

controlled by a small number of large corporate interests and their political allies, or whether human communities, in all their variety, will retain vital and resilient relationships to their local and regional environments?

The way this great question is answered in the economic and political practice of communities around the world will determine, to a large extent, the fate of the commons and the quality of human life in the future.

Perhaps we have now come to a “teachable moment” with respect to the commons and the ethic of stewardship. Perhaps the overreach of corporate interests and,

in response, the world wide movement of indigenous and community based cultures asserting their right to exist, marks a turning point and a new opening in the struggle for the commons and the practice of right relationship.

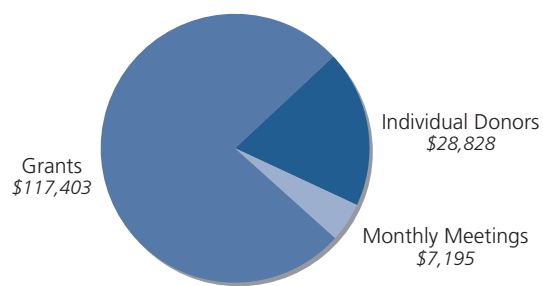
Your help is needed.

This emerging work on the commons is exciting and promising. To move it forward, QIAP needs the financial support of individuals like you who are concerned about how our inter-dependent world is lived in and governed. **We welcome your support.**

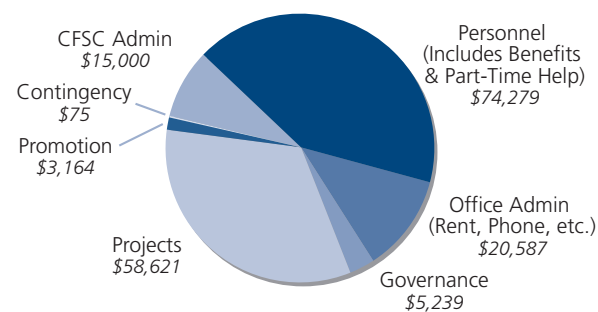
## Financial Report 2007-08

The Quaker International Affairs Programme (QIAP) is funded by Canadian Quakers, groups and individuals, and grants from foundations and governments for specific projects. QIAP is under the care of the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC). Funds for QIAP are raised separately from CFSC. Audited financial statements are available through CFSC.

### Revenue \$153,426.00



### Expenditures \$176,965.00



QIAP has one full time staff person and occasional supplementary staffing. Committee members, and other Friends, contribute many hours of volunteer work that are not reflected in the financial statement. To fulfill our work plan in the coming year **we must raise \$85,000 in undesignated donations. To give, please see the enclosed donor form.**

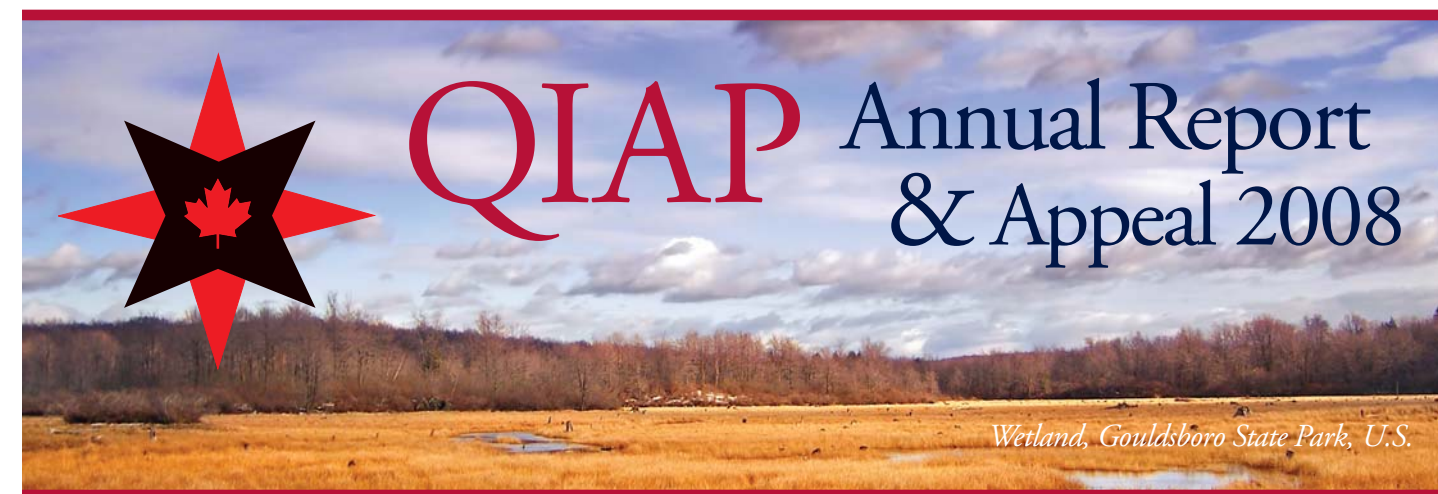
We are deeply grateful to individual donors and Quaker Meetings who make our work possible through in-kind and financial donations. We also thank the following organizations for their support:

