



CORIOLI INSTITUTE

Research. Reintegrate. Rebuild.



Annual Report

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Contents

Letter from Our Founder & Chair	3
Who We Are	5
Our Team	8
Our 2024 Projects	11
Our Year in Numbers	23
Financials	26
Partners & Collaborators	29
The Road Ahead	30





Letter from our Founder & Chair

Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year's achievements, I am filled with immense gratitude for the extraordinary progress made possible by our brilliant and dedicated team, committed partners, and the communities we serve. What began as an ambitious idea—that those who navigate and transcend violence hold the crucial knowledge needed to transform systems—has come to life in ways that inspire profound hope for the future.

In our first full year of operations, we achieved transformative growth, generating nearly \$140,000 in revenue. With over 91% of expenditures directed to programming, we have set a high standard for operational efficiency and ensured that the vast majority of our resources go directly toward advancing our mission.

This year, our work spanned four continents and touched the lives of millions of individuals—whether directly through programming or indirectly through policy and systemic change. From our life history interviews with justice-involved veterans in Chicago to our participatory research with climate-displaced communities in Eastern Africa, we have continued to center lived experiences as the cornerstone of our research and action. Across 17 active projects in 13 countries, we have fostered deep partnerships that bridge local and global knowledge to co-create solutions grounded in deep listening, community ownership, and transformative leadership.

Here are some highlights from 2024: Over the past year, we completed 316 life history interviews across Ukraine, Mexico, Colombia, and Somalia, deepening our understanding of reintegration and resilience in conflict-affected communities. Our work also contributed to regional policy shifts, indirectly supporting over 482 million individuals across Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa through cutting-edge research on climate change, conflict, and migration, as well as participation in high-level multilateral policy dialogues.

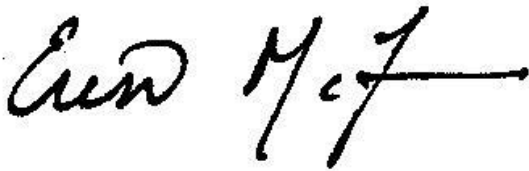


Additionally, we launched our inaugural Summer Fellows Program, bringing together 12 outstanding young leaders to develop innovative solutions while gaining transformative professional experience.

As we look ahead to 2025, we face a world of complex challenges—from the escalating intersections of climate change and conflict to the evolving dynamics of reintegration in contexts of protracted violence. The Corioli Institute remains steadfast in our commitment to addressing these challenges with courage, innovation, and integrity. Our upcoming priorities include developing a globally adaptable social cohesion measurement framework, expanding local research capacity in conflict-affected regions, and advancing our pioneering "Evidence to Impact" initiative to translate rich empirical data into actionable policy.

None of this would be possible without your belief in our mission. Whether through your financial support, strategic partnerships, or shared expertise, you have helped us take bold steps toward a world where communities transform violence into resilience and renewal. Together, we are building bridges between research and action, between local and global, and between ideas and impact.

Thank you for being an essential part of this journey. I look forward to continuing our work together in the year ahead.



ERIN K. MCFEE, PHD MBA





Who We Are

Born from a pioneering UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship project, the Corioli Institute combines rigorous research with practical action to strengthen community resilience and enhance security in violence-affected regions worldwide. Our independent think-and-do tank develops evidence-based approaches that strengthen social bonds and create sustainable pathways forward, with a particular focus on human mobility and the complex dynamics of reintegrating formerly armed actors (FAAs)—individuals who used to participate in organized violence—into their communities. Drawing from deep academic expertise, cross-sector partnerships, and frontline experience in conflict zones, we bridge theory and practice to deliver concrete solutions that help communities navigate violence, displacement, and social upheaval while fostering lasting peace and security. This integration of rigorous research and practical action defines our approach as a think-and-do tank, where evidence directly informs interventions and community experience shapes scholarly understanding.

At the heart of the Corioli Institute's approach is a fundamental belief that those most affected by conflict must lead as architects of their own path forward. Our "radical participation" philosophy goes beyond traditional consultation or engagement—it reimagines how knowledge is created and how change happens in violence-affected communities across more than a dozen countries and four continents.



We reject the conventional model where outside experts prescribe solutions. Instead, we put lived experience at the center of both research and action. From the Americas to Eastern Africa, when communities become co-creators rather than subjects of research or recipients of aid, they generate more nuanced insights and more sustainable solutions. Our ethnographic walks, participant-led conferences, and work with communities from day one to define what success looks like exemplify how "radical participation" transforms academic research into meaningful action while building community.

This commitment extends beyond project boundaries to our organizational structure. As a woman-owned, majority-minority, and veteran-led organization, we actively recruit formerly armed actors as researchers and analysts, creating a virtuous cycle where those who have navigated reintegration become agents of change while gaining vital employment opportunities. Our work continues to shape policy discussions and practical interventions across the globe, contributing to a growing body of knowledge about effective reintegration strategies and sustainable pathways to human security.



Mission

To improve security and reintegration outcomes through methodological innovation that places lived experience at the center of research and action by...

- ...transforming pathways to reintegration through holistic approaches that engage both individual journeys and their social contexts, creating ethical and sustainable solutions through integrated support networks.
- ...pioneering evidence-based approaches to security grounded in radical participation and principled leadership, centering diverse stakeholder voices in both analysis and implementation.
- ...advancing multi-scalar policy change by translating community-generated knowledge into frameworks that reshape how institutions approach peace and security.

Vision

A world where individuals and communities transform lived experiences of violence into pathways toward resilience and renewal, emerging from their unique circumstances.





