



L'ARCHE

L'Arche International
Annual Report – 2022

Together.
With and without
intellectual disabilities.

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What is a Federation?

It is "an encompassing political or societal entity formed by uniting smaller or more localized entities: such as a union of organizations."¹

What does this mean for L'Arche?

Each L'Arche community is unique and situated in a particular cultural reality, with its own mandate and mission. But we are also part of something bigger: a mission united around core values that fosters relationships of true belonging among people with and without intellectual disabilities around the world!

¹www.merriam-webster.com





A **LETTER** from the International Leaders

We would like to begin this annual report by expressing our gratitude to each of you: members with and without intellectual disabilities, friends, supporters, and financial partners who have journeyed together another year. 2022 was a year of both reflection and innovation, driven by our five strategic priorities.

Together we worked towards a final version of our new Charter, affirming who we are and what our mission is together. We are **people with and without intellectual disabilities, who are committed to caring for one another through friendships across differences in the context of shared daily life and work activities.** Through this, we **create places of true, safe belonging, which contribute to more authentic, loving communities and societies.** The concept is simple, but the implementation diverse and multi-faceted! We have again been reminded of the importance of providing the tools and support needed to enable every community across the world-wide Federation to hold to and live out L'Arche values and the L'Arche mission.

Being firmly rooted in core values is important, but it does not stop us from being innovators! In 2022, we developed new evaluation and learning skills and practices so we could keep a pulse on the health of the Federation and **learn from new expressions of the mission.** We also worked on new approaches to developing sustainable revenue, particularly by strengthening our ability to be more united and effective at inviting new partners to join our mission.

Thanks for coming along with us as we review the year together!



Stephan Posner
International Leader



Stacy Cafes-Carney
Vice-International Leader

EQUIPPED for the Mission

Uniting the Federation around Core Values, while Being Responsive to the Call on L'Arche in a new Era

The mission of L'Arche is both big and small, both local and international. It is on the one hand very simple, yet it can be lived out in many ways. And so, we continue to ask ourselves, what is the essence of L'Arche, and how can we keep hold of it over time - through questions, challenges, and transitions?

The purpose of the work in this priority area is to equip the Federation to be united around core values, and to be able to keep to these values day after day, while responding to local needs and contexts.

In 2022, after a significant time of reflection, we developed a draft **Charter**. Communities shared their insights into the core values of L'Arche, and the Charter team carefully and respectfully pulled those reflections together into a new Charter. The Charter will be voted on at the 2023 Federal Assembly.

The **Federation Council**, a group of 30 representatives with and without intellectual disabilities from diverse communities across the world, met in May 2022. The purpose of the group is to meet with the International Leaders to offer reflections on the progress of the mandate.

The meeting was a valuable time to explore concrete concerns and hopes for the Federation today. The charter process was named as being one source of inspiration and hope.

The **International Formation Program** continues to be a key strategy for uniting the Federation. It has three objectives:

- Creating space for all members to integrate the fundamentals/core values of L'Arche in a cross-cultural context
- Fostering connections across the Federation
- Providing resources to ensure all members can access formation

2022 programs included Fundamentals, Online Inclusive Sessions, L'Arche Board Members, New Community Leaders, National Leaders and Envoys, and Safeguarding.



“As a [new] Board of Directors, we arrived without any knowledge of the mission. These training sessions helped us to understand it and therefore to provide a better accompaniment for our directors and the community.”

Carolina Gonzalez,
Board President, Honduras





Federation Assembly

The L'Arche Federation Assembly, held once every five years, is a foundational **time of coming together, renewing relationships, celebrating together, and carrying out Federation business**. The June 2023 Assembly will, for the first time ever, be an online event. While this represents a challenge because we will not be together in person, it also allows for all L'Arche communities to be represented. Our Director of Inclusion has developed training sessions on the inclusive use of Zoom, which opens doors for this and other online events. This important work enables our members with disabilities from all over the world to connect with one another.



