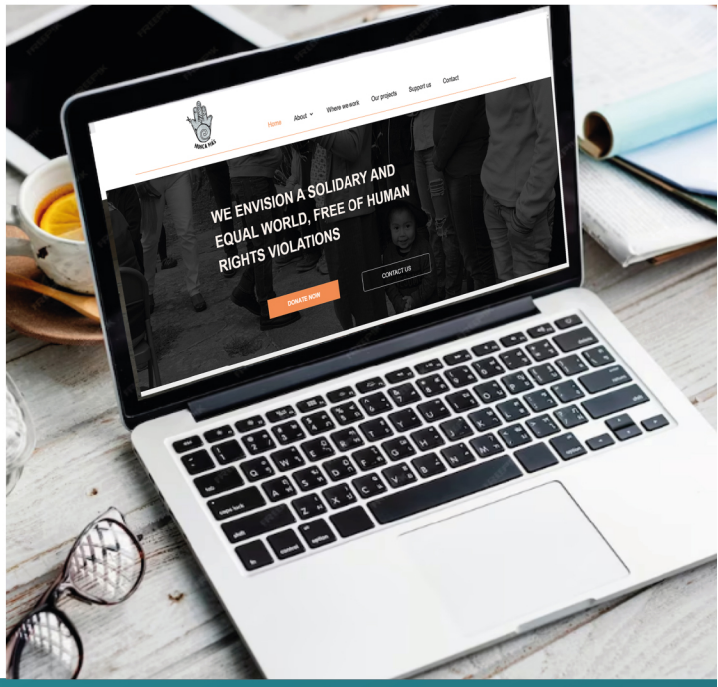
Our thoughts go to his wife and family.

Updates and Announcements:
What's new at Nunca Más



Before we update you on our projects, we want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of our dedicated volunteers and members whose unwavering support makes everything we do possible. Your time, effort, and commitment are the backbone of our organization, and we truly couldn't carry out our work without you. Each of you plays a vital role in driving our mission forward, and for that we are deeply grateful.

If you haven't already renewed your membership or made your contribution for 2024, we kindly remind you to do so! Your continued support through membership fees is crucial to sustaining our work and ensuring we can keep making an impact together. Thank you once again for being part of this important journey!



Donate to support our work.

We are pleased to announce that we have received official authorization to collect funds in addition to the membership fees and donations. Therefore, you can now find a donate button on our website. This is an exciting step for us, as it opens up new possibilities for supporting our work and expanding our impact. We encourage our readers, members, volunteers, and their families try it out and make a contribution, no matter how small. Your support means the world to us - thank you for helping us bring about change!

Projects:

During this past year, our projects in Honduras, Ecuador and Sri Lanka have been successfully completed. Keep reading to find out more about each project, as well as upcoming projects.

The general situation in relation to getting funding from CISU
It has become more difficult to get funding from CISU. Competition is getting tougher due to the fact that many more organizations apply while the funding remains the same. CISU has therefore decided its modalities, which give Nunca Mas the option to apply for a smaller programme. This will give us and our partners more certainty, as activities can be planned for 3-5 years. This is different from now, where we regularly have to apply for short-term projects lasting 6-18 months. We have also begun looking into other sources of funding, among others the CISU neighbourhood fund . Thus, we have identified partners in Georgia using resource persons in Denmark with in-depth knowledge of the country. With these new opportunities, we have exciting times ahead of us.

Zimbabwe

The fourth project in Zimbabwe, initially set to end in December this year, is still ongoing and has been extended until February 14, 2025,. The project got off to a bumpy start with the government postponing the planned village hearings, which were the main objective and activity of the project. It was unclear whether the government would allow for the hearings to take place at all. Due to these complications, the project and activities were adjusted, and we are now back on track. The adjustments mean that the hearings will start without the government. This is not optimal, but if the hearings do not start soon, the set-up in place for the hearings will be lost. If that happens, the hearings will be of little value.

Shari Eppel, the Director of our partner, Ukuthula Trust visited Denmark 19-22 November, where she visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and CISU as well as made the presentation Political Space for Civil Society in Zimbabwe - Past and Present at the Center of Africa Studies at the University of Copenhagen. She meet with members of the board of Nunca Más, including the chairperson of Nunca Más, Johannes Nordentoft with whom the future co-operation were discussed.



In the pictures, Shari Eppel is together with Amanda Hammer, professor at the Centre of African Studies, University of Copenhagen, as well as Jan Ole Haagensen, co-founding member & senior adviser and Johannes Nordentoft, Chairperson of Nunca Más.

Ecuador

The project "Enhancing the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence in Ecuador" (PRIVA) has been successful in strengthening civil society organizations and training community promoters to prevent gender-based violence. It built on previous work, with PRIVA establishing cooperation agreements with key institutions such as the Cantonal Council for the Protection of Rights of Ambato and the National Council for Intergenerational Equality.