Values

- **Transformative Leadership:** We model new standards for leading knowledge production and change in our field. Our own organizational structure—woman-owned, majority-minority, and veteran-led—exemplifies this transformation. Through continuous learning and reflective practice, we develop and share innovative methodological approaches that challenge traditional research and action paradigms. We invest in developing emerging scholars and practitioners from conflict-affected communities, creating pathways for new voices to shape the field.
- **Evidence-Based Innovation:** Through collaborative data collection and rigorous research, we develop solutions that work in real contexts and create lasting change. Our methodologies, from ethnographic walks to participant-led conferences, demonstrate how radical participation transforms academic research into meaningful action. We hold ourselves accountable through transparent methods, open data practices, and continuous dialogue with communities and peers.
- **Power in Partnership:** We restructure our research and action through deep community partnership, exemplified by our practice of recruiting formerly armed actors as researchers and analysts. Local knowledge and lived experience determine our priorities, shape our methods, and define our success metrics. We invest direct resources in community research capacity and vocational capabilities and work to transfer funding control to local organizations.
- **Critical Ethical Practice:** We actively examine and challenge established approaches to ensure they serve those most affected by violence. Our ethical framework goes beyond avoiding harm to actively building new modes of engagement that prioritize dignity, justice, and local agency.
- **Grounded Empathy:** Everyone has a story, and that story holds expertise. Throughout our research and practice, we begin with lived experience and deep listening to understand the full complexity of conflict and violence. This empathy extends to all actors—including those who have caused harm—building understanding that honors local knowledge and leadership.





Our Team



Dr Erin McFee
President & Chair



Doug Livermore
Director of Development



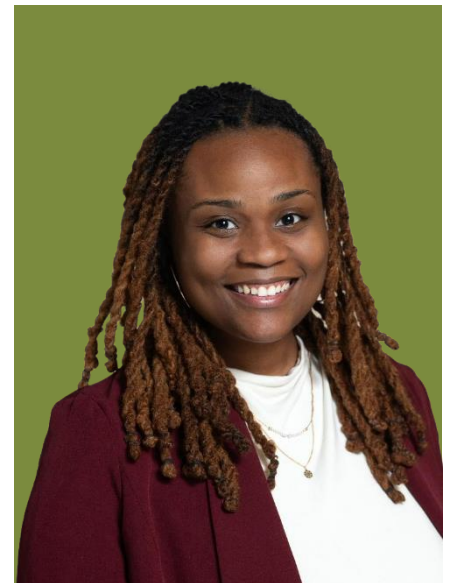
Dr Terrell Odom
Treasurer



Dr Lyla Kohistany
Secretary



Jonathan Röders
Director of Projects & Programs



Dr Brittany Young
Director of Operations



Rimjhim Agrawal

Director of Sustainability



Luke Magyar

Director of Advocacy & Outreach



Emma van den Aakster

Contributing Researcher



Elayna Whiteman

Development Intern

2024 Corioli Summer Fellows Program

Our team's work was supported by 11 exceptional students and young professionals from diverse walks of life: Ameya Sriram, Christopher Ogolla, Dan Futrell, Elayna Whiteman, Emma van Steertegem, Emma Wendt, Gertie Zwick-Schachter, Nicholas Campos, Salma Tageldin, Sean Kingsland, Seri Welsh, and Victoria Choo. Learn more about the program and its impact on page 22.



Board of Advisors



Dr Heidi K. Gardner

Distinguished Fellow at
Harvard Law School
CEO of Gardner & Co.



Dr Ariel Kalil

Behavioral Economist &
Developmental Psychologist
University of Chicago



Dr Crystal Hadnott

Philanthropy Leader & Author
Founder of CH Philanthropy &
Fundraising



Our 2024 Projects

13 countries, 5 continents, 200,000+ people directly impacted





Projects Overview



The "Out of War" project collects and analyzes life histories from formerly armed actors and conflict-affected populations to understand meaningful reintegration and social cohesion in post-conflict contexts. Through in-depth interviews and participatory research, the project examines how individuals navigate the transition from conflict to civilian life, focusing on their lived experiences rather than predetermined metrics.

By exploring personal narratives, the project highlights how former combatants and communities rebuild social bonds, reestablish trust, and create new forms of belonging. This approach acknowledges that successful reintegration and sustainable development cannot be measured solely by institutional standards but must reflect the unique challenges and achievements of those directly affected.

The research centers diverse voices and experiences to develop a nuanced understanding of successful reintegration and social cohesion, emphasizing the complexities of rebuilding lives and communities after conflict. These insights inform policy and program design, enabling interventions that address real needs, remove barriers, and create more effective pathways to lasting peace and reconciliation.

Colombia

Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Rebuilding

In collaboration with Fundación Comité Reconciliación ONG, the Corioli Institute Colombia team conducted 41 life history interviews with formerly armed actors across eight regions of Colombia. The participant group included 13 women (31.7%) and 28 men (68.3%), representing diverse experiences within the conflict, such as former members of guerrilla groups (FARC, ELN, and EPL), paramilitaries (AUC), and Colombian Army veterans. Their narratives revealed complex pathways into and out of armed groups, shaped by factors like recruitment through deception, survival amidst intense violence, and struggles with post-conflict reintegration.



Participants highlighted resilience in the face of stigmatization, barriers to employment, and systemic failures in transitional justice processes. Many found meaning in education, entrepreneurship, and community rebuilding efforts, while others struggled with lasting trauma, social exclusion, and limited institutional support. These findings emphasize the importance of individualized, psychosocially informed reintegration programs to support sustainable peace and social cohesion.

Disengagement and Transition from Gangs

In collaboration with the Universidad de los Andes School of Government, we conducted 25 life history interviews with former gang members in Cali, Colombia. The participant group comprised seven women (28%) and 18 men (72%), whose narratives revealed complex pathways into and out of gang involvement. Their stories highlighted how early exposure to trauma, family instability, and deep-rooted structural inequalities shaped their trajectories toward gang life.

While many participants struggled with substance use and cycles of violence, their narratives also revealed resilience and aspirations for change, particularly through education and professional development. Some found crucial support systems through extended family networks and close friendships. However, their accounts consistently surfaced themes of betrayal, loss, and profound distrust, underscoring how gang involvement creates lasting emotional wounds. These findings point to the need for comprehensive support systems that address both immediate challenges and deeper systemic barriers, recognizing that successful transitions from gang life require multi-faceted, individually tailored interventions.

Ukraine

Resilience and Reintegration in Wartime Ukraine

The Ukraine research program completed 24 in-depth life history interviews with Ukrainian military veterans in 2024. These comprehensive interviews captured rich narratives that illuminate the complex interplay of regional, cultural, and historical factors shaping military service in the country. Veterans' accounts traced their journeys from diverse backgrounds—both urban and rural—through the economic challenges of the post-Soviet era and evolving national identity formation. Their motivations for service reflected a combination of patriotic duty, personal determination, and practical considerations, while their experiences ranged from frontline combat to strategic leadership positions. These valuable testimonies provide crucial insights into the processes of military adaptation, post-service reintegration, and the broader societal impacts of conflict, contributing to our understanding of contemporary Ukrainian resilience and wartime experience.

