

# ***Annual Report 2023***

The Year We Launched Progress & Change Action Lab



## President's Foreword



Florian Irminger  
president

Thanks to Progress & Change Action Lab, I am incredibly privileged to be in a position to support political leaders and a civil society CEOs, and their organisations; in difficult times, we need to pull together and strengthen each other.

Today's societies indeed face a unique combination of an erosion of human rights, an accelerating climate crisis and environmental emergency, and the rise of illiberal, nationalist and populist ideologies. These challenges amplify and reinforce each other, and are compounded by a diminishing spirit of multilateral cooperation, the weakening of security governance, and the discrediting of international accountability and justice mechanisms.

This has created a context in which unpredictability is the "new normal", clouding our ability to see the opportunities of tomorrow.

None of us are fully equipped to address this challenge.

With P&C Action Lab, we want to be in a situation in which we can provide support and engage with partners to tackle these challenges; we know we do not have all the answers. 2023, the year we launched, showed that we can contribute with our partners to look for answers.

I truly believe, we are a pioneering force in the realm of advisory services. Our approach to partnership is unique. We only work with partners of whom we share the cause—we make their cause become our cause and we believe in their vision as much as they do. The first few partnerships we have developed proved to me that we were able to develop trust with the organisations that engaged with us.

2023, the year we launched, we learned a great deal and look forward to continue learning thanks to the continuation of our partnerships and to developing new ones.

Thank you for your trust and your friendship!



## Our Board



**Florian Irminger**  
*Board member, President*



**Marion Duvillard**  
*Board member, Treasurer*  
Event Operations Director,  
Gonet Geneva Open



**Michaël Flaks**  
*Board member, Secretary*  
Lawyer  
Former Director General of the Interior,  
State of Geneva



**Dr. Patrick Mutzenberg**  
*Board member*  
Director, Centre for Civil  
and Political Rights



**Dr. Joëlle Noailly**  
*Board member*  
Senior Lecturer, International Economics,  
Geneva Graduate Institute  
Associate Professor, Environmental Economics,  
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

## Special Thanks

First and foremost, thanks to the partners who trusted us in the first steps of P&C Action Lab, in particular DCAF - Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, the coalition coordinated by the International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law, and the many Azerbaijani human rights defenders and their NGOs with whom we have been working.

We would also like to express special thanks to friends of P&C Action Lab, who have supported our launch and worked with us on developing our services, especially Craig Jackson, Alexandra Swetzer, Chris Ducket, and Mary Lambeth.

We are also incredibly thankful to the 12 people who joined us on 31 May 2023 to launch P&C Action Lab and make this adventure possible.



## 2023: A Year in Review

### Development of Our Services

#### Strategy Development: Transforming Inertia into Action

Guided by our experience, we developed services around (transition) strategy development for organisations.

Whether an organisation needs help separating long-term goals from day-to-day urgencies, uncovering unseen potential, or addressing unknown strategy gaps, we developed work methods to help them by raising the right questions and identifying how the organisation and its team can adapt to ensure their strategy answers today's challenges and continues making a difference.

#### Outreach: Amplifying Influence

Effective outreach is about resonating with the audience.

We equipped ourselves to offer unique capacities to manage and coordinate multi-faceted outreach and advocacy campaigns that amplify your influence, enhance your visibility, and optimise your campaign outcomes at all levels.

The mix of our expertise on human rights issues, the rule of law, and in relation to addressing the triple planetary crisis allow us to ensure an effective campaign management.

#### Opportunity Identification: Seeing Potential Amidst Challenges

As unpredictability has become today's "new normal", our ability to see tomorrow's potential can be hindered.

We hence identification services that offer partners and their team an additional perspective by examining what they, immersed in day-to-day operations, might overlook.

These identification services are tailored and personalised to the needs of the partners, developed following in-depth exchanges with our partner.

#### Filling the Gap: Taking Matters into Our Own Hands

Where we see gaps on concerns to the core of our mission, we initiate coalitions, build movements, and generate action with our own means. We launch and seed projects and campaigns, offer our availability to partners constituting the coalitions and movements, and owning the action we will have jointly made possible.

As a cause driven advisory group, we cannot remain inactive, when we believe our contribution could make a difference.

## Initial Online Campaign

In June 2023, we launched an initial online campaign, aiming at showing the particularity of our work as a cause driven advisory group. We wanted to highlight the dedication we have to the causes we believe in. The campaign is in line with the communication style we have chosen for ourselves, with no pictures:

We are not doomed if we combat inertia



“If you want to identify how you can make a difference, because, you, like us, believe we must change the current course of events, we will listen and commit to you and your team. We work with you to create targeted outreach and advocacy campaigns. We engage with you and your stakeholders to design and implement your (transition) strategies.”

We identify opportunities where others see despair



“If you want to identify opportunities for your organisation or business, because, you, like us, believe we must change the current course of events in this era, we can offer you and your team an additional perspective. To allow us to see what you and your team, immersed in day-to-day operations, might overlook, we tailor our products and services to your needs with you.”