These partnerships were crucial for making it possible for social organizations play an active role in the project's implementation and for partaking in establishing a local, workable system that can help prevent violence against women and take care of women who are experiencing violence.



To support members of civil society organizations and groups, develop their fundraising skills and improve the sustainability of their actions against gender-based violence, PRIVA organized workshops on organizational and fundraising skills. 104 participants from 40 civil society organizations participated. Additionally, 304 participants were trained as community promoters, empowering them to identify forms of violence and promote protective measures within their communities.

Despite challenges, like the fragile environment and state of emergency declarations, the project successfully carried out awareness campaigns. These included events on the International Women's Day and the Day of Non-Violence Against Women, which reached approximately 1,800 people. PRIVA also commemorated 100 years of women's suffrage in Ecuador, various awareness events were organized, such as the "Poetic Route" and a National Meeting of Vice-Prefects.

Overall, the project successfully enhanced local efforts to prevent gender-based violence in Ecuador through strong community engagement, training, and strategic partnerships.

Sri Lanka

The project with the Rule of Law in Sri Lanka ended on July 14, 2024. The project made significant progress in promoting the rule of law and fighting corruption. Over 260 participants, including scholars, journalists, and students, attended training sessions that sparked the creation of the “People Against Corruption” network. Public awareness campaigns reached thousands of people through social media, while community programs empowered women, farmers, and youth through legal and human rights education. Youth played a key role, using platforms like #SystemChange to advocate for governance reforms and greater accountability. Two handbooks were distributed widely, helping sustain the momentum for transparency and systemic change.

As the project wrapped up, a significant political shift occurred. In September 2024, Sri Lanka held national elections, electing a new president who was not from the “old boys’ network”, but from a new generation of politicians. This marked a significant moment in the country, creating hope for progress in upholding the rule of law and advancing human rights. The leadership change creates a possibility of strengthening the democratic institutions, addressing systemic corruption, and ensuring justice for all citizens. While challenges remain, this transition signals an opportunity for sustained dialogue and collaboration between civil society and government to build a more transparent and equitable future.



Guatemala

We have applied for a new project in Guatemala. Although both the type of project and the location are new for Nunca Más, the partnership is not completely new, as various members of Nunca Más have previously worked with members of CIPREVICA (Center for Research for the Prevention of Violence in Central America). The project will be titled "Women Defenders: Promoting Safe Spaces for Violence Prevention" and will aim to strengthen women's leadership and empowerment while fostering new masculinities as allies in violence prevention efforts.

Honduras

The project with CPTRT ended in March 2024. It aimed to empower youth in Choluteca, Honduras, through political advocacy and psychosocial support. Youth from both rural and urban areas were trained in human rights, violence prevention, and leadership skills, which they then shared with others in their communities. This fostered stronger community engagement and allowed young people to participate in decision-making processes. The Psychosocial Care Table (MAPS), bringing together youth, mental health professionals, and NGOs to address psychosocial issues, continued functioning. Workshops on topics like suicide prevention and communication skills helped improve interpersonal relationships. Despite challenges in sustaining MAPS, the initiative was well-regarded, and youth expressed interest in continuing the work. The project reached about 1,000 people through social media, highlighting the youth's accomplishments and lessons learned.



CONTIGO:

We are also currently working on a Denmark-based project. Until the beginning of this year, our focus had been on defending human rights and providing psychosocial support to partner organizations in Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as disseminating information in Denmark. We will continue to do so, however, we have started developing a psychosocial project called CONTIGO, based in Copenhagen. The project will still be in alignment with our values regarding the defense of human rights, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and directives on community work from the WHO.



We have a strong team comprising members of Staff, the Board of Directors and volunteers of Nunca Más whose mission is to identify strengths and challenges that allow us to define the objective of the project and the target group. The focus of the project will be on mental health and partner violence, and providing guidance or counselling for the target group, which will initially be migrants of Spanish-speaking origin. We have already begun offering our services, and we are now working on a project proposal to be able to expand that service to more people in need.



New volunteers

We would like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome our new volunteers Celina Brunotto, Daiana Kejwan, Romina Opazo, Eunice Zamora, Lucia Lucía Pérez, Karina Pasten-Lopez and Karolina Kadich.
We also welcome Jesus Lopez who is working with the home page together with Erik Nielsen.

Finally, we welcome to Sofia Zelaya, who is our SOME volunteer.
We're excited to have you on board and look forward to working together!

Until next time

As we wrap up this edition of our newsletter, we want to express once again our heartfelt thanks to all of you who continue to support our mission. Whether through your time, expertise, or financial contributions, each of you plays an invaluable role in making our work possible.

We are energized by the journey ahead and look forward to sharing more updates with you in the future. If you have any questions or would like to get more involved, don't hesitate to reach out. Together, we can continue to make a positive impact and create lasting change.

Thank you for being part of this important work. Stay tuned for more exciting news in the coming months!
In the meantime, we wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Warm regards,
The Nunca Más Team