- International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (DGIS)
- Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), Geneva
- UK Department For International Development (DfID)



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## Programme Highlights 2007-08

### Publication of Book

On January 21, 2008 the Quaker International Affairs Programme (QIAP) launched the book *The Future Control of Food: A Guide to International Negotiations and Rules on Intellectual Property, Biodiversity and Food Security* at meetings of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in Geneva. The book is the first wide-ranging guide to the key issues of intellectual property and ownership, genetics, biodiversity, and food security. Book launches were also held in Canada at the Munk Centre for International Studies in Toronto and at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Ottawa. IDRC assisted



Co-editors and contributing author at IDRC book launch.

the book was promoted by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity as part of the International Day of Biological Diversity. As a result of demand, IDRC is now financing a Spanish translation of the book with

QIAP in financing and producing the book.

The book is a culmination of three years of collaborative work carried out with a wide range of stakeholders. Since its release the book has taken on a life of its own. In May,

the book was promoted by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity as part of the International Day of Biological Diversity. As a result of demand, IDRC is now financing a Spanish translation of the book with

Mundi Prensa in Spain (publication in early 2009).

The book is available for free on the internet and 2000 complimentary copies were distributed by QIAP and IDRC to stakeholders in developing countries. Still, demand has been such that it has already gone into a second printing since it was released.

### Dialogues

Two dialogues on intellectual property issues as they relate to biodiversity, food security and future scenarios were held with UN secretariat staff from different UN bodies and negotiators from the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) at the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). QIAP also facilitated a side event at the 11th Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome in October 2007 on “Strategies and Principles of Successful Resource Mobilization.”

Continued on next page...

This book is freely available online in HTML and XML formats on IDRC's website at:

[http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-118094-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-118094-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

To order copies from UBC Press or Earthscan - visit QIAP website for details on a 20% discount at:

<http://www.qiap.ca>

## What They're Saying About the Book:

*"This book, by far the best one available in the field, is not just a fine piece of research on a complex subject; it is also a convincing indictment of a growing tendency to privatize knowledge related to agricultural production, through a web of interrelated instruments and processes which have developed without being subject to adequate public scrutiny."*

**Olivier De Schutter**

**UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food**

*"I came upon the 'Future Control of Food' at the meetings of the CBD Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) Working Group 6 in Geneva. I was there as a resource person for the African negotiators. On returning to South Africa I read the book from cover to cover marveling at how incredibly useful and accessible it is. It will in many ways significantly add to my capacity as a lawyer working with indigenous communities on ABS issues and as a resource person for the African negotiators. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the QIAP and you for putting the book together. Keep up the excellent work."*

**Kabir Sanjay Bavikatte, Lawyer**

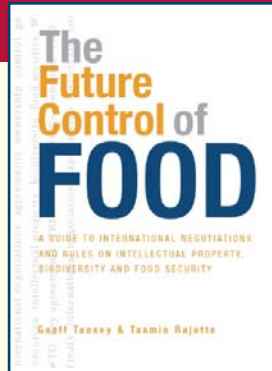
**Natural Justice (Lawyers for Communities and the Environment) - Cape Town, South Africa**

*"We got the books! Thank you so much! My colleagues are enjoying reading it - they say it provides a one-stop shop of the different issues and platforms related to genetic resources and food. Congratulations! We have started distributing it to organizations working on the food issue here in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia."*

