

accountability  
counsel



# SHIFTING POWER



**SHIFTING POWER**

DEMANDING  
ACCOUNTABILITY

BUILDING A JUST  
FINANCIAL SYSTEM

DEFENDING  
HUMAN AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
RIGHTS

COMMUNITY  
CASES BUILD  
GLOBAL IMPACT

GROWING  
A GLOBAL  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
MOVEMENT

HONORING OUR  
FOUNDER

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Accountability Counsel strives to create a world where  
**people and our planet are prioritized  
over profits; powerful institutions are  
responsive to the needs of communities;  
and the global financial system respects  
human and environmental rights.**



We hold trillions of dollars in international investments accountable to human rights and environmental standards.

Money matters and presents a critical leverage point to ensuring justice. Behind every project fuelling environmental and human rights abuses is a complex investment chain enabling that project to happen.

**We work alongside communities whose rights, livelihoods, and environment are under threat. Case by case, and investor by investor, we shift power to communities to build a more just financial system.**

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ANNUAL REPORT 2023

## ➔ DEMANDING ACCOUNTABILITY



**“Today, we have written a page in the history of Haiti. This is the first time that Haitian farmers have stood up and been listened to.”**

MILOSTÈNE CASTIN, HAITIAN FARMER AND ADVOCATE

Less than two years after the devastating Haiti earthquake, farmers along Haiti’s fertile northeastern coast were rebuilding their lives. But in 2012 these farmers were evicted without warning from their land to make way for a 607-acre internationally-financed garment factory, fast-tracked after the earthquake as a solvent for economic growth.

The loss of these farmers' land was devastating: over 4,000 people were suddenly without their livelihoods and the regular meals and income those provided. Many faced food insecurity and could no longer pay for their children’s education.

As construction began on the park, the collateral damage only increased. Mismanaged waste facilities overflowed into open dumps, and industrial wastewater was emptied directly into the river, just a few miles upstream from Three Bays National Park, a marine protected area of coral reefs and mangrove forests.

The answer was to demand accountability. Supported by legal advice and expertise from Accountability Counsel and a coalition of advocates, the communities organized and negotiated directly with the project’s investors and the Haitian government to secure a historic remedy agreement, including environmental protection and new land to replace the farms they lost.

**This momentous victory – which can never completely repair the harm they endured – is restoring livelihoods to the farmers and families who fought for it, providing hope to other communities in Haiti, and presenting a model for justice for communities around the world.**

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➔ **BUILDING A JUST  
FINANCIAL SYSTEM**

**Accountability Counsel's  
model defends human  
rights, demands climate  
justice, and strengthens  
community power.**

