



LATIN AMERICA BUREAU

Achievements and Performance Report



2023-2024



Introduction

Dear LAB Supporters and Readers,

It's a great pleasure to share with you the report of highlights from LAB's 2023/2024 financial year, showcasing the great variety of work we've produced in this period. We are privileged in the quality and commitment of our volunteers who contribute much of our capacity and output, ably coordinated by our Managing Editor Rebecca Wilson.

We are very proud of our ongoing publishing programme, as well as of a whole range of in-person and online events and collaborations with grassroots activists and universities. We continue to develop innovative ways to publish books, working closely with authors, researchers, and translators to bring quality non-fiction (and occasionally fiction) to the widest possible readership.

Our outreach is supported by an active online presence, with our website growing in readers and reach, as well as connecting to thousands via social media channels.

We also continue to develop new ways to support the dissemination of academic research and support individual researchers in improving the impact of their work. LAB continues to thrive and develop through successful collaborations and we welcome inquiries about potential joint projects with a wide range of organisations that align with LAB's mission to share analysis of the politics of Latin America from the perspective of social justice organisations in the region.

Do share this report with your networks and join us in our work via collaboration or donations.

Thank you for celebrating our achievements with us!

Warmly,

Marci López Levy, Chair of LAB Council



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BOOKS

Overview



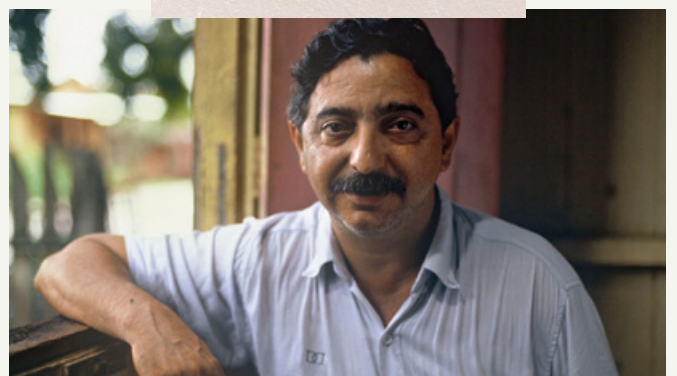
Our partnership with Practical Action Publishing, in place since 2014, is key to LAB's work. Approximately 126 books in LAB's back catalogue have been digitized and made available to download or print-on-demand from the PAP website. All new LAB titles since 2014 have been co-publications, with LAB commissioning, editing and promoting, and PAP producing, publishing and distributing the books in both print and ebook formats. We now use Ingram Books as our worldwide distributor and are able to arrange local (on-demand) printing of all titles.

Book launches and regular events have provided numerous opportunities for mounting bookstalls selling recent LAB books. Although significant challenges for organization remain, Bill McLelland and Lizzy Sanders have done a brilliant job at getting LAB books to UK readers in person. We have a range of titles on sale at Housmans bookshop in North London and are seeking similar arrangements elsewhere.

Translation rights were signed for LAB book *Chico Mendes – In His Own Words* including a Korean translation and a Bengali translation by Pritilata Biswas. Biswas lives in Chennai, a city in southern India where local activists who had set up the Jessore Road Gachh Banchao (Save the Tree) Committee were anxious to find inspiration and precedents in other countries.

They came across the name of Chico Mendes, the Brazilian rubber-tapper and Amazon defender, and were inspired by the book LAB published in 1990.

Rights to a Chinese edition of *Crossed Off the Map* have been signed, with publication expected in 2025.



BOOKS



The Heart of Our Earth: Community Resistance to Mining in Latin America, by Tom Gatehouse

This book was launched in March 2023, at the close of our previous financial year. Rebecca Wilson organized promotion, which was partly paid for by a grant from the NSCCT. Approximately 160 copies were sold (in all formats) in the first nine months. Author Tom Gatehouse did a number of speaking engagements, including: a LAB webinar (in Spanish, Portuguese and English) on Mining and Environmental Justice, with speakers from Argentina, Ecuador and Brazil; the Resisting Mining Bookclub (organized by London Mining Network); an event at London bookshop Morocco Bound; to the Anglo-Bolivian Society; to a local group campaigning against proposals to mine tin and lithium at Wheal Vor in Cornwall. The website for the book remains active and is updated with new posts about mining in the region. [View the project report.](#)

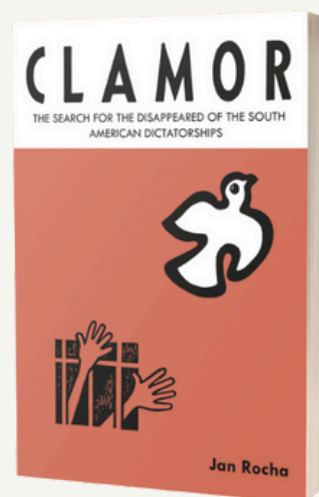


Tom Gatehouse discusses the book and the (erroneous) concept of 'sustainable mining' at Morocco Bound Bookshop in London.