Study Commission

Finally, as we continue to move forward in equipping and uniting the Federation, we also remain committed to learning from our past. Working since the autumn of 2020, the Study Commission set up by L'Arche International has endeavoured to shed light on the mechanisms of the psychological hold and sexual abuse of which Thomas Philippe and Jean Vanier have been accused. Composed of six researchers from different disciplines (history, sociology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, theology) and working independently, the Study Commission has been free to choose its methodology of research, its sources, make its own interpretations and draw its own conclusions. During their monthly meetings over the last two years, the members of the Commission were able to share the progress of their research in their respective disciplines, mutually benefiting from this interdisciplinary exchange.

In 2022 this study into the founding of L'Arche, and the relationship dynamics at work between the founder and the people who knew him, was completed with the results being released in early 2023.

“ After 18 years as an assistant in the house and workshop, our members with disabilities can quickly perceive my state of mind. They sense my sorrows; my problems. In their own way, they intervene and show me their desire to help, their feelings of solidarity, without asking me for explanations. Heriberto with pats on my back, Luis Rafael with hugs, each assuring me that calm will come.

They've become a guide for me. And so, through these years I have lived a path of enrichment, of growth as a human being, a path of transformation towards being a more sensitive person, more spiritual, more human. Thank you, friends, for being my family, for being present without me calling you, and for helping me to be a better person. ”

Reflections from a Long-Term Assistant,
L'Arche Dominican Republic



Quality of **LIFE** and Community

Supporting the Federation to Uphold a L'Arche Standard of Care and Community

“ This training opened my eyes and made me see the importance of having this knowledge to raise awareness, understand and be prepared to prevent a possible situation that could put the integrity and safety of the core members and community staff at risk. Many thanks to attorney Julio Moncada, for sharing such valuable information.”

Roberto Jerez, Treasurer of the Board of Honduras

The size and cultural diversity of our Federation is certainly one of our greatest assets. When it comes to our core work of creating places of belonging for people with and without intellectual disabilities, every L'Arche community across the world has gifts, insights, and encouragement to share.

At the same time, every community has lessons to learn and areas where it can improve. It is therefore one of the important roles of L'Arche International

to make sure that **a L'Arche standard of quality of life and community is upheld** even in the most difficult contexts, and in places where it is counter-cultural to hold people with intellectual disabilities in such high regard.

We are committed to strengthening and developing the following initiatives that help us do this across such a diverse Federation:

International Delegates and Envoys

(Federation Representatives)

Our **team supported 33 single communities in 26 countries and 7 national structures (which represent an additional 34 communities)** to strengthen local Boards, discern new community leaders and establish mandates, fundraise, facilitate formation programs, develop strategic plans and much more.

HIGHLIGHT In 2022 the L'Arche International Delegate for Africa, Central and South America led the rigorous grant application process for funding from a French government agency. **The grant unites L'Arche communities in Ivory Coast, Egypt, Kenya, and Zimbabwe in their effort to increase and improve their outreach to local youth with intellectual disabilities** and their families over the next 3 years. L'Arche has passed the first stage of the grant application process, which gives a 90% chance of being successfully awarded this significant investment in their local work.



International Mission program

When a community faces times of transition, crisis, or opportunity there can be a need for interim human resources support in order to maintain the L'Arche standard of quality of life and community. This support may be in the role of a community leader, a daytime program leader or an experienced assistant. L'Arche International's Human Resources team coordinated and prepared 7 experienced L'Arche members to accompany 6 communities in India, Bangladesh, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso and Syria in 2022.

International Experience program

The program enabled 4 L'Arche assistants from different parts of the world to spend time supporting and sharing experiences with communities in Argentina, Honduras, and Mexico.

In total over 500 members were impacted by the exchange of skills, experience, and culture facilitated through these two programs.

Safeguarding training and formations

Through the support of L'Arche International, 15 communities spanning Latin America, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Asia were able to host local, in-person, tailored safeguarding workshops and training sessions.

