



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**MUSICIANS**  
WITHOUT BORDERS



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Who we are</b>	<b>4</b>
Executive summary	4
Our year in numbers	6
Mission, vision, and objectives	8
<b>Realization of objectives</b>	
<b>Objective 1: Use music to build peace and achieve social change in communities and countries affected by conflict</b>	<b>11</b>
Western Balkans: Music Connects	12
Central East Africa: Rwanda Youth Music and Kivu Youth Music	14
Palestine: Bara'em Ghirass	16
Jordan: Al-Musiqa Tajm'ana	18
Europe: Welcome Notes	20
Welcome Notes Bosnia and Herzegovina	22
Welcome Notes Netherlands	24
Welcome Notes Training	26
El Salvador: Soy Música and Armonía Cuscatleca	28
<b>Objective 2: Grow knowledge, expertise, and the global recognition of music's potential for peacebuilding and social change</b>	<b>30</b>
Advocacy	32
Communications	34
art27	36
Monitoring, evaluation, and learning	38
Theory of change	39
<b>Objective 3: Build the capacity and quality-assurance systems needed to function as a stable, values-led organization in the field of music and peacebuilding.</b>	<b>40</b>
Governance	41
Human resources	43
Safeguarding and integrity	44
Communication with stakeholders	45
Main risks facing the organization	46
Information on financial policy and results	48
<b>Annual accounts</b>	<b>53</b>
Balance sheet	53
Statement of income and expenses	54
Appropriation of result	55
Cash flow statement	56
Notes to the annual accounts	58
Notes to balance sheet	59
Notes to the statement of income and expenses	65
Notes to the allocation of expenses	68
Adoption of annual accounts	72
<b>Looking forward: Plan for 2024</b>	<b>74</b>
Partners and donors	76
Independent Auditor's report	80



# WHO WE ARE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2023 was a tumultuous year. A year where we felt more than ever the limits of our power for change, as wars threatened, escalated, continued and started around the world. It was also a year where we experienced the importance of perseverance and solidarity, as our work continued despite rising tensions - in Palestine, in DRC, in Northern Kosovo, and with people fleeing armed conflict. It was a year where we had to remember that, while our impact might feel small in the face of overwhelming violence, the ability to escape into music means the world for those suffering it.

2023 was also a year where we had to consider our organizational health. During the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath in 2020-2022, we conducted a prudent financial policy which helped us weather the storm but meant key positions were not filled. During the same period, we invested heavily in the professionalization of our organization, including obtaining CBF (Netherlands Fundraising Regulator) certification. This strategy was successful, but it had left our operations, and our team, stretched.



As a result, most of our efforts were directed at sustaining our programs in active and post-conflict countries on the one hand, while strengthening our operations on the other.

As you will read below, in 2023:

- We continued the development of our music programs in Palestine, Jordan, Rwanda, DRC, and the Western Balkans,
- We stabilized our work with people in forced migration in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and expanded our outreach program at reception centers in the Netherlands,
- We completed two music projects in El Salvador,
- We delivered training to practitioners via new and existing collaborations with universities and training institutions,
- We collaborated with academic researchers in studies on the social impact of our music programs,
- We refocused our role in the art27 network towards the Resounding podcast, platforming voices of artists with lived migration experience, and
- We invested in policy development and quality-control structures to ensure the safety, quality and integrity of our work.

We are grateful to our partners who continued their important work, sometimes under the most difficult of circumstances, with grace and integrity. And as always, huge thanks to all who support the work of Musicians Without Borders. Thanks to you, we continue to prove that while war divides, music connects.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura J. Hassler".