Clamor: the search for the disappeared of the South American dictatorships, by Jan Rocha

Written by LAB's São Paulo correspondent Jan Rocha, and published in April 2023, this book complements our 2016 title K, by Bernardo Kucinski. It was launched at Lumen, London, to engaged audience of old and new LAB readers.

Clamor describes the work of the human rights organization Clamor, set up by Jan Rocha and others in 1977 with backing from the Catholic Church. Initially focused on the disappeared prisoners of Brazil, it swiftly extended to cover Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina and Chile. It was instrumental in tracking down children seized from parents who were imprisoned and illegally adopted by military families. It also investigated Operation Condor, the coordination of intelligence services of the southern cone dictators.



BOOKS



Moving Forward: Seeing health, care, and violence through the eyes of displaced Venezuelan women in Brazil, by Pía Riggiozzi, Bruna Curcio, Natalia Cintra, and Tallullah Lines

Moving Forward, published 2023, is a photobook by Pía Riggiozzi, Bruna Curcio, Tallullah Lines, and Natalia Cintra offering an insight into the experiences of migrant women and girls. LAB edited and published the book in two bilingual editions: one in English/Spanish and another in Portuguese/Spanish. Both versions are also available Open Access (for free) online. LAB promoted the book and the accompanying documentary film of the same name (subtitled by LAB) at festivals including Sisterhood Festival, Migration Matters Festival and the London Spanish Book and Zine Fair. The doc was shortlisted for Best Foreign Documentary at World Roman Pictures Network's (WRPN) Women's International Film Festival.

Crossed Off The Map: Travels in Bolivia, by Shafik Meghji

Shafik Meghji has continued to promote *Crossed Off the Map* energetically. It was shortlisted for the Edward Stanford Travel Book of the Year 2023 and a further 214 copies (in all formats) were

sold during the year. Total sales in all formats reached 805 copies by May 2024. LAB sold the rights for a Chinese translation, which is due to be published in 2025. An extract from the book will also be included in an anthology of South American travel writing published by Bradt in 2025.



Women Resisting Violence: Voices and experiences from Latin America, by the Women Resisting Violence Collective

This LAB book, published in English in November 2022 was translated into Spanish and Portuguese by a team of feminist translators from all over Latin America and has now been published Open Access by Cita Press, based in the USA. The Portuguese edition is to be published by Jandaíra (Brazil) in 2025.

BOOKS

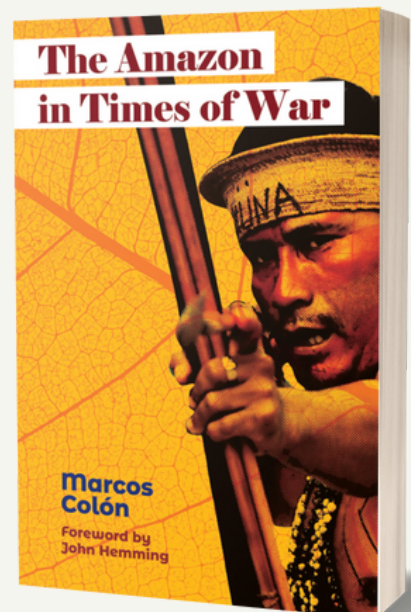


The Amazon in Times of War with Marcos Colón (Arizona State University)

LAB collaborated with US academic and Amazon expert Marcos Colón, to edit, publish and promote his book *The Amazon in Times of War*, published in October 2024. The book is a collection of essays inspired by the author's travels around the Amazon region and his research at the State Universities of Florida and Arizona and at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism & Mass Communication.

LAB is organized a UK tour in which Colón visited the universities of Cambridge, Edinburgh, St. Andrews, King's College London and UCL. There was also be a launch event in London with an exhibition of photographs from the book and a panel discussion alongside speakers from Kayeb*, Survival International and Brazil Matters, and a focus on UK and US promotion and marketing activities.

*Kayeb is a new platform designed to change narratives about Amazonia and its people, supporting and empowering local communities from the region to have a voice in discussions about climate change, social inequalities, and the future of the forest.