“ Personally, this training is one of the most interesting training sessions we have ever had and with a lot of value in the teaching that Julio has left us today. ”

Daniel, House Leader



“ I feel supported, it gives security, it protects the work of each of us. ”

Assistant



Highlights from **COMMUNITIES** receiving financial aid

- **Haiti** - To say life in Haiti was challenging in 2022 is a gross understatement. Extreme inflation, political turmoil, gang violence, poverty, and the aftermath of natural disasters were all a reality. Yet, there are two L'Arche lights that have not been snuffed out. The Carrefour community has a new manager of the day program, who has organized the community to grow their own vegetables, including tomatoes, cabbage and corn. They are grateful for the security wall that was completed in 2020, which is the only way they can protect such initiatives. To celebrate the International Day of Disability, L'Arche Chantal led a small parade through their city, involving two choirs, and hosted a reception and a play afterwards.
- **Mexico** - L'Arche Mexico City was delighted to host the International Leadership team meeting in November of 2022. It was an opportunity to share a little of their culture with the Federation, and it was also a wonderful opportunity for members of L'Arche

Mexico City to realize how large and diverse the Federation is. The community appreciates your ongoing support, which enabled them to welcome five new members with disabilities into their daytime workshop program, where they produce beautiful *piñatas* and colorful embroidered cloths.

- **Bangladesh** - With inflation rates reaching almost 50% on food, people in Bangladesh are experiencing many challenges. But the L'Arche Mymensingh community knows that it is all the more reason to come together and support one another. In 2022, the community organized a meeting for Mother's Day. One of the mothers walked more than an hour across town to attend the meeting with her daughter. This was only possible because of the wheelchair provided by L'Arche Mymensingh, and she was deeply grateful.

“
We talk together...
I learn things...
I learn how to take care of
[my daughter].

”
Mother of a child with an
intellectual disability who attends
the Mother's Group organized by
L'Arche Bangladesh

- **Egypt** – At L'Arche Al Fulk, they have been busy managing their new guesthouse and centre for networking and peace. It has proven to be a very meaningful and empowering experience, which you can hear more about from members in **this short video**.



Scan the QR Code
or visit the link to watch
the video

bit.ly/larche_al_fulk

- **India** – 2022 was a time of strengthening and building local governance in L'Arche FMR India. A new National Board President stepped into his role in September 2022 and has been working closely with the National Leader and communities to revive their strategic development plan to impact even more lives in India.
- **Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso** – Currently, in partnership with L'Arche International and local professionals, L'Arche Ivory Coast and L'Arche Burkina Faso are developing a "Relationship-Based Care" training program that is relevant to the local culture and context. The pedagogy is rooted in L'Arche's mission and philosophy: that people with intellectual disabilities have intrinsic value and gifts to share; and that competent

caregiving also includes promoting relationships of equality and mutual respect. Participants will mostly come from L'Arche, but there will also be participants from other organisations, expanding L'Arche's capacity to transform perceptions of intellectual disability.

- **Uganda** – L'Arche Uganda continues with a time of strengthening and building. They welcomed a new community leader in September of 2022, who has been working together with the leadership team and the Board. He is being mentored by the former community leader of L'Arche Kenya, to ensure he is well grounded in the values of L'Arche and able to lead the community going forward. Community members make crafts and sell them at local exhibitions, they work the garden to produce food for the community, and they tend to farm activities.
- **Bethlehem** – L'Arche Bethlehem continues to prioritize their outreach work with a local institutional care home. Many of the people who live in the institution do not have family or any other connections apart from L'Arche friends. Sometimes L'Arche organizes handicraft activities together on site, and at other times they organize a game or an outing to a local restaurant. In olive season, L'Arche organizes a joint field trip to help pick olives. Whatever they do together, they make it a celebration!





“Your support and accompaniment encourage and drive us to continue our commitment to work for a community that makes a difference, impacts and transforms our society. For this we are very grateful.”

Denia Deras, Community Leader
L'Arche Tegucigalpa.
Pictured above with a volunteer.