**Laura Hassler**  
Director

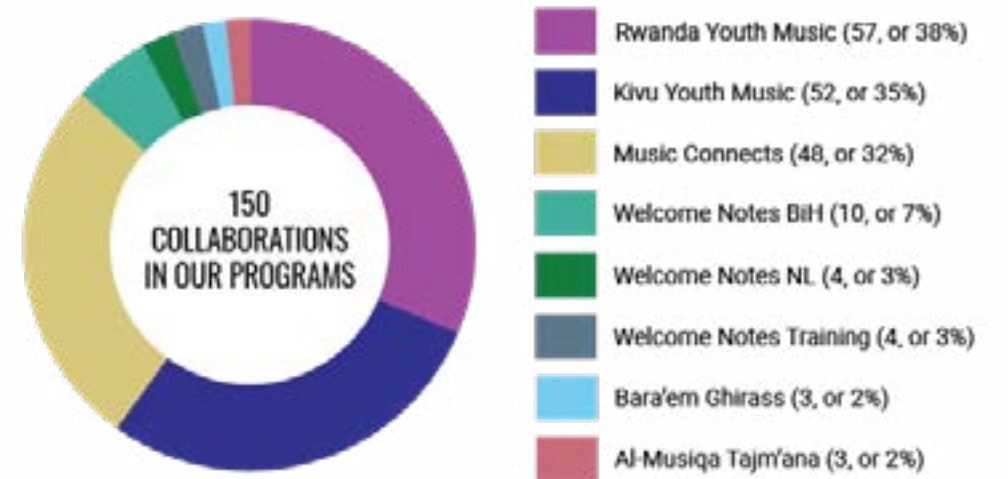
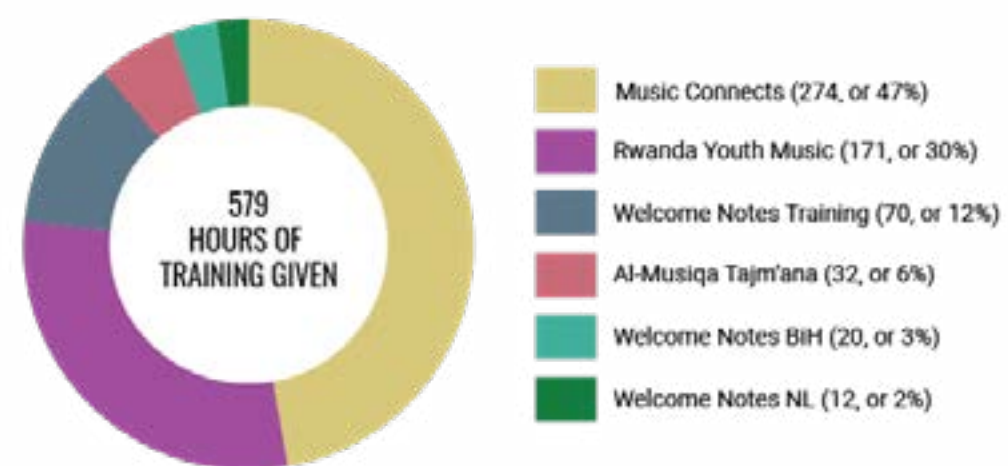
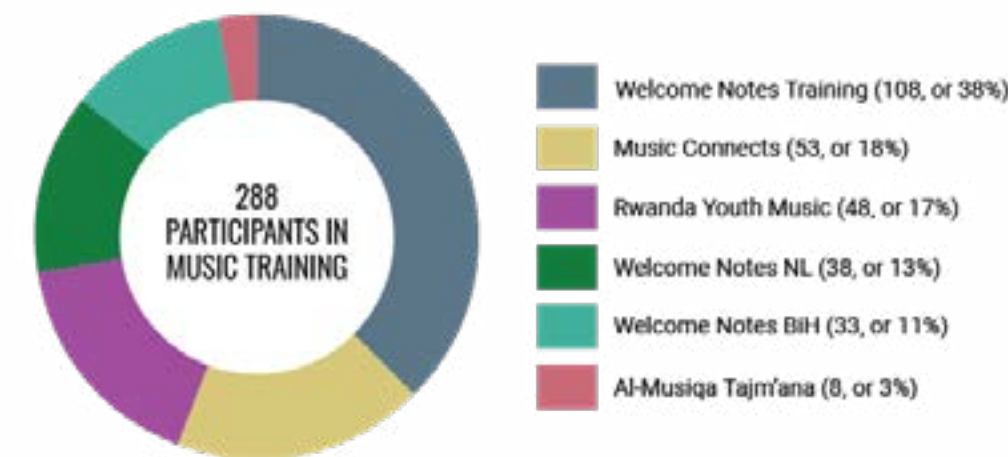
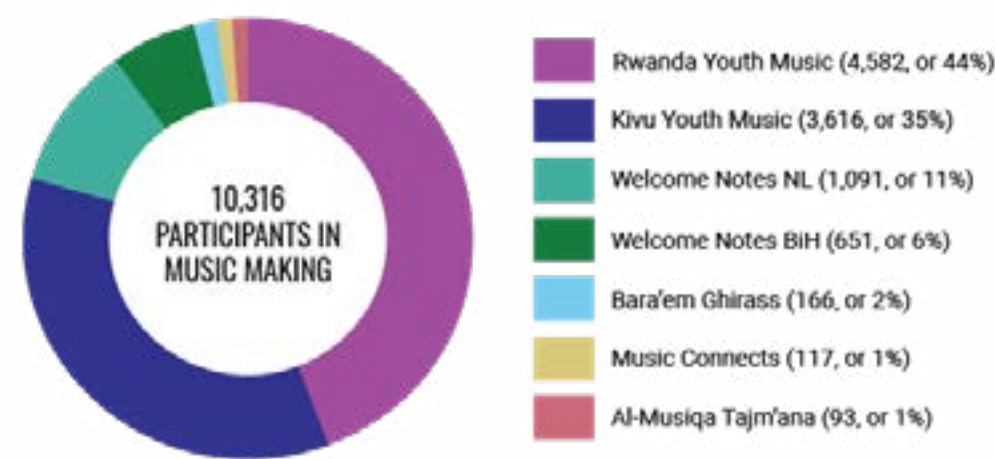
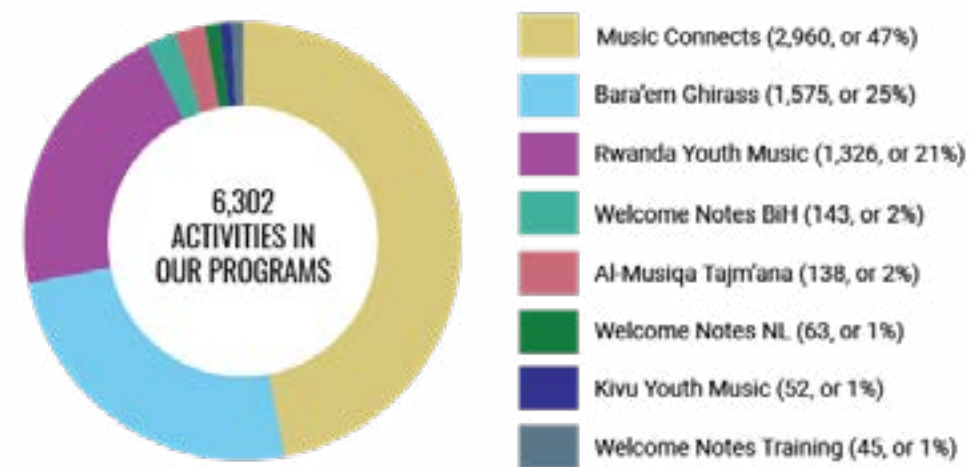




# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

## DEFINITIONS

- Participants in music making represent final direct beneficiaries of our music programs in target countries,
- Participants in music training represent people trained in music leadership, band coaching, or project management skills and methodologies through our music programs and training program,
- Hours of training given represents the number of hours of training delivered within our music programs and training program,
- Music leaders in activities represent the number of workshop leaders, teachers and coaches leading music activities in our music programs,
- Activities in our programs represents music lessons, workshops, concerts and other events, band sessions, training sessions and other music activities reaching our target groups,
- Collaborations in our programs represent the number of organizations we collaborate or partner with - formally or informally - in our music programs and training programs.



# MISSION, VISION, AND OBJECTIVES

Music, like language, is a universal human capacity that can strengthen empathy, heal, connect, encourage, empower, and bring joy: all essential to building just and peaceful societies. From rock to classical, from rap to jazz to body percussion, MWB works through the power of music for peacebuilding and social change.

Our **vision** is a world where music has a central role in peacebuilding.

Our **mission** is to use the power of music to bridge divides, connect communities, and heal the wounds of war.

Our **guiding principles** reflect our core beliefs and values and serve as the basis to ground our practices. We refer to:

- A foundational belief in the essential role of the arts for a thriving and diverse culture,
- A growing body of research indicating the power of music to connect, strengthen empathy, and contribute to healing,
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- The principles of active nonviolence.

To serve our mission and vision, we focused our Strategic Plan (2023-2025) on three strategic objectives:

1. Use music to build peace and achieve social change in communities and regions affected by conflict,
2. Grow knowledge, expertise, and the global recognition of music's potential for peacebuilding and social change,
3. Build the capacity and quality-assurance systems needed to function as a stable, values-led organization in the field of music and peacebuilding.





# REALIZATION OF OBJECTIVES

## REALIZATION OF OBJECTIVE 1

### Use music to build peace and achieve social change in communities and countries affected by conflict

Since 1999, Musicians Without Borders (MWB) has developed and implemented long-term music programs that connect and serve communities affected by war and armed conflict. We collaborate with musicians, organizations, and activists to create sustainable and embedded programs. We believe a long-term approach is most effective for creating the basis for peaceful societies, healing and community building.