Somalia

Defection, Reintegration, and Peacebuilding

The Corioli Institute Somalia team collected 16 life history interviews with former al-Shabaab members, revealing diverse trajectories into and out of the group, shaped by coercion, ideological persuasion, and financial necessity. Former members often cited disillusionment with the group's brutality, abuse, and deviation from its purported religious ideals as reasons for leaving. Reintegration experiences varied, with many facing community mistrust and threats from al-Shabaab, but others managed to rebuild their lives through family support, government programs, and peacebuilding efforts. This analysis contributes to an ongoing research and action initiative launched in 2021 that



examines the patterns of defection, disengagement, and reintegration among male and female former al Shabaab members, with findings intended to inform evidence-based international policy and intervention strategies.

Mexico

Recovery and Rehabilitation in the Shadow of the Sinaloa Cartel

Together with local partner organization Comunidad de Sinaí, an addiction rehabilitation center in El Dorado, Sinaloa, we conducted seven life history interviews with former cartel members and victims of the cartel, building on a 2019 series of 17 interviews at the institution. In addition, we worked with SUCEDE – Sociedad en Acción Sinaloa, a social and ecological recovery NGO, to carry out surveys and interviews with over 100 community members in La Reforma, a coastal community affected by severe economic and environmental decline under increasing cartel presence and control.

This research aimed to better understand the struggles and aspirations of a community in the shadow of systemic violence. The study serves as a longitudinal follow-up to a mixed-methods study on family and community dynamics in 2019. That earlier study examined household roles, behaviors, and relationships, particularly among youth, offering insights into cultural norms, familial expectations, and trust. These findings have informed targeted youth prevention and reintegration policies.



Battle Lines & Lifelines

Life Stories in the Aftermath of Violence

The "Battle Lines & Lifelines" project examines how gender shapes experiences of conflict and violence across multiple dimensions - from participation in armed groups to post-conflict recovery and from intimate partner violence to structural exclusion. Through extensive fieldwork, life history interviews, and practical interventions, this research reveals how gender norms and expectations profoundly influence both engagement in violence and pathways toward holistic peace and stability.

Our work illuminates how women in conflict settings navigate a complex web of competing demands—balancing economic survival with domestic caregiving responsibilities while confronting various forms of violence. These overlapping burdens create distinct challenges for survival and recovery while also fostering unique forms of resilience. We explore how these intersecting pressures shape women's trajectories: their experiences with domestic and political violence, their responses to economic



hardship and displacement, and their strategies for rebuilding lives and communities. Notably, women maintain multiple responsibilities while navigating insecurity and scarcity, creating compound forms of physical and emotional strain. Yet these very pressures also catalyze innovative survival strategies and support networks as women forge new forms of solidarity and develop adaptable skillsets that span domestic, economic, and community spheres.

The project demonstrates how traditional gender roles produce fundamentally different experiences of violence and its aftermath for women and men. Women, in particular, face multilayered challenges—often navigating between victimization and agency while maintaining crucial community roles. This complexity is largely overlooked by current interventions, which frequently fail to address women's distinct challenges around childcare, domestic labor, and community stigma. Our research makes clear the urgent need for gender-responsive approaches that tackle both the practical and structural barriers women encounter in building their lives amid and after conflict.

Through deep engagement with personal narratives, this work develops a nuanced understanding of how gender shapes both violent conflict and security. These insights inform more effective, equitable interventions that recognize and respond to the complex gendered realities of life in conflict-affected settings.

Diaries of Displacement from an Informal Settlement

This project documents the lived experiences of 15 women residing in an illegal settlement in Colombia following violent displacement during the internal armed conflict. Over three months, these women maintained daily diary entries, offering an intimate glimpse into their struggles, hopes, and resilience as they navigated the challenges of post-conflict life in the context of ongoing violence and acute vulnerability. By capturing their voices in their own words, the project provides valuable insights into the intersection of gender, displacement, and social reconstruction in a context of profound change.

The manuscripts reveal narratives of resilience amid adversity, with individuals navigating economic hardships, family instability, and caregiving responsibilities while striving for personal growth. Family and community networks provide crucial support, though they are often strained by conflicts and societal expectations, particularly for women balancing multiple roles. Despite emotional struggles, many express aspirations for a better future, emphasizing the importance of education, skill development, and stable social connections to overcome structural inequalities. These rich, longitudinal insights will inform policy and program design recommendations for displaced and violence-affected populations, not only in Colombia but also in comparative settings globally, helping to create more responsive and effective interventions that address the complex needs of communities rebuilding after conflict.

Women-Led Cooperatives Amidst Chronic Insecurity and Social Decline

The Corioli Institute provided critical support to the women-led "Leonor Cuadras" oyster nursery cooperative in La Reforma, Sinaloa, Mexico, a coastal community in the Sea of Cortez grappling with declining fishery economies, environmental degradation, economic hardship, weakened social capital, and an increased presence of organized crime. Women, who face fewer economic opportunities and heightened vulnerabilities to gender-based violence, are disproportionately affected. The cooperative exemplifies the transformative power of gender-focused development in violence-



affected contexts. By combining sustainable aquaculture with economic empowerment, the project not only restores fragile ecosystems but also addresses systemic barriers faced by women, creating pathways for female leadership and broader community cohesion and resilience.

Through a participatory research intervention conducted on the islet where the cooperative operates, the Corioli Institute produced a [comprehensive capacity-building report](#). This resource highlighted the cooperative's initial successes and growth while offering technical guidance on cooperative management and organizational sustainability. This initiative stands as a replicable model for communities navigating the intersecting challenges of cartel presence, environmental degradation, social instability, and economic inequality. We are currently seeking funding to scale this model of oyster nursery cooperatives to a regional level.



Pathways Forward

Prevention, Recovery,
and Sustainable Transitions

The "Pathways Forward" programming line examines how individuals and communities navigate critical transitions and transformations, with a particular focus on justice system involvement, prevention of organized crime, and building pathways to civilian reintegration. Through rigorous mixed-methods research and program evaluation, we study interventions that support successful transitions while identifying systemic barriers and opportunities for reform.