- **Zimbabwe** – L'Arche Zimbabwe was proud to celebrate their 25th anniversary in October of 2022. This celebration marks twenty-five years of being a light in society and a testimony to the inherent value and gifts of people with intellectual disabilities. The year also included times of reflection on the four priority dimensions of L'Arche Zimbabwe, which are community, spirituality, competence (professionalism) and outreach. The result was over 20 formation sessions led by members of the community to support assistants and core members in key areas of growth. L'Arche Zimbabwe continues to run activities such as the physiotherapy centre, the day care centre, farm production, and carpentry work, which all improve local sustainability while continuing the mission of L'Arche.
- **Ukraine** – 2022 was a year spent in survival mode. The community was necessarily focused on planning, receiving, and distributing emergency supplies of food and medicine; making sure everyone could keep warm during winter power outages; and figuring out how to continue to gather and support one another when the electricity was unpredictable. But they've managed and are very grateful for all the support they've received! See also page 14.
- **Honduras** – In 2022 L'Arche Honduras was focused on building and retaining a strong team of leaders and staff. The new community leader in the Tegucigalpa community is particularly gifted at managing human resources. She oversees the new workshop leader who is a psychologist and skilled in choosing activities that match the gifts and abilities of the members with disabilities. As a result, craft items produced by the community have become very popular at local markets! One customer said "I had no idea L'Arche could produce this!" Another new member of the team is a physiotherapist who has done an amazing job of planning quality physical activities that increase the health and well-being of all members. As a result, some members were able to participate in the Special Olympics in Honduras, and have qualified to represent Honduras at the Special Olympics World Games to be held in Germany in June of 2023!



Emergency RESPONSE

Responding to the Needs of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Times of Crisis

L'Arche is not primarily a crisis response organization. While it is certainly true that the L'Arche mission responds to a "crisis" in our societies – the lack of belonging and opportunity for people with disabilities across the world – our communities normally focus on long-term initiatives and solutions, by welcoming people into community, and often into a home. That being said, since we have a deep understanding of the unique needs of people with intellectual disabilities, and a strong sense of solidarity, we feel we must be prepared to respond when a crisis arises in a region where we have the capacity to serve.

“ You understand that it is somehow scarier alone, and when there are more people, there is a sense of peace through unity. ”

Ania Boldina, Long-term Assistant
L'Arche Kovcheh, Ukraine

The crisis in the Ukraine is the most recent example. Since the beginning of the war, L'Arche has supported over 700 people, approximately 350 of whom have received intensive, ongoing support.

The L'Arche Emergency fund supports local L'Arche communities to:

- Meet basic daily needs of food, medicine, accommodation, and transportation for refugees with intellectual disabilities and their families.
- Respond to emotional needs for security, kindness, care, and support.
- Retain and build the capacity of L'Arche staff to identify and respond to needs as they arise.
- Establish pathways of communication and connection, where members with intellectual disabilities are living outside of a L'Arche home.

Thank you for your kindness and generous support of this important work. We never know when and where a crisis will hit, but in L'Arche we know there will be a network of support to get through it with us.

“ I never imagined that people can be so good, so helpful, in another country. ”

Khrystyna, Mother of two taking refuge in L'Arche Kaunas, Lithuania



Scan the QR code to read Ukraine Report or visit the link

bit.ly/ukraine_report



PHOTOS OF EMERGENCY WORK

Evaluation & learning

Building the Tools and Infrastructure Needed to Explore the Health and Impact of L'Arche

In 2022, we continued the work of developing the tools and infrastructure needed to explore the health and impact of L'Arche.

The Evaluation and Learning team spent the necessary time to build a **CRM database** capable of storing information that is important to L'Arche, while taking every step to ensure the database respects privacy and security. This work has made it possible to engage with pilot L'Arche communities to learn about their models of community life (whether that be homes, daytime programs, cafés, guest houses or something else), to learn more about their local outreach and impact, and to get an accurate picture of the composition of each community.

The Evaluation and Learning team has been active in supporting the Safeguarding team as it prepares for our second Federation-wide **safeguarding audit** in 2023. Together, they've used the CRM to create a tool through which safeguarding data can be stored and the results synthesized.

Safeguarding is just one - albeit very important - indicator of health in a community. The Evaluation and Learning team has been working closely with the international delegates and envoys to support **regular assessment of L'Arche communities** using an evaluation tool designed for this purpose.



These assessments will help communities identify their own strengths, areas of growth and their mission impact. This will also help L'Arche International highlight and share inspiration, and better understand the challenges various communities are facing so we can be more strategic in the support we offer.