MWB frames its programmatic development around the analysis of needs, the relevance of our peacebuilding mission in specific contexts, and our expertise and knowledge of the region.

We run programs in the Middle East, the Western Balkans, and Central East Africa, while our European project serving people in forced migration follows migration routes and responds to opportunities as they arise.

Please find below an overview of our program portfolio.





# WESTERN BALKANS: MUSIC CONNECTS

## Why we work here

The Yugoslav wars of the 1990s left the Western Balkans deeply divided along ethnic lines. Nowhere was this more so than in Mitrovica, an ethnically divided town in northern Kosovo, where Serbs live north of the river Ibar, and Albanians in the south. In neighboring North Macedonia, the Roma population is the region's most discriminated and isolated ethnic group.

## What we do

Music Connects is a European project based on the methodology developed at Mitrovica Rock School, co-founded by MWB in 2008. Operating from both sides of divided city Mitrovica in Northern Kosovo, Mitrovica Rock School uses band-based music education to connect youth from different ethnic communities through music. This approach was adopted by Roma Rock School in North Macedonia, where Roma, Macedonian and other youth come together in mixed bands. Both rock schools receive coaching from teachers and students from Fontys Rockacademie in the Netherlands.

To expand participants' horizons and grow artistic networks, youth exchange organization Clash! hosts cultural exchanges with artists in Berlin, while genre-bending bands from the three participating schools perform at Balkan Trafik! Festival in Brussels.

## Context in 2023

In 2023, tensions between the governments of Kosovo and Serbia continued to escalate, and were felt particularly in Northern Kosovo. This meant that ethnically mixed activities brought an increased risk to participants and staff, and press requests had to be screened carefully. In October 2023, a training week planned to be held in Mitrovica had to be moved to Skopje at the last moment, as a violent incident shut down all inter-community activities. Despite these tensions, the program was able to carry out nearly all foreseen activities, thanks in a large part to the longstanding relationships between teachers and students from both sides of the city.

## Our objectives in 2023

- Promote social resilience and enhance inclusion of ethnically divided and marginalized communities in the Western Balkans, particularly youth,

- Support and train young musicians and music education organizations in the Western Balkans to develop and implement didactic practices that promote inclusion and resilience,
- Stimulate creativity, promote genre blending, and facilitate transnational co-creation between musicians from the Western Balkans and northern Europe,
- Develop, demonstrate and disseminate best practices that can be replicated by artists and organizations working with socially marginalized youth.

## Who benefited from this program

- Youth of different ethnic backgrounds from Mitrovica and Skopje, who come together across ethnic divisions through music making activities and focus on the development of their creative identities instead of ethnic identities,
- Communities of parents, friends, and musicians brought together across ethnic lines through music activities in their hometowns,
- The general public in the Western Balkans and the EU.

## Key results

- 117 young musicians from different ethnic communities participated in 2,960 music lessons, mixed band rehearsals and workshops.
- 17 teachers and trainees from Mitrovica Rock School and Roma Rock School received teacher training at Fontys Rockacademie in the Netherlands.
- 10 ethnically mixed bands with 52 members rehearsed, recorded, and performed their original songs.
- Four supergroups with 20 students from Mitrovica Rock School, Roma Rock School, and Fontys Rockacademie performed in Brussels and Berlin.
- Two music videos were released by mixed bands from Mitrovica Rock School and Roma Rock School.
- We organized 80 workshops, 15 concerts, and spent 12 days in the studio.





# CENTRAL EAST AFRICA: RWANDA YOUTH MUSIC AND KIVU YOUTH MUSIC

## Why we work here

Central East Africa suffered brutal violence and conflicts in the 1990s. Although Rwanda has maintained peace since the genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994, the ongoing effects of violence, fighting, and instability continue in the region today – fueled by a history of colonial oppression based on war, profit, and division. Across the border in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), levels of conflict continue to spiral, resulting in the world's most neglected humanitarian crisis.

## What we do

Rwanda Youth Music began in 2012 in response to the legacy of genocide in Rwanda. WE-ACTx for Hope invited MWB to develop a music program supporting the wellbeing of children and youth living with HIV. The project has grown to reach over 20,000 children and young people in Kigali, throughout Rwanda, and across the region. Community music leaders, trained by MWB, lead a range of musical activities - from teaching musical instruments and songwriting to Rwandan traditional dance and studio production - with children and youth from vulnerable communities.