Our work spans multiple contexts—from supporting justice-involved veterans in Chicago through restorative practices and holistic reintegration support, to evaluating forgiveness and reconciliation programs in post-conflict settings, to assessing youth crime prevention initiatives in Ecuador. This diverse portfolio allows us to understand both the unique challenges of specific populations and the common threads that enable successful transitions and sustainable change.

By combining ethnographic approaches with impact evaluation and participatory methods, we develop nuanced insights into what makes prevention and transition programs effective. These findings directly inform policy design and program implementation, helping create evidence-based interventions that address root causes while building individual and community capacity for lasting transformation. Our emphasis on local ownership and context-specific solutions ensures that initiatives are both impactful and sustainable.



Supporting Justice-Involved Veteran Transitions

The Corioli Institute continued its close collaboration with the Office for Military Affiliated Communities (OMAC) at the University of Chicago in support of its Veterans Restorative Justice Project (VRJP), which aims to address the unique needs of justice-involved veterans by fostering healing through restorative practices, promoting reintegration into society, and advocating for policy reforms that support veteran rehabilitation and community engagement. Through ongoing research and assessment, we supported OMAC in growing its holistic health, economic sustainability, and housing work with justice-involved veterans in Cook County, Illinois.

Preparing Women for Post-Incarceration Life

The Corioli Institute partnered with the Comunidad de Sinaí to assess their ESPERE (Schools for Forgiveness and Reconciliation) workshops in women's prisons in Culiacán and Mazatlán, Sinaloa, Mexico. These workshops help incarcerated women process their experiences as both victims and perpetrators of violence, reconcile with others and develop positive habits and behavioral changes. Moreover, the program supports women in creating life plans and preparing for successful post-incarceration trajectories. Through surveys, interviews, and focus groups, the Institute conducted a comprehensive ethnographic and qualitative evaluation. This approach provided deep insights into the workshops' effectiveness, helping ESPERE partners optimize their curriculum, improve program delivery, and demonstrate impact to donors.

The data revealed key themes of empowerment, community support, and resilience. Participants experienced transformative emotional healing, forgiveness, and self-discovery through the program. The sessions built confidence and equipped women with tools for managing trauma and adapting to everyday life in prison. Surveys emphasized the crucial role of mentorship and peer support in participants' personal growth, while the workshops fostered hope and motivation, highlighting how education and adaptability help address both incarceration constraints and systemic barriers. The evaluation demonstrated that ESPERE workshops facilitate positive change beyond the individual by building community cohesion and equipping participants with skills to resist interpersonal adversity and collective despair. These insights validate the program's success and demonstrate that it is a replicable framework for similar interventions in other correctional facilities.

Preventing Youth Recruitment into Serious Organized Crime

TAG International is implementing a groundbreaking project in Guayaquil, Ecuador, that addresses the root causes of youth involvement in serious and organized crime (SOC) through evidence-based prevention interventions in three key localities. The project brings together local authorities and communities to counter SOC threats by focusing on socio-economic drivers, including unemployment, limited educational opportunities, and lack of basic services.

Through capacity-building initiatives and gender-sensitive pilot interventions, the project is strengthening local institutions' ability to implement durable prevention strategies while fostering collaboration between government counterparts and community stakeholders. The Corioli Institute conducted a Deep Dive assessment, examining its early implementation stages through the lens of OECD-DAC criteria: relevance, performance, and sustainability. Using mixed methods including interviews, document review, outcomes harvesting and field visits, the Institute delivered actionable feedback for program improvement.



Rescuing Neighborhood Parks to Foster Safety and Social Cohesion

In 2024, we partnered with Parques Alegres I.A.P., an organization that transforms neglected neighborhood parks in Sinaloa into safer, more inclusive public spaces. Through citizen-led park committees, Parques Alegres empowers communities to take ownership of local parks, fostering collective action and social cohesion while addressing violence, vandalism, and environmental degradation. The Corioli Institute has launched a foundational impact evaluation, beginning with 35 stakeholder interviews and a comprehensive document review to contextualize Parques Alegres' model within global best practices and theoretical frameworks. This initial phase identified gaps and opportunities in the organization's methodologies. The evaluation will assess the organization's approach through large-scale surveys comparing intervention and control groups, interviews, focus groups, and other participatory data collection methods.

Initial findings highlight park revitalization as a catalyst for community building and enhanced resilience in the face of urban insecurity, improving both park safety and usability while strengthening trust and collaboration among residents, enhancing their capacity to maintain these spaces. These insights have helped refine the project's theory of change and informed strategies to optimize program effectiveness. This collaboration contributes to understanding how participatory urban design can address systemic challenges and advance broader goals of sustainable development.



Leading Change

Policy Design,
Implementation,
and Systemic Reform

The "Leading Change" programming line examines how policy design and implementation shape systemic transformation, with a particular focus on transitions from conflict to peace and military to civilian life. Through a combination of policy research, field assessments, and participatory methods, we shape institutions and governance systems to better support individuals and communities navigating complex transitions.

Our work spans multiple scale—from evaluating national security sector reforms to understanding individual experiences of reintegration—allowing us to identify both structural barriers and opportunities for meaningful change. The programming line bridges research and practice through several complementary workstreams: conducting rigorous policy assessments that inform inter-



national actors and national governments; producing research briefs that translate complex findings into actionable recommendations; and facilitating stakeholder dialogues that ensure reforms reflect ground-level realities. This multifaceted approach enables us to support evidence-based policymaking while maintaining focus on the human dimensions of systemic change.

Veteran Reintegration and Security Sector Governance and Reform in Ukraine

In 2024, the Corioli Institute continued its partnership with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (Swedish government development agency) under a five-year framework agreement with the European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments. This collaboration focuses on supporting Ukraine's security sector governance and reform in alignment with EU accession requirements and NATO standards. Building on our fieldwork and the participatory stakeholder conference in 2023, the Institute contributed to the development of an Annex on veteran reintegration, identifying key reform priorities and strategies for the defense sector. In parallel, we released the report "[*Between Frontline and Home Front: Reintegration, Resilience, and Participation Strategies for Ukraine's Veterans*](#)", providing an in-depth analysis and outlining actionable, data-driven strategies for the holistic reintegration and support of Ukrainian veterans and their families.