**POLICY ADVOCACY  
CHANGES SYSTEMS  
AT SCALE**

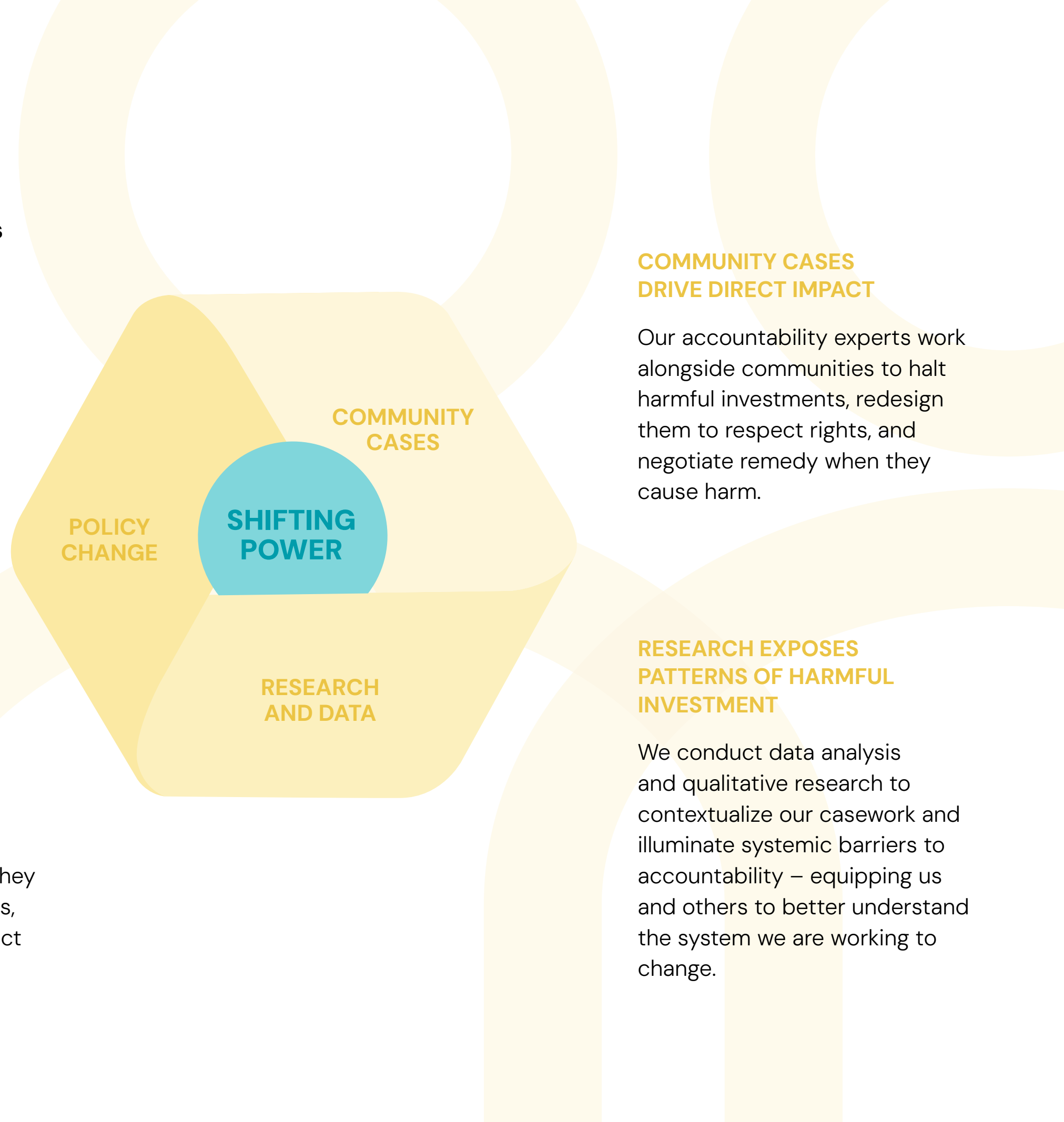
We leverage lessons from our casework and research to strengthen the systems, safeguards, and practices at investing institutions so that they are responsive to communities, respect their rights, and protect the environment.

**COMMUNITY CASES  
DRIVE DIRECT IMPACT**

Our accountability experts work alongside communities to halt harmful investments, redesign them to respect rights, and negotiate remedy when they cause harm.

**RESEARCH EXPOSES  
PATTERNS OF HARMFUL  
INVESTMENT**

We conduct data analysis and qualitative research to contextualize our casework and illuminate systemic barriers to accountability – equipping us and others to better understand the system we are working to change.



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We have supported

**132**  
**communities**  
to demand justice,

pushed

**95**  
**institutions**  
to commit to accountability,

and shifted power to

**3.2**  
**million people**  
worldwide.



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## ➔ DEFENDING HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACROSS THE GLOBE

Regardless of a project’s intentions – when rights, livelihoods, and land are involved, or when decisions are made far from their impacts – the risk of harm is high.

Accountability Counsel has supported communities negatively impacted by extraction in Mongolia and Peru,

agribusiness in Ukraine and Liberia, infrastructure in Uganda and India, energy in Nepal and Mexico, education in Tanzania, and conservation in Myanmar.

**The need for accountability is universal.**



### Defending rights in Nepal

In the mountains of Nepal, a high-voltage power line would run straight through the homes, forests, and communal spaces of the region’s Indigenous residents. The communities did not consent to the project, and their peaceful protest was met with violent retaliation. Accountability Counsel is raising their concerns to the highest level to ensure the project respects their rights.

### Preserving livelihoods in Mongolia

Nomadic herders in Mongolia have tended their sheep, goats, and camels for generations. When a gold and copper mine took their land, drained water resources, and leaked toxic chemicals on pastures, Accountability Counsel supported the herders to secure remedy and preserve their traditional lifestyle.