Vanessa Gabriel, Ali Rocha, Fiona Watson and Marcos Colón at the launch of *The Amazon in Times of War*

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PROJECTS



LAB has continued to develop and expand its partnerships with university researchers, offering a range of services including website design, podcast production, event organisation, publishing, subtitling and editorial and training services. We now have contacts with the universities of Cardiff, East Anglia, Essex, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester, Northumbria, Reading, West of England; London's King's College, Metropolitan University, School of Economics, Queen Mary and University College; and overseas: Arizona, Florida State and New Mexico. LAB aims contributes either as a contracted researcher on a project already funded by the university or academic research councils, or as a partner in new projects based in and funded through the universities.

While it has taken time to cultivate these relationships, they have proved highly productive and promise well for the future. Special thanks to Cathy McIlwaine for her advice in this field.

Women Resisting Violence with King's College London

Women Resisting Violence is a project with Kings College London which led to a [multilingual podcast](#), [book](#) and [article series](#) in 2021-3 focused on Latin American women's resistance initiatives to gendered violence in its many forms. In the past year a short films programme

was developed under the project umbrella and screened at the National Film Archive of Chile and at Brixton House Theatre in London. The book has been translated into Spanish and Portuguese and published by Open Access feminist publisher Cita Press.



The Women Resisting Violence short film screening in London, featuring films by women's organizations MinA Theatre and Mujeres de Asfalto.

CAMeNA with University of Lancaster

This article series, based on documents and testimonies held in the Centro Académico Memoria Nuestra América at the Universidad Autónoma de Mexico (UNAM), which began in 2021 is ongoing. Plans for a podcast about the archive and the stories is underway.

PROJECTS



RECLAMA (Harnessing Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Heritage) with Northumbria University

LAB collaborated on a British Academy-funded project documenting Afro-Ecuadorian women's heritage within Ecuador and further afield.

LAB subtitled a short film series into English and Portuguese (March 2023) and helped organise, host and provide interpreting for an international webinar in Spanish and Portuguese titled 'Recuperando y celebrando la herencia de las mujeres Afro'.

An in-person event was organized and held in London in June 2024, presenting the project to a local audience including London-based anti-racist organisations, and a short film programme featuring one of the films made by Mujeres de Asfalto collective as part of the project.



Moving Forward with Universities of Southampton and York

We continued to promote the Open Access photobook *Moving Forward: Health, care and violence seen through the eyes of displaced Venezuelan women in Brazil*, published in May/June 2023 in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, as well as the documentary film subtitled by LAB, which was shortlisted for Best Foreign Documentary at WRPN Women's International Film Festival. LAB organized a screening at Sisterhood Festival in Bradford Libraries, and a talk at the London Spanish Book and Zine Fair in October 2023, on creating and publishing a multilingual photo book on women's experiences of migration'.

Hilos Fronterizos (Borderland Threads) with LSE Latin America and Caribbean Centre, Universidad de Chile and the British Academy

LAB created a website for this project which collected arpilleras (narrative artworks told through sewing scraps of material onto a base canvas) and testimonies from Colombian women migrants living in Antofagasta, Chile. The short animated film which tells these women's stories is included in the Women Resisting Violence short film programme showcasing different initiatives and arts-based resistance.

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ARTICLE SERIES



Environmental Defenders

The Environmental Defenders series continued on LAB's website throughout 2023, edited by Rebecca Wilson. 28 articles and regular social media posts were published between January 2023 and April 2024. The series was ongoing in March 2024 with original articles being commissioned and a documentary film, *The Future is in Our Territories*, in which four environmental defenders discuss their territorial work and the Americas-wide alliance for racial and climate justice, in production. This went on to be selected and awarded at film festivals in Latin America.

In October 2023 we won funding from LUSH Charity Pots to work on the series for six months. This included commissioning/publishing 12 original articles from international writers (e.g. in Chile, Surinam, Ecuador, Bolivia, Paraguay, Mexico and the UK); publishing high-quality photographs; commissioning English translations of reporting by our partner outlets; hiring a social media writer; commissioning/publishing a mini documentary amplifying the voices of four Black and Indigenous environmental defenders and their work. Thanks to our volunteers, the series was able to continue in periods without funding. We are grateful for their support and ideas.

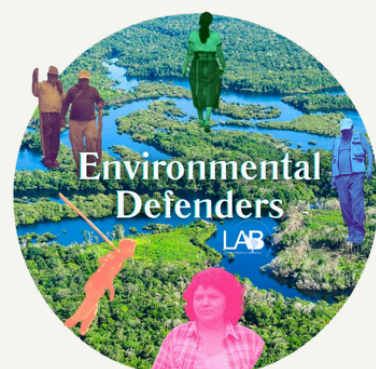
The series acquired over 10,000 readers and led to a 126% increase in social media



reach and a 75% increase in social media engagement.