The seven main areas of evaluation:

- 1 People with intellectual disabilities are valued, supported in living their gifts and growing as human beings.
- 2 Assistants are valued, motivated and growing as human beings.
- 3 Quality of daily life, spiritual and communal life.
- 4 The structures and leadership of the community are clear, effective and ensure the spiritual, legal, financial and communal elements are lived.
- 5 The community is financially viable and well managed.
- 6 The community is engaged in the Federation of L'Arche.
- 7 The community is engaged in the world around them.

Highlight STORY

L'Arche Italy Assessment Process: An Opportunity to Grow in Appreciation for One Another

There are two communities in Italy – Arcobaleno and Il Chicco. Hoai-Huong is a L'Arche International Envoy who had the opportunity to support the communities through the self-assessment process. Together they decided to focus this assessment on the second area of evaluation – "Assistants are valued, motivated, and growing as human beings."

One of the communities was surprised to find that **the assessment process helped them to recognize and be grateful for characteristics of their community that they had taken for granted.** For example, they realized that they have a beautiful culture of helping and supporting one another. If one assistant has completed their responsibilities early, they will often help another assistant finish theirs. Office staff, the nurse or the physiotherapist will often step in if extra help is needed with the day-to-day routines. Newer assistants realized how well the core members welcomed them into the community. And core members reminded the assistants that they can also contribute to the everyday chores of the community.

Of course, the process also gave space to communicate about concerns or things the communities could improve. For example, core members indicated it would be helpful to provide some training to the assistants on how to "speak our language" and "stay with us."

This is the type of positive experience L'Arche International hopes to encourage by providing L'Arche-specific assessment tools, and guidance for implementation from the international envoys or national leaders.

“ The assessment helped us to outline the limitations of the assistants and find possible solutions to support them. ”

Loredana Moretti,
Coordinator of Volunteers and Formation,
L'Arche Il Chicco



“ This time to really listen to each other, and particularly the core members, helps us stay close to the fundamental values of L'Arche. ”

Hoai Huong Truong, L'Arche International Envoy for Italy



ENGAGING society

Helping to Create
a World where
Everyone Belongs

It isn't always easy to capture the uniqueness of L'Arche in a few sentences. Even long-term members and partners can struggle when they try to explain the profound experience of **belonging and transformation**, which is cultivated through the many facets of L'Arche.

However, we also want to successfully invite more people to join the mission. To help the Federation engage with society, we have been working on a **new visibility campaign called "With and Without,"** which offers a glimpse of life in L'Arche.

At the heart of the campaign is a text, a type of "brand manifesto", which was developed collaboratively with a diverse team of L'Arche leaders and fundraisers.

The producer of the L'Arche *As I am* series worked with communities from different parts of the world to produce a video that brings the text alive with images of L'Arche.

A key role of L'Arche International in this work is to build the capacity of L'Arche communities, particularly those without a national structure or communications function, to effectively use this visibility campaign to engage with society. To this end, we are creating a toolbox and will provide the necessary ongoing support to ensure we are aligned and effective as we invite new friends to join the mission.

SUSTAINABLE Revenue

Building an Effective Fundraising Infrastructure to Sustain the Mission over the Long-term

We continue to observe the life-changing impact L'Arche has across the world. Well over ten thousand members are currently living the concrete daily experience of creating places of belonging together. As we look forward to the next three to five years, we have **two essential areas of need: solidifying L'Arche's current work and increasing our ability to respond to needs of people with intellectual disabilities around the world.**

In about half of the countries where we operate, L'Arche is the only - or one of very few - organisations supporting the lives of people with intellectual disabilities.

- **To solidify L'Arche's work**, we need to continue to develop local leadership, increase resilience projects such as social entrepreneurs or agricultural projects, and continue L'Arche values-based formation programs.
- **To increase reach**, we need to build the capacity to go out and answer the call of thousands more families who have a member with an intellectual disability, are isolated, and are living in difficult conditions.

To help meet these needs, in 2022 L'Arche International increased its focus on collaborative fundraising across the Federation.