The findings from both efforts inform how the EU can support critical reforms in Ukraine's defense and reintegration sectors while ensuring alignment with NATO and other partners. Additionally, as part of this framework, we initiated a series of policy documents focusing on political, economic, and social reintegration, alongside the gendered dimensions of military-civilian transitions, paving the way for continued work in 2025. This combined research and analysis highlights the critical need for participatory, sustainable approaches to reintegration, positioning the Corioli Institute as a key contributor to supporting Ukraine's veterans and advancing its broader security and resilience goals.

Trust After Betrayal Research Brief Series

The *Trust After Betrayal Research Brief Series* investigates how trust is broken and rebuilt across contexts - from intimate relationships to broader societal systems - drawing on insights from psychology, sociology, political science, and conflict studies. Through rigorous analysis of empirical research and practitioner experience, the series reveals universal patterns and context-specific dynamics in how individuals and communities navigate betrayal, attempt repair, and rebuild sustainable trust. Each brief translates complex research into actionable insights, offering evidence-based strategies for fostering resilience and reconciliation in environments shaped by conflict, systemic injustice, and institutional failures. By bridging academic theory and practical application, the series provides policymakers and practitioners nuanced frameworks for strengthening social cohesion and repairing trust at multiple levels—from grassroots initiatives to institutional reforms.



The Climate Change, Conflict, and Migration Nexus

Humans and Their Life Source after Occupation

This research project examines the ongoing human and environmental impacts of post-occupation violence in Northern Iraq, focusing on two key dimensions: patterns of violent deaths (including massacres, assassinations, and femicides) and the relationship between water scarcity and internal conflict. The study employs an illustrative case study approach grounded in peace continuum theory in a partnership between the United States Air Force Academy and the Corioli Institute. The methodology combines semi-structured interviews, field observations, and archival analysis to document both quantitative trends and qualitative experiences at individual, familial, and community levels to inform policy recommendations for more effective post-occupation peacebuilding strategies. The project addresses a critical gap in understanding how resource degradation and historical violence continue to shape conflict dynamics in post-occupation settings, with particular attention to the human cost of Iraq's ongoing "residual war."

Migration, Environment, and Climate Change in Eastern Africa and the Arab Region

Corioli Institute researchers supported deepening the evidence base and delivering [data-driven policy and program recommendations](#) for international development, humanitarian, and policy audiences throughout the Arab Region and Eastern Africa.

- **Saudi Arabia Border Governance Study:** Assessing the impacts of climate-induced migration on border management systems across the Arab region to develop evidence-based policy recommendations and implementation frameworks.
- **Jordan Climate Change Adaptation:** Supporting the Ministry of Environment's implementation of the National Adaptation Plan through integrated research, training, and capacity building that enables local leaders to design and deliver gender-sensitive climate adaptation measures for vulnerable populations.
- **Sudan Security-Climate Assessment:** Examining the intersection of climate change, environmental degradation, conflict, and displacement in Gedaref through participatory community-based research and mapping focused on sustainable resource management.



The project emphasizes women and youth leadership in building local resilience while strengthening evidence-based approaches to disaster risk reduction and conflict prevention.

- **Kenya Climate-Mobility Evaluation:** Assessing the impact and sustainability of climate resilience programming in Kenya's arid lands through an endline evaluation examining how interventions have strengthened local capacity to address climate-induced displacement and resource competition in Garissa and Turkana Counties, with particular focus on evidence-based approaches and government ownership.
- **MENA Climate-Security Research:** Leading research and analysis to examine the climate-security nexus and forced displacement in conflict-affected areas of the MENA region, with focus on water scarcity and community cohesion. Through literature reviews, case studies, and stakeholder engagement, the initiative strengthened the evidence base for climate-sensitive programming while building regional capacity for disaster risk reduction.
- **Women Development Organization Chapter Contribution:** Leading research analyzing how gender shapes vulnerability and resilience within the climate change-conflict-migration nexus across the MENA region, with a focus on women's experiences of disaster displacement, livelihood loss, and water scarcity to inform gender-responsive policy development across the Arab Region.
- **Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Arab Region Chapter Contribution:** Leading a research team in the collaborative drafting of a chapter examining the complex nexus of climate change, disasters, and human mobility in the Arab region, with a focus on disaster displacement trends, policy frameworks, and challenges across different contexts including conflict-affected areas, non-fragile states, and Gulf Cooperation Council countries. Examining thematic intersections, including water scarcity, food security, gender, and heat impacts, to provide evidence-based recommendations for averting displacement while strengthening resilience and regional cooperation.



Bridges to Impact

Cultivating Leaders for Transformative Change

The Corioli Institute Summer Fellows Program

The Summer Fellows Program cultivates the next generation of leaders by providing extraordinary access to primary data, fieldwork opportunities, and tailored professional development. Through hands-on experience and mentorship, fellows gain the skills, knowledge, and networks necessary to drive meaningful change. The program creates a dynamic exchange where fellows contribute fresh perspectives to the Corioli Institute's work while developing their own expertise and leadership capabilities.

In its inaugural year, the 2024 cohort brought together 12 talented individuals from two continents who made significant contributions across the Institute's portfolio. Fellows supported community safety initiatives in Sinaloa Cartel-controlled neighborhoods, advanced multiple projects examining conflict, climate change, and migration in the MENA region, published in leading platforms like *War on the Rocks* and *Small Wars Journal*, and conducted legal and policy research on Afghan National Army Special Operations Command (ANASOC) immigration pathways into the US.

The cohort's impact extended beyond research to include developing a social media strategy, advocacy plans, a book proposal, and the program's own standard operating procedures. Several fellows transitioned into academic-year internships, ensuring continued collaboration and knowledge exchange. Through these diverse achievements, the program demonstrated its dual value - advancing the Institute's mission while providing fellows with transformative professional experiences that will shape their future leadership in the field.



After/Shocks

Moral Injury and Trauma

The "After/Shocks" programming line is in its inception phase, focusing on the profound impacts of moral injury and trauma among military veterans. This initiative has engaged the public through a series of dialogues with special operations and conventional veterans, fostering critical discussions about their lived experiences, and forming collaborative relationships with academic, government, and other non-profits to chart the way forward. The program is currently advancing research and planning efforts to explore innovative strategies for understanding and addressing the psychological and emotional challenges faced by veterans, with the aim of informing future interventions and support systems.