### Protecting the planet with communities in Myanmar

As stewards of a biodiverse coastal region, the Karen Indigenous community in Myanmar knew that a top-down conservation project would displace people and inadvertently open ecosystems to devastating deforestation. Instead, they proposed an alternate Indigenous-led vision to protect the land and sea.

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## ➔ COMMUNITY CASES BUILD GLOBAL IMPACT

Our approach translates lessons learned from community cases into systemic change to prevent future harm. A recent community case from Kenya has helped lay the foundation to hold over three trillion dollars of Chinese overseas investment to greater accountability: proof that community action can scale global impact.

On Kenya's eastern coast, Lamu is the oldest and best preserved Swahili settlement in East Africa – a UNESCO heritage site. It is home to farmers, fishers, and herders, as well as delicate mangrove forests that help prevent erosion and flooding and act as nursery habitats for local fisheries.

This historic town has been under threat from a massive coal-fired power plant, just one aspect of an even larger mega-infrastructure project of oil refineries, pipelines, petrochemical factories, and a deep sea port – all of which would renew reliance on fossil fuels and devastate the environment, culture and way of life that the communities of Lamu have stewarded for centuries.

Just as in Haiti, the people of Lamu organized to defend their rights, livelihoods and environment. With support from a coalition of experts, including Accountability Counsel, the communities pressured the project's investors, one by one, to divest from the coal plant. Targeting the financial power behind the project ensured justice was served in Lamu.

Lessons from this case and others catalyzed new guidelines that require Chinese investors to create avenues for accountability, as well as a China-led initiative that creates a new channel for community concerns about mining and mineral projects.

**The impacts of this victory do not stop with the land and people of Lamu – their advocacy is putting trillions of dollars on a path to greater accountability.**



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## ➔ GROWING A GLOBAL ACCOUNTABILITY MOVEMENT

Money is moving faster than accountability. Investors globally are pouring billions of dollars into communities to respond to compounding crises, including climate change, pandemics, conflicts, and poverty.

The urgency of the crises people and our planet are facing demand that every dollar meets its mark.

This is the moment to shift power to communities and ensure that financial flows protect people and the planet. Join us as we:

- ➔ **Scale our support to communities and local advocates as they seek justice and remedy for the impacts of investments gone wrong.**
- ➔ **Strengthen existing tools to hold investors accountable, especially where they are under threat from efforts to dilute community power.**
- ➔ **Close major accountability gaps so that communities harmed by investment can demand justice, no matter who the investors are.**





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# Thank you to our supporters for joining us to create a just financial system that respects people and planet.

## TEAM

Lama Almoayed  
Stephanie Amoako  
Samer Araabi  
Gregory Berry  
Julio Castor Achmadi  
Ishita Chakrabarty  
Caitlin Daniel  
Margaux Day  
Radhika Goyal  
Madigan Griffin  
Lani Inverarity  
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Annie Lascoe  
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Frances Maybach  
Robi Chacha Mosenda  
Anirudha Nagar  
Teresa Nyankonyu Mutua  
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Hannah Schiweck  
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Megumi Tsutsui  
Sutharee Wannasiri  
Ant Williams

## BOARD

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Vanessa Barboni Hallik  
Caroline Bressan  
Gary Cookhorn  
Andrew Dickson  
Erica Gould  
Jason Haggins  
David Hunter  
Sujatha Jesudason  
Kim Keller  
Carolyn Rashby  
Fernanda Venzon

## STUDENTS

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Sy Baker  
Rudi Barwin  
Avalon Bauman  
Brooke Behrmann  
Olivia Belanger  
Emma Buday  
Kashvi Chandok  
Hiran Dewar  
Irmak Ersoz  
Alara Hanci  
Deveen Harischandra  
Christopher Liu

Melissa Liu  
Katie McKinney  
Maria Fernanda  
Quintero Sirtori  
Dion Romano

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J. Patterson Foundation  
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Ford Foundation  
Global Commons  
Alliance  
Global Greengrants  
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Luminate  
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Rockefeller Brothers  
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Benjamin**  
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Richard Jaffe

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& Brent Lang**  
Harriet Young  
**Sara Zion & Tushar Shah**

## CORPORATE MATCHING

Anonymous (2)  
BlackRock  
Genentech, Inc.  
Kaiser Permanente  
Omidyar Group  
Travelers

## PRO BONO, IN KIND, & OTHER

Anonymous (1)  
Covington & Burling, LLP  
Healy & Associates  
University of California,  
Berkeley  
Ramp

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## ➔ HONORING OUR FOUNDER

We are forever indebted to Accountability Counsel's extraordinary founder, Natalie Bridgeman Fields. She founded Accountability Counsel in 2009, with an audacious vision for justice and accountability. As anyone who has worked alongside Natalie knows, she is a powerful force for change. Though she is deeply missed as our organizational leader, Natalie's vision for community-led advocacy remains the beating heart of Accountability Counsel.