- We had an unexpected opportunity to **fundraise collaboratively** when friends and partners across the world wanted to respond to the needs of people with intellectual disabilities in Ukraine. In eight months, the Federation raised over 620,000 Euros for the L'Arche Emergency Response, allowing us to provide strong and ongoing support to L'Arche in Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania as each community responded to the growing needs.
- In June 2022, fundraisers from various countries across L'Arche came together for a first ever "**fundraisers week.**" As a result, an International Group of Fundraisers of L'Arche was formed, a community of practice that is also working together to engage major financial partners.
- People with intellectual disabilities engage with fundraising, communications, and outreach work across the Federation. Gathering examples of this and developing a best practice manual for **inclusive fundraising** has been part of our work in 2022, drawing from experiences in several countries, including Kenya, USA and France.

“ On behalf of the core members, assistants, community leaders and Board of Directors, we thank you and hold you in our prayers and close to our hearts. ”

Mariela Vargas, L'Arche Honduras Board of Directors

“ The Board President and I really benefited from the exchange with the International Group of Fundraisers... thank you for the good advice received. ”

Virginie Kieninger, National Leader of L'Arche Switzerland

Our finances at a glance

L'Arche communities and national structures continue to contribute 70% of the income of L'Arche International, which is a wonderful reflection of the solidarity that is alive in the Federation. The L'Arche International budget is approximately 3% of the total budget needed to sustain L'Arche around the world, and the majority of our budget is dedicated to supporting our communities located in the global south. We continue to see very dramatic inflation and economic downturn in these countries, and at the same time, it is our communities in these countries that often see the greatest need for an increase in L'Arche's presence.