In DRC, the Kivu Youth Music team run weekly workshops for children and youth who are directly affected by conflict, in Internally Displaced People camps and in orphanages. The music leaders are trained by the Rwanda Youth Music training team, in Musicians Without Borders' methodology. In addition, we have developed a pioneering approach to use music for the conservation of nature in the region.

## Context in 2023

On the border between Rwanda and DRC, over one million people were displaced in the second half of 2023 by armed violence in the province of North Kivu. As a result, a staggering 2.48 million internally displaced people were registered in the province by November 2023. This coincided with the run up to presidential elections in DRC in December, increased tensions between DRC and Rwanda, and increasingly regular and violent clashes between armed group M23 (allegedly supported by Rwanda) and the DRC army and its allies (including foreign mercenaries).

Within this context, the Rwanda Youth Music team trained a new project team - Kivu Youth Music - to

support children directly affected by the violence, in Internally Displaced People camps and orphanages in Goma.

## Our objectives for 2023

- Impact the current and future potential of young people from vulnerable communities by increasing access to creative opportunities, and improving wellbeing and financial outcomes, in Kigali, Rwanda, and surrounding provinces,
- Contribute to regional peacebuilding, using music as a nonviolent approach to build communities that are prepared to act creatively and peacefully for their future, in DRC's Goma region.

## Who benefited from this program

- Children, youth, and young adults living with HIV,
- Young people in Kigali and the surrounding region with limited creative opportunities,
- Children and young people who are directly affected by conflict, in Goma, DRC,
- The general public in Rwanda and worldwide through (social) media.

## Key results

Rwanda:

- 4,582 children and youth participated in 1,326 music activities run by the Rwanda Youth Music team of 29 music leaders,
- 15 new Community Music Leaders from partner organization WE-ACTx for Hope were trained by the Rwanda Youth Music team,
- 16 young members of the Rwanda Youth Music provided music lessons six days a week, at nine locations in Kigali, to 424 children and youth in neighborhoods with limited creative opportunities.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):

- 3,616 children and youth in orphanages and Internally Displaced People camps in Goma, DRC, participated in 52 workshops run by the 16 music leaders of the Kivu Youth Music team.
- MWB entered into a new partnership with the Dutch committee of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN NL), working together with our partners in DRC to develop a pilot project linking conflict, climate change and music.





# PALESTINE: BARA'EM GHIRASS

## Why we work here

The urgent need for life-affirming, creative music programs in Palestine must be understood in the context of ongoing systematic oppression and violence towards the Palestinian people during 75 years of occupation. For most Palestinians, poverty, state and interpersonal violence, and the absence of infrastructure and services define daily life. Additionally, vulnerable groups of women, children, and people with a refugee background are marginalized and isolated.

The children of the Bethlehem area suffer from the ongoing occupation. There are few extracurricular activities and little opportunity for self-expression. Our partner Ghirass Cultural Center focuses on children who need extra support in order to be able to follow the school curriculum. Together, we offer a music program that helps children increase their focus and concentration, practice their communication skills, and release stress.

## What we do

We offer free music education to 50 children from the Bethlehem area including the surrounding villages and refugee camps. Each child receives instrumental lessons and participates in the choir, the orchestra and the social work group sessions. Children who need extra support receive one-on-one sessions with our social worker.

We also provide weekly music sessions to the children's mothers, in which they learn stress-reducing music activities and develop their self-expression and communication skills. Every week, the women meet with our social worker to tackle important issues such as self-care, stress reduction, planning, raising adolescents, domestic violence and resilience.

## Context in 2023

Since October 2023, and as of this writing, movement is severely restricted for Palestinians, and many families in Bethlehem have lost their sources of income. Nightly and daily army raids in refugee camps, villages, and in Bethlehem city terrorize the population and in particular children, who are scared of being imprisoned, beaten up, or killed.

## Our objectives in 2023

- Build a children's Arabic music program within Ghirass Children's Center,
- Provide free instrumental and singing lessons to vulnerable children in the Bethlehem area,
- Provide music activities and social support for mothers of the children.

## Who benefited from this program

- Children from isolated villages, refugee camps, and the Bethlehem area, including children with special needs,
- Mothers dealing with a variety of social challenges,
- Families of participating children and women.