**Thank you Natalie, for modeling what  
courage and integrity in the face of injustice  
can accomplish to create a more just world.**



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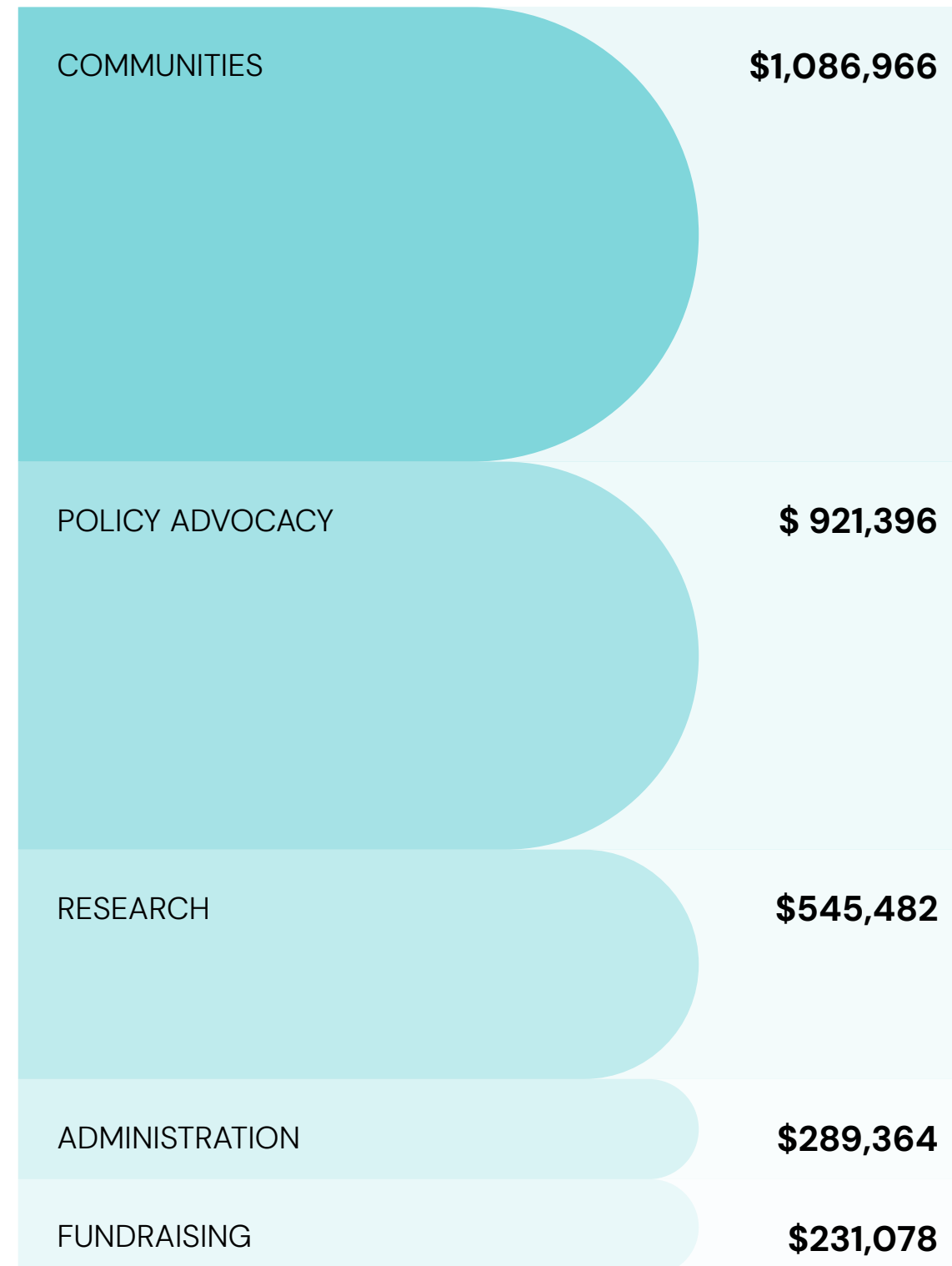