**Wilhelmina 'Ditdit' Pelegrina, Executive Director Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment.**

*"I just wanted to thank you and commend the QIAP for the initiative of producing 'The Future Control of Food.' It is an excellent - and very important - contribution to the current debate on intellectual property rights, biodiversity and food security. ... It will serve me a great deal, and will stay in our reference library for the colleagues who replace me in the future."*

**Representative of Brazil to FAO**



## Programme Highlights 2007-08 Continued

### Other publications

Four of our background papers (Patents, trade and health; Patents, trade and food; Patents, trade and development; and Patents and Quaker action) have been translated into Arabic and are now available on QIAP's website and the website of the Library of Alexandria in Cairo, Egypt—the main gateway for information in the Arabic world.

### Office move

In June, the QIAP office moved down one floor within the same building to a larger space that can better facilitate dialogues and meetings. The Quaker Peace and Sustainable Communities Committee (QPASC) of the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) also moved in and now shares the space with QIAP. We are very excited about the possibilities the new space creates for QIAP and QPASC and in supporting the work of other CFSC programs when an Ottawa location is needed.



*Gianne Broughton,  
QPASC staff*



*Tasmin Rajotte,  
QIAP staff*

### Looking Ahead: Work on the Commons

QIAP is in the midst of a transition phase from working on intellectual property issues as they relate to food security and biodiversity to work on "the commons." Historically, the commons has referred to shared resources such as forests, land and grazing systems, water management and fisheries. New commons, however, are emerging in reaction to higher intellectual property standards, new technologies and privatization that include knowledge, genetic data, and open source software, to mention a few. This year, QIAP has embarked upon a scoping study on the commons to discern what the specific focus of the work should be. This study involves consultations with stakeholders, research, the production of several papers and facilitating a dialogue on different aspects of the commons.

*Staff photos courtesy: Carol Dixon*

## Awakening to the Reality of the Commons

By Keith Helmuth, Associate Member of QIAP Committee



*Sheep on the meseta, Spain*

Awakening to the reality of the commons is creating a renewal in our spiritual life. The renewal of our spiritual life is, in turn, advancing the stewardship of the commons.

Some years ago on the CBC programme, "Ideas" cultural historian and Dominican priest, Gregory Baum, asked the question; "What is the preeminent spiritual discovery of the 20th Century?" He answered this question with an expression of right relationship that has deep resonance within the Religious Society of Friends. He offered that the emerging consciousness of "human solidarity" has been opened to us as a fundamental spiritual discovery.

When George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, said he "lived in that life and power that takes away the occasion for all war" he was expressing the same sense of spiritual discovery that Gregory Baum calls "human solidarity."

To be fully awakened and fully deployed, human solidarity must be grounded in the reality of the commons.

The reality of the commons is revealed to us in two forms; the plentitude of Earth's overarching life support processes, and the cultural arrangements of knowledge and skills that support flourishing human communities.

Grounding in ecological integrity is an essential step on the path to a fully realized solidarity with of Earth's commonwealth of life. Grounding in cooperation, sharing, and nurture is essential for the deployment of knowledge and skills according to this fully realized solidarity.

Awakening to the commons as the field of action in which solidarity and right relationship are made real, and in which equity is a guide and measure, is a never-ending opening for Friends' work in the world.

Unfortunately, this ethic of solidarity and right relationship, and its grounding in the commons, is not yet recognized in a way that "takes away the occasion for war." The ethic of competition, domination, and wealth accumulation is still seen by some elements of our society as an acceptable way to organize economic and social relationships. An attitude of grasping instead of sharing dominates many of the large corporate structures of economic life.

The commons are now increasingly vulnerable to expropriation by powerful corporate interests as they roam the Earth seeking opportunities to advance their



*Vines protected from wind, Lanzarote in the Atlantic Ocean.*

mission of wealth accumulation. This mission recognizes no limit on what it has the self-assigned "right" to take over and exploit. Both the natural commons of Earth's life support processes and the cultural commons of knowledge and skills are seen as "resources" for exploitation. The structural violence of great inequity that accompanies this exploitation, and the overt violence of emerging "resource wars" are increasingly prominent.

The human prospect now includes the question of whether access to the means of life will be increasingly