LAB's EDs Team included Linda Etchart, Sue Branford, Fiona Watson, Moira Millán, Ana Reyes-Hurt, Marcos Colón, Matt Dunnett, Jamie Goodland, and Marilene Cardoso Ribeiro.

The Series is a collaboration between LAB and organizations in the region, including: No Ficción, Guatemala; Agência Pública, Brazil; Climate Tracker, Global; ContraCorriente, Honduras & Central America; Mongabay, Latin America & Global; Amazônia Latitude, Brazil; Peru Support Group, UK; Federación Ecológica, Costa Rica; Expediente Público, Central America; CLIP, Costa Rica.



ARTICLE SERIES



Environmental Defenders

In February 2024, Mapuche land defender Moira Millán visited London and we held an intimate solidarity event which shed light on the persecution of Indigenous people in Patagonia. The event raised £700 for her cause through ticket sales and donations.

Rights to the English translation of Moira Millán's testimony *Terricide* have been acquired and LAB is working on the translation, to be published in 2025.

LAB's book *The Amazon in Times of War* by Marcos Colón (see below) also forms part of our Environmental Defenders Work.

Funding is being sought in order to continue the series. If you are interested in becoming a partner, a funder, or would like to suggest a collaboration as part of this series, please get in touch.



ARTICLE SERIES



Jan Rocha's Blog

LAB correspondent Jan Rocha continues to contribute up-to-the-minute news and analysis from São Paulo, with posts including 'Coup and Carnival' (Feb 2024), 'Malvinas Moment for the Armed Forces' (Aug 2023) and 'The Amazon Summit: some progress but Contradictions remain' (Aug 2023).



Brazil: offshore oil threatens coral reef

The Parcel de Manuel Luís coral reef is at risk



Brazil: the climate change disinformation business

The agribusiness lobby teams up with far-right politicians

Agência Pública

Three articles were added to this series provided by Agência Pública, an independent journalists' network based in São Paulo. Most articles were translated from Portuguese for LAB by Matty Rose. Some also appeared on the Mongabay US website.

Voz, LAB's quarterly guest-written dispatch

LAB's long-read, guest written dispatch was originally a quarterly publication initially available only to LAB Patrons (higher-level subscribers via Patreon). Voz has now been made free.

Two numbers were published during the year:

Voz VIII. September 2023. *Together we heal: Women, Art & Resistance*, by Fi Gilligan, follows the creative healing practices of a displaced Afro-Indigenous women's organization in Cartagena, Colombia and is both a long-read article and a link to a documentary film of the same name.

Voz IX. March 2024. 'I watched as bonfires of books and papers were burned', by Tom Gatehouse, was an interview with Mike Gatehouse (Tom's father) who lived in Chile in 1973 and was taken prisoner after the military coup and held in the National Stadium.



Stills from Together We Heal by Fi Gilligan and Briana Barrios

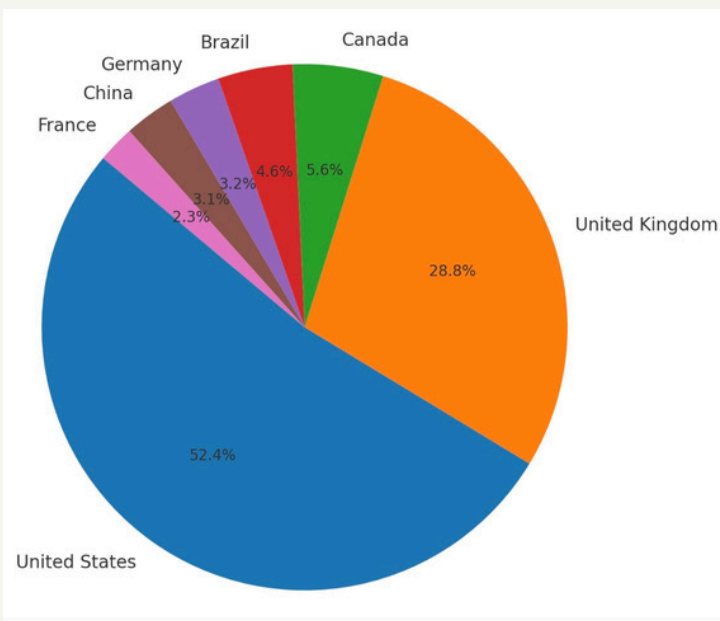
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LAB'S WEBSITE

LAB's website remains central to all of LAB's work. 92 new posts were added during the year, and the various project websites and article series detailed above now convey the impression of separate, linked websites under the LAB umbrella, and sharing the LAB domain lab.org.uk.