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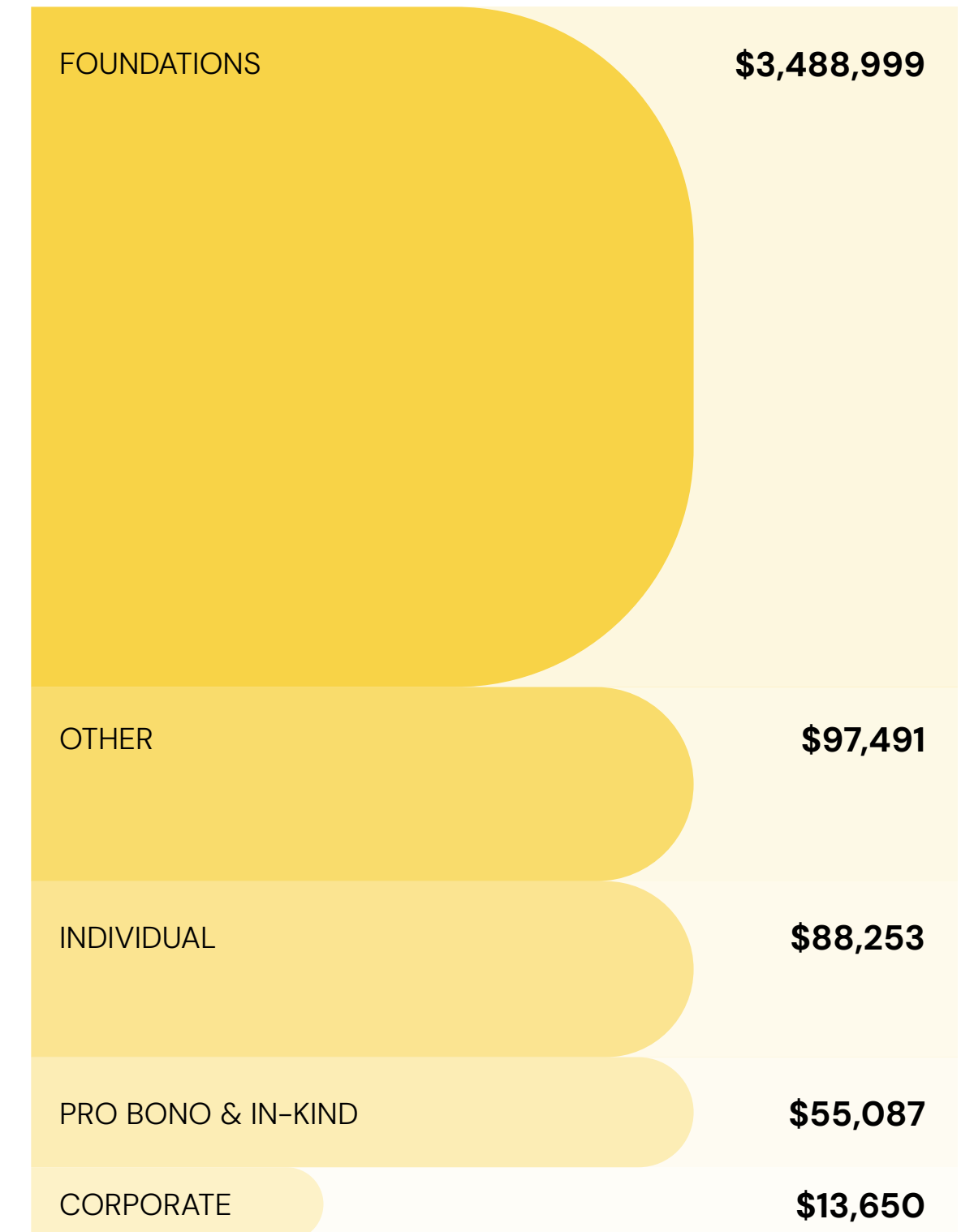
### Expenses

**\$3,074,287**



### Income

**\$3,743,480**



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