Our Year in Numbers

Projects & Impact

7 Active Programming Lines

17 Active Projects in **13 countries**

211,162 Individuals Served

482,000,000 in **29 Countries**

Indirectly Impacted through Policy Work

Knowledge Transfer

25 Publications
and Media Appearances

55 Conferences, Events
and other Engagements

11 Trainings Held

15 Fellows/Mentees Supported

4 Regional Policy Frameworks Influenced





Data Collected

361 Interviews

180 Survey Responses

83 Focus Group Discussions

65 Ethnographic Walks

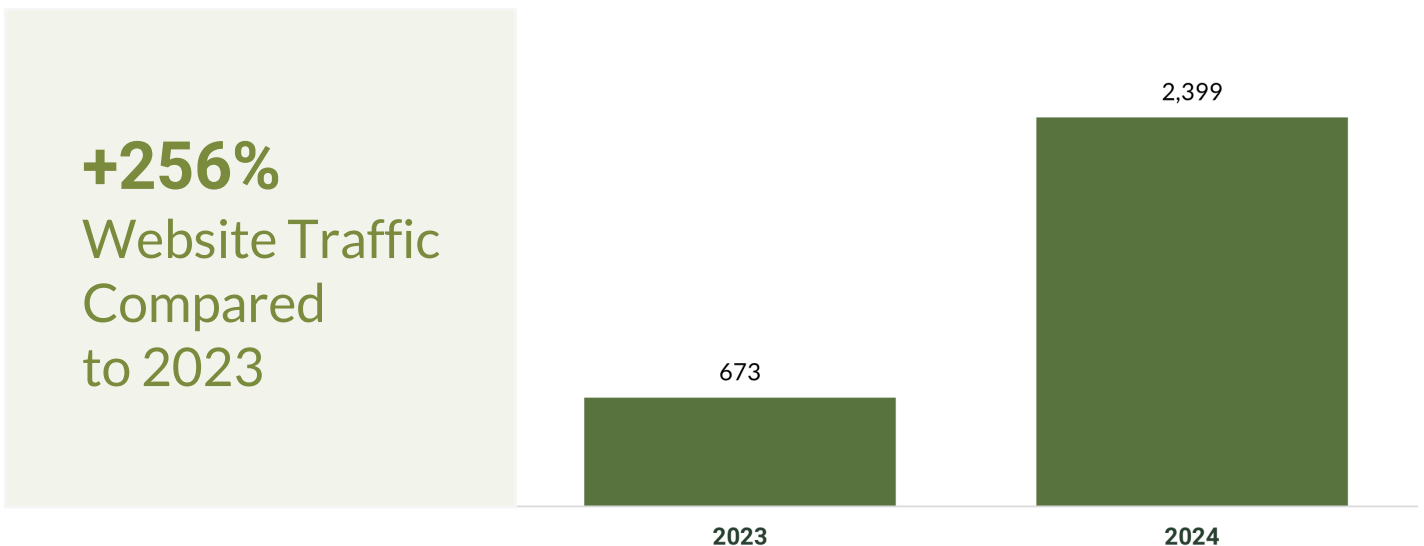
38 Community Mapping Exercises

Reach

1,007 Email Engagements

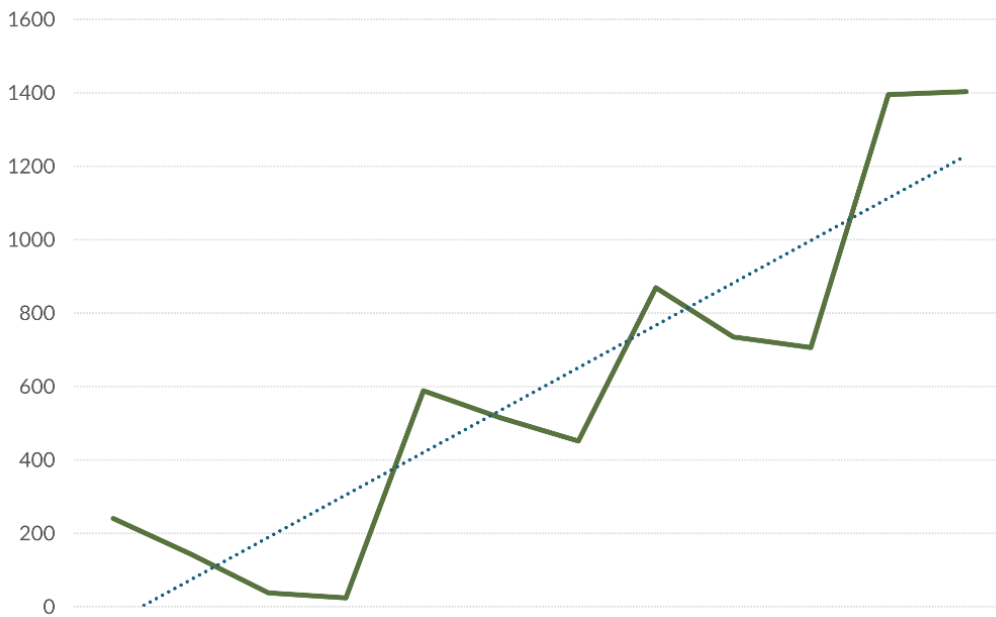
2,399 Website Sessions from **75** Countries