LAB's website received 300,000 visits March 2023- March 2024, from 184 countries, with most users in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Brazil, Germany, China, France.



NEWSLETTER

Ten newsletters were published during the year and emailed to our approximately 1,300 subscribers. Most continue to receive the newsletter for free, though we often remind subscribers of the importance of

supporting LAB by becoming 'LAB supporters' or 'Friends of LAB' by making a regular donation via CAFDonate (see above). The newsletters were compiled and edited by Antonella Navarro and Rebecca Wilson.

SOCIAL MEDIA

LAB's social media accounts have continued to grow steadily, especially on Instagram, where we now reach 38.6K accounts. Articles, events and LAB news are shared on Instagram to a small number of engaged followers, mostly based in the UK.

Although we are active on Twitter and receive good engagement with our tweets, the platform no longer allows non-paying customers to view statistics, and many users are leaving the platform after its acquisition by Elon Musk. Following advice from Trustees, LAB has [opened an account on the open network BlueSky](#) to which many of our followers are likely to migrate.



5 STAFF & VOLUNTEERS



Staff

During this financial year we were able to retain the services of Rebecca Wilson, our Managing Editor working now as a freelance consultant. Her hours fluctuated as our funding, projects and work in hand dictated. From January 2023 onwards she has been mainly resident in Colombia, but she remains constantly present by email and on WhatsApp and has been able to bring to LAB her local contacts and opportunities from the region.

As an increasingly ‘distributed’ organization, we have found strength in having our regular post-holders and council members in Latin America and the US as well as in the UK.

Volunteers

As before, we continue to recruit to our large panel of volunteers which includes several writers (including regulars Jan Rocha, Grace Livingstone, Linda Etchart, Maozya Murray and Marley Markham) and translators (including regulars Ruth Donnolly, Emma Hinde, and Valentina Hernández Gómez).

We now have a brilliant book sales assistant (Lizzy Sanders) and a print books distribution manager (Bill McLellan); an author royalties manager (Isobel Jones); film reviews editor (Karoline Pelikan); and volunteers who specialize in specific LAB projects, especially Environmental Defenders and Women Resisting Violence (see more in coming pages).

LAB has an informal panel of experienced editors and contributors, including Sue Branford, Marcela López-Levy, Nick Caistor, Linda Etchart, Tom Gatehouse, Grace Livingstone, Jan Rocha and Fiona Watson. Our Managing Editor is Rebecca Wilson and our Editor-at-Large, Mike Gatehouse.



Book sales assistant Lizzy Sanders & LAB volunteer Anastasia at the London Spanish Book and Zine Fair

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FINANCES



Overview

LAB's operation depends on funding from individuals, foundations, and universities. Each funding stream presents its own challenges and uncertainties, and its annual income has fluctuated between £15,000 and £50,000 over the last five years. In 2023/24 LAB's annual income reached £50,895, up from £29,383 in 2023/22. However, almost all of this is tied to specific projects. Funding for LAB's core work remains extremely tight and uncertain.

With the support of LAB's strong volunteer network, this funding was efficiently deployed to publish and promote books, support research, and raise awareness of Latin America and the Caribbean in the UK and beyond. LAB volunteers also translated and edited books and articles, managed conferences and meetings, and sold LAB books at events, generating income which supported the organization's core costs. The sale of LAB books and the translation rights for two LAB publications (Chico Mendes - In His Own Words and Crossed Off The Map) also brought in funds.

Grants and university contracts comprise a large part of LAB's income. In 2023/24, through partnerships with KCL and the Universities of Northumbria, Southampton, and York, LAB continued to receive funding to publish books, produce podcasts and organize events for WRV, RECLAMA and

ReGHID projects. In a highly competitive funding environment, LAB also secured grants to translate books and report on the work of environmental defenders in the region.

Whilst LAB depends on grant and consultancy income to expand its work, it could not operate without the donations of our supporters who give to LAB in response to funding appeals and on a regular basis through standing orders and CAF Donate platform. In 2023/24, we were extremely grateful for donations of all sizes. Two large one-off donations enabled us to develop grant proposals and win grant funding. In 2025, we hope to expand the number of LAB supporters donating on a regular basis, and move LAB onto a more sustainable financial footing.

As an increasingly 'distributed' organization, we have found strength in having our regular post-holders and council members in Latin America and the US as well as in the UK.

Everyone who has contributed to LAB and engaged with LAB's work in 2023-4 should be immensely proud of all that has been achieved on such a tight budget and in a short period of time. We hope to secure significant funding in the coming year to sustain this important work.

Hazel Plunkett, LAB Treasurer

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