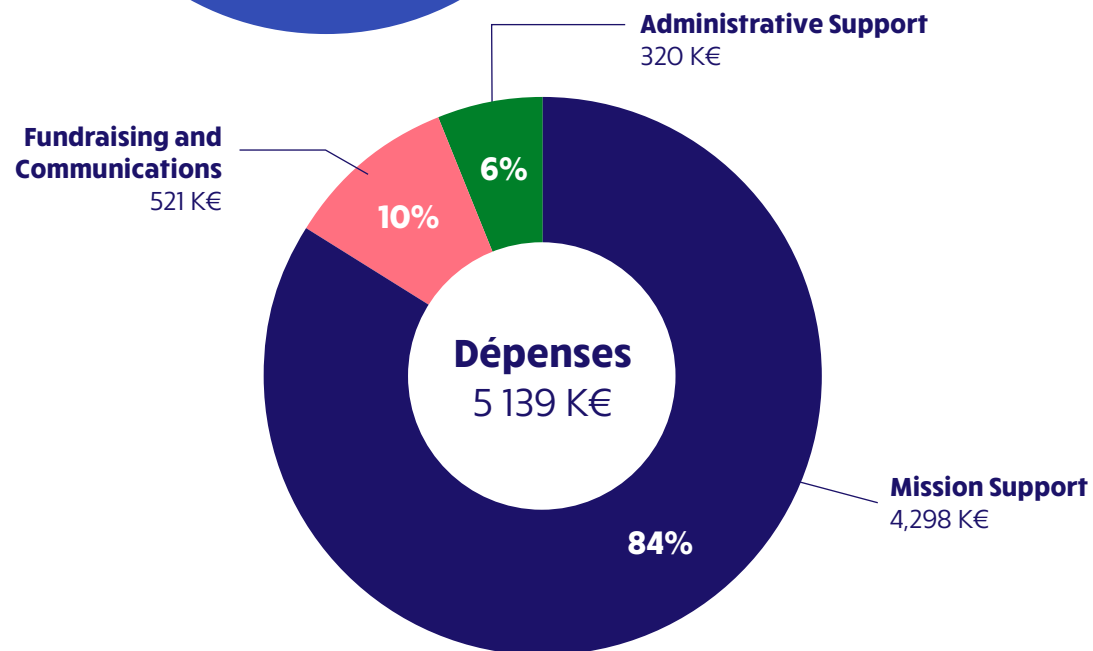
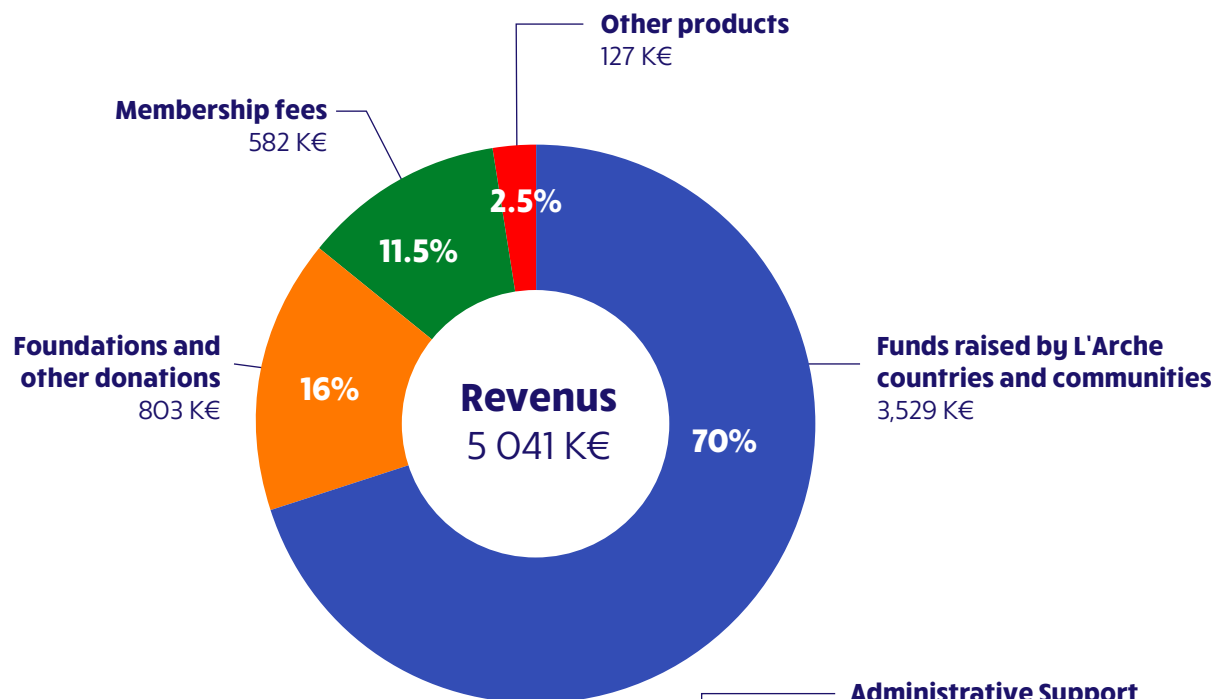
We are also grateful for the ongoing support of several major financial partners. In fact, an ongoing, multi-year donation earmarked for capacity building allowed us to make a significant investment in professionalization and collaboration of fundraisers, as well as developing evaluation, learning and management tools. This contributed to the higher expenses over our 2021 figures.

Sincere thanks

2022 was a full year, and we look back on all the challenges and opportunities with gratitude. We are grateful for the authentic relationships across differences that were built, the lives of people with and without disabilities around the world that were touched, and the growth that we saw as an organization.

None of it could have happened without your faithful and generous financial support.

Thank you!



INNOVATIONS in L'Arche

L'Arche communities across the world each find their own way to innovate and live the mission of L'Arche according to their local context. In this report we'd like to highlight three communities which are operating

GUEST HOUSES!

They are ready to welcome you, so go ahead and make your reservation today!

L'Arche Bethlehem

Location: City of Bethlehem, just five-minute walk from the Nativity Church.

Features:

- 12 rooms / 23 beds
- Beautiful historic building, and cafe
- L'Arche handicraft gift shop on site

CONTACT INFORMATION

boutiquehotel.larchebethlehem.org



L'Arche Alexandria, Egypt

Location: City of Alexandria, Egypt

Features:

- 16 rooms / 22 beds
- Garden café
- Located in Alexandria - one of the great cultural centres of the ancient world

CONTACT INFORMATION

mogelhob@gmail.com

L'Arche Al Fulk, Egypt

Location: Samalut, El Minia, Egypt.

Features:

- 20 rooms / 38 beds
- 2 training/workshop rooms and a chapel
- Hub for local networking and peace building

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