We work with you to further the cause we believe in



“If you, like us, believe we must change the current course of events in this era of interrelated crisis, we will listen and commit to you and your team. We work with you to create targeted outreach and advocacy campaigns. We engage with you and your stakeholders to design and implement your (transition) strategies. We want to support you, because our way to further the cause we believe in is to work with you and your organisation to master impact and make change happen.”

## UNSR on Freedom of Association and Assembly: Civil Society is Crucial in the Selection Process

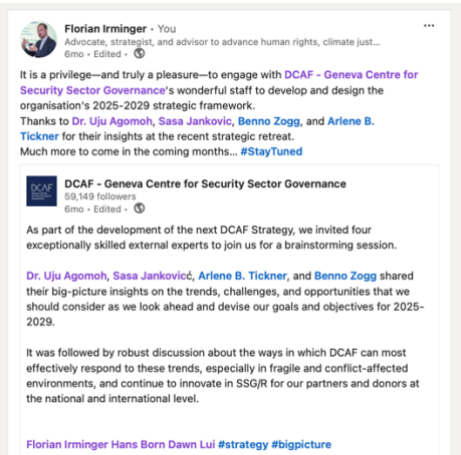
Starting in September 2023, P&C Action Lab was instrumental in initiating an informal coalition of NGOs working together on the appointment of the new United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of association and peaceful assembly. The coalition was coordinated by the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law ([ICNL](#)) and comprised of widely known and respected global and regional human rights organisations. The coalition aimed to ensure civil society input played a role in the UNSR nomination and selection process.

P&C Action Lab, represented by its President, Florian Irminger, supported ICNL’s coordinator with policy advice and process insights.

The process culminated in the appointment of [Gina Romero](#) as special rapporteur in April 2024, to the great satisfaction of all NGOs involved in the process.

## DCAF: Partnership to Strengthen Peace and Security with a Human Rights Based Approach

Through an engagement started in September 2023, Progress & Change Action Lab, represented by its President, Florian Irminger, is working with the leadership of DCAF - Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance to develop its new strategic framework for the period 2025-2029.



The partnership involves us working closely with the steering of DCAF’s strategy development process, providing guidance and assistance on a thorough internal consultation process and leading the drafting of an initial draft strategy, in addition to providing expert policy advice and external organisational on insight.

P&C Action Lab’s involvement with DCAF for the strategy development ended in May 2024.

## COP29: Supporting Civil Society for Climate Justice

Since November 2023, P&C Action Lab is involved in supporting several Azerbaijani human rights defenders and their organisations in developing their campaign towards the 29<sup>th</sup> United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2024.

On 20 February 2024, the Climate Justice Initiative was established by five Azerbaijani NGOs, namely Public Association for Assistance to Free Economy, EcoFront, Women's Empowerment Center, Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Center, and Institute for Citizens Rights.

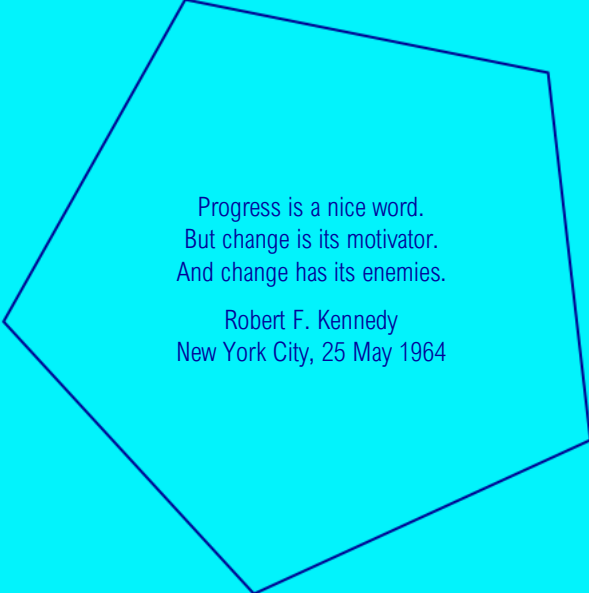
The detention on 29 April 2024 of human rights defender Anar Mammadli, chairperson of the Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Center, changed the plans of the coalition, but P&C Action Lab continued to be engaged with the group and support it, in view of managing and coordinating their campaign.



## 2023: Financial Overview

1. Expenditure		Total 2023	
1.1.	Human resources	CHF	-
1.2.	General expenses	CHF	291,73
1.3.	Project implementation	CHF	5 751,94
1.4.	Communication	CHF	325,86
1.5.	Management bodies	CHF	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>CHF</b>	<b>6 369,53</b>
2. Income		Total 2023	
2.1.	Donations and legacies	CHF	-
2.2.	Sponsorship	CHF	-
2.3.	Public and private grants	CHF	-
2.4.	Membership fees	CHF	10,00
2.5.	Resources from projects	CHF	7 150,00
2.6.	Other income	CHF	-
<b>Total income</b>		<b>CHF</b>	<b>7 160,00</b>
<b>Results for the 2023 financial year (+/-)</b>		<b>CHF</b>	<b>790,47</b>

A detailed financial overview is available in French upon request at [lab@progress-change-actionlab.org](mailto:lab@progress-change-actionlab.org).



Progress is a nice word.  
But change is its motivator.  
And change has its enemies.

Robert F. Kennedy  
New York City, 25 May 1964