1,363 Unique Website Visitors





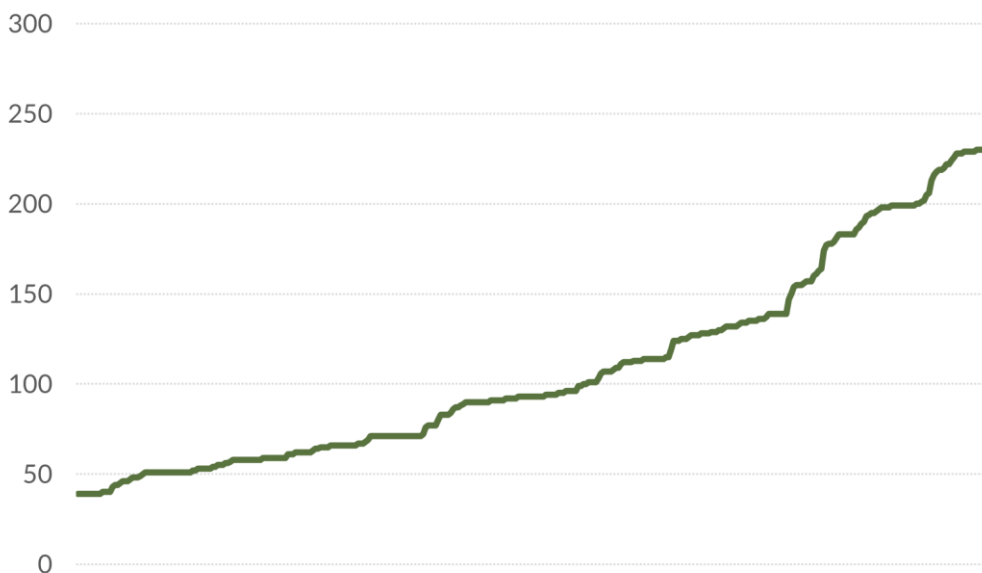
Social Media Impressions



+17.3%

Average
Monthly
Growth
Rate

Social Media Followers



+15.8%

Average
Monthly
Growth
Rate

“The team at the Institute were wonderful teachers who expanded my knowledge of policy and advocacy work while helping me work towards my own professional goals.”

2024 Summer Fellow Sean Kingsland



Financials

The Institute demonstrated robust financial growth in fiscal year 2024, with total revenue and support reaching \$138,898—up from \$2,265 in our inaugural year 2023. This expansion was primarily driven by philanthropic contributions totaling \$102,326, supplemented by \$14,850 in grant funding. Program-related revenue streams generated an additional \$21,722, reflecting successful implementation of our revenue diversification strategy.

Revenue and Support	2023	2024
Donations	\$2,250	\$102,326
Grants	-	\$14,850
Other Income	\$15	\$19,567
Total Revenue and Support	\$2,265	\$136,743
Expenses		
Program Services	\$2,000	\$78,381
Management and General	-	\$6,885
Fundraising	-	\$2,500
Total Expenses	\$ 2,000	\$87,938
Change in Net Assets		
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	-	\$265
Net Assets, End of Year	\$265	\$49,070

Operational expenditures were strategically deployed to advance the Institute's mission and research objectives. Program services expenditures increased to \$97,586 from \$2,000 in the prior year, accounting for 91.3% of total expenses. Administrative overhead remained lean at \$6,790, while strategic investments in fundraising totaled \$2,500. This expenditure pattern reflects our commitment to maximizing mission impact while maintaining operational efficiency.



Financial Position

The Institute concluded fiscal year 2024 with net assets of \$32,286, marking a significant strengthening of our financial position from \$265 in the previous year. This enhanced capital structure provides a foundation for expanding our research initiatives while maintaining appropriate operating reserves. The substantial improvement in our financial position enables the Institute to pursue expanded programming and deeper engagement in our core policy areas while ensuring long-term organizational sustainability.

Operational Efficiency and Performance Metrics

The Institute maintained exceptional operational efficiency in fiscal year 2024, with key performance indicators demonstrating strong financial stewardship and resource allocation. Program expenses comprised 91% of total expenditures, substantially exceeding industry benchmarks and reflecting our steadfast commitment to maximizing mission impact through direct program activities.

Fundraising operations demonstrated remarkable efficiency with a cost of \$0.02 per dollar raised, enabling the organization to direct the maximum possible resources toward research and policy initiatives. Administrative overhead was maintained at 6% of total expenses, reflecting disciplined cost management while ensuring robust operational infrastructure.

These metrics underscore the Institute's successful execution of its financial strategy, combining prudent resource management with aggressive pursuit of mission objectives. This operational model positions the organization to sustain and expand its research and action impact while maintaining the highest standards of financial responsibility.

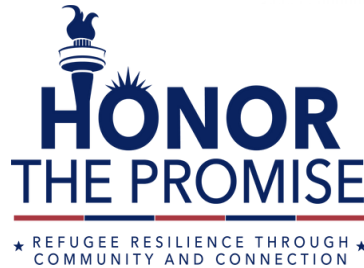
Efficiencies		Target	Actual
Program Efficiency	≥	65%	89%
Fundraising Efficiency	≤	\$0.20	\$0.02
Administrative Efficiency	≤	35%	8%

Strategic Financial Outlook

In fiscal year 2025, the Institute will implement a comprehensive revenue diversification strategy to build upon our current financial foundation. While individual and institutional donations have provided robust support for our work, we recognize the importance of developing balanced revenue streams to ensure long-term sustainability. Our strategic plan emphasizes expanding our grant portfolio through enhanced engagement with foundations aligned with our strategic priorities while simultaneously developing our consultancy services to leverage our policy expertise. This three-pillar approach—encompassing philanthropic support, grant funding, and consultancy revenue—will strengthen our financial resilience and support the continued expansion of our research initiatives.



Partners & Collaborators



Escuela de Gobierno
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BROWN



FOLKE
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ACADEMY

SWEDISH AGENCY FOR PEACE, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT



The Road Ahead

The Corioli Institute transforms how societies recover from violence by integrating research with direct action. Through deep engagement with lived experience and systems-level analysis, we generate evidence-based solutions for sustainable peace and security. Partnering with government, civil society, and the private sector, we develop comprehensive, lasting approaches. Our "radical participation" model elevates those most affected by violence from subjects to co-creators of knowledge and solutions.

From formerly armed actors to policymakers, these perspectives reshape conflict resolution. We embody this by creating pathways for violence-affected populations to become researchers, fellows, and leaders. Our work spans reintegration journeys to national security reforms, connecting personal narratives to policy change. Across diverse contexts—from the U.S. to Ukraine, Colombia, and Somalia—local leadership defines both challenges and solutions.

Operating Context

In 2025, global security dynamics challenge and validate our approach. Ongoing wars in Ukraine and Sudan and the reclassification of cartels as Foreign Terrorist Organizations blur traditional conflict boundaries, requiring new reintegration and security strategies. The climate-conflict-migration nexus is central to security. Climate-induced livelihood loss increases vulnerability to armed group recruitment, while militaries balance security and disaster response. Resource conflicts—over water and arable land—are intensifying in Yemen and Sudan. These dynamics, coupled with regional tensions, demand integrated security and resilience approaches.

Methodologically, we refine how ethnographic insights inform policy. Our ethnographic walk methodology reaches historically inaccessible populations, while our data collection in insecure contexts sets new standards. We also explore AI's potential while maintaining ethical standards and participant protection. In the U.S., shifting political landscapes bring challenges and opportunities. Potential changes in aid priorities require adaptability. In response, we deepen in-region partnerships, decolonize funding practices, and invest in local research capacity, ensuring resilient programming less dependent on traditional aid structures.

Funding Landscape

Peacebuilding funding is shifting. Civilian initiatives face declining support, with Official Development Assistance to fragile regions at its lowest since 2016. Humanitarian funding forecasts remain bleak, with few major donors increasing commitments.

The international community is exploring innovative financing. The UN Secretary-General's call for fresh approaches has spurred flexible, impact-driven funding mechanisms. There is growing momentum for higher-quality financing, urging donors to adopt participatory, accessible models that better serve local peacebuilders. Improved donor coordination is enhancing efficiency. Despite these efforts, funding for war-to-peace transitions remains a challenge. As 2025 approaches, the global community must bridge this gap to sustain peace initiatives worldwide.



Strategy 2025: Building Bridges for Collaborative Solutions – Growth, Dialogue, Partnership

Integrated Impact

In 2025, the Corioli Institute will focus on strengthening social bonds fractured by conflict through an approach we call "Integrated Impact." This strategy bridges divides between research and action, external and local expertise, and theoretical frameworks and practical tools. By co-creating solutions with conflict-affected communities, we ensure that our programs remain deeply relevant to local needs while maximizing donor investments through sustainable, locally owned initiatives. Our commitment to translating rigorous research into actionable policy is reflected in our Evidence to Impact Initiative, which integrates multi-layered stakeholder consultation. By engaging community leaders, policymakers, and practitioners, we ensure our recommendations address real-world challenges while expanding our global network. At the same time, we will prioritize developing local leadership, drawing on our Summer Fellows Program to train researchers from conflict-affected communities who can bridge global and local knowledge in transformative ways.

To further advance our mission, we are pioneering a framework for measuring social cohesion in post-conflict settings. Social cohesion is widely recognized as crucial for reintegration, yet it remains poorly defined and rarely measured systematically. Our framework, set to launch in 2026, will analyze ethnographic data to identify universal social cohesion markers while allowing flexibility for local adaptation. This participatory approach ensures communities define their own cohesion indicators, making the tool practical for both policy and programming. By combining empirical rigor with local participation, we aim to create a tool that not only advances scholarly understanding but also serves as a meaningful assessment mechanism on the ground.

Partnering for Sustainable Growth

As we strengthen our programmatic impact, we are equally committed to securing a sustainable financial foundation. In 2025, we will focus on expanding our foundation partnerships by integrating community-led initiatives with systems-level policy engagement. This positioning allows the Institute to serve as a bridge between grassroots innovation and institutional transformation, attracting funders who seek to support sustainable transitions from violence. Alongside this, we will maintain a robust grants pipeline, securing multi-year awards that ensure programmatic stability while fostering long-term organizational growth. Our strategic approach to funding also includes expanding our sustainable revenue streams by leveraging our expertise in consulting services and launching an innovative case study series. This series will examine the complexities of rebuilding social fabric and strengthening



resilience in violence-affected communities, drawing on our extensive field experience and research. Designed for policymakers, practitioners, and academic institutions, these cases will explore reintegration, resilience-building, governance challenges, and trauma-informed approaches. To maximize both accessibility and sustainability, we will implement a tiered distribution model, ensuring that core insights are freely available while generating revenue through premium content tailored for academic institutions.

Thematic and Geographic Priorities

The Corioli Institute's 2025 strategy prioritizes areas where our methodological expertise and lived experience can generate the greatest impact. Our work will center on four key thematic areas. First, we will deepen our focus on justice-involved formerly armed actors, building on our work with veterans, former gang members, and individuals associated with non-state armed groups. This effort recognizes that reintegration requires addressing both immediate practical needs and deeper systemic barriers while fostering community acceptance. Second, we will advance our research on women's experiences in conflict and violence, acknowledging the ways in which gender shapes participation in armed groups and transition pathways. This work, informed by projects like "Battle Lines & Lifelines," explores the intersection of economic survival, community rebuilding, and intergenerational trauma.

Third, we will strengthen our efforts to prevent recruitment into transnational organized crime by expanding upon our youth-focused interventions in Ecuador, Colombia, and El Salvador. Our approach combines rigorous research on recruitment patterns with community-led prevention strategies that build resilience against organized crime influences. Finally, we will expand our work in environmental peacebuilding, reflecting the growing recognition of climate change's role in conflict and displacement. By examining how environmental degradation intersects with existing tensions and identifying opportunities for environmental cooperation, we seek to foster peace through sustainable resource management.

Geographically, we will concentrate our efforts in four strategic regions where we have strong partnerships and demonstrated impact. Latin America remains a cornerstone of our work, particularly in Colombia, Mexico, and Ecuador, where our deep community relationships and successful programs provide a strong foundation for expanded impact. In Sudan, we will build on our multi-sector participatory engagement to address the complex intersection of environmental change, conflict, and displacement, with an eye toward reintegration pathways for those exiting the current conflict. In Ukraine, we will continue supporting veteran reintegration and security sector reform while developing new initiatives that respond to evolving post-conflict needs. In the United States, we will expand our justice-involved veteran support programs while developing new approaches to community resilience, holistic health, moral injury, and trauma-informed research that can inform both domestic policy and global practice.

This focused geographic strategy allows us to deepen existing partnerships while developing scalable approaches that can be adapted to other contexts. Concentrating resources in these regions ensures that our work remains grounded in local realities and led by affected communities. Through these strategic priorities, we continue advancing our mission of improving security and reintegration outcomes while remaining true to our values of transformative leadership, evidence-based innovation, and radical participation. By building bridges between research and action, global and local perspectives, and theory and practice, we create sustainable pathways to peace in violence-affected communities worldwide.



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Research. Reintegrate. Rebuild.