## Key results

- 50 children from isolated villages, refugee camps, and the Bethlehem area participated in 1,383 instrumental lessons, choir sessions, group sessions with a social worker, and orchestra rehearsals.
- 10 mothers followed weekly music sessions, group sessions with our social worker, and regular individual sessions with our social worker.
- 152 workshops were given to 80 deaf children by our deaf music workshop leader.
- We created five videos shared with a broad audience through social media.
- The children gave their first concert on a central stage in Bethlehem, for 350 people.





# JORDAN: AL-MUSIQA TAJM'ANA

## Why we work here

Well known for its hospitality, Jordan accepts people fleeing neighboring countries suffering from conflict, resulting in a mosaic of different cultures. Of the ten million people in Jordan, 70% are under 30 years old, and people with a migration background make up nearly a third of the population.

In response to requests from the music community, we designed a progressive music leadership training. The training supports the development of an infrastructure of organizations and trained music leaders, equipped to support vulnerable and underserved children through music.

## What we do

Al-Musiqa Tajm'ana (Music Brings Us Together) creates a network of musicians and music teachers who use music to promote social inclusion, stimulate creative development, and bring hope and joy. The project reaches children and youth in underserved refugee and host-communities. Through training, the musicians are better equipped to deal with the specific challenges of Jordan's social and educational landscape.

## Context in 2023

In 2023, MWB launched a new partnership with Tajalla for Music and Arts, a Jordanian organization bringing music to children in marginalized communities. As legal partnership requirements have been navigated, we have worked on planning and agreements with partners Tajalla for Music and Arts and Soka Gakkai, anticipating a start of new activities in early 2024. Meanwhile, our ongoing partnership with Music as Therapy International proceeded, with trainings implemented for musicians working in Jordan with children with special needs.

## Our objectives in 2023

- Train Jordanian musicians working with vulnerable children,
- Offer Music as Therapy International training to special education teachers and therapists working with children with special needs,
- In partnership with Tajalla for Music and Arts, bring music activities to children in isolated Jordanian villages.

## Who benefited from this program

- Children from host and refugee communities, including children with special needs,
- Children with special needs attending school in Amman,
- Musicians, music teachers and special education teachers and therapists,
- Families of the children and trainees participating in our training and workshops and Music as Therapy sessions.

## Key results

- We provided 12 hours of training to eight Music as Therapy International trainees,
- Our trainees provided 64 Music as Therapy International sessions to 36 young children with complex special needs in Amman,
- We concluded a partnership agreement with Tajalla for Music and Arts, who filed an application with the Jordanian Ministry of Culture to enter a new project phase in 2024,
- We created and released a [video](#) on Music Leadership Training.





## EUROPE: WELCOME NOTES

War and armed violence, climate change, persecution, and poverty force staggering numbers of people to leave their homes in search of safety every year. 2023 brought more global instability, geopolitical tensions, armed conflicts and brutal wars, as well as consequences of climate disasters to people worldwide.

The number of people in forced migration is increasing: in 2023, nearly 300,000 people fled to Europe, a 50% increase from 2022 ([IOM, 2023](#)). According to the International Organization of Migration (IOM), 2023 was the deadliest year for people in forced migration worldwide ([IOM, 2024](#)).

People in forced migration need their physical needs met: shelter, food, medical care, education, jobs. But they also need a sense of belonging, a feeling of safety and acceptance, the chance to experience joy, creativity, and the warmth of community—a welcome. Music can be that welcome.

Based on expertise developed in post-conflict regions, MWB launched Welcome Notes in 2015, in response to the increasing numbers of displaced people seeking safety in Europe. In 2023, we had three branches of activities under the Welcome Notes banner:

### Welcome Notes Bosnia & Herzegovina

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, in collaboration with War Childhood Museum and Superar in BiH, we bring music and arts activities to vulnerable children in refugee camps and centers. Musicians lead music and arts workshops where children sing, dance and try out instruments. A mobile team works in various locations, with the flexibility to respond to moving refugee populations.

### Welcome Notes Netherlands

In the Netherlands, a team of music workshop leaders offers music activities to groups of displaced children living in emergency reception centers.

### Welcome Notes Training

We share our music leadership methodology through training courses for individuals and organizations working toward the social inclusion of people in forced migration in Europe.





# WELCOME NOTES BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

## Why we work here

Due to its border with the European Union, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a bottleneck for people in forced migration on the route to Western Europe. The Western Balkans see constant traffic of people on the move, many of whom stay in the region temporarily while in transit.

## What we do

Welcome Notes BiH is a collaboration between MWB, War Childhood Museum and Superar in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project delivers creative workshops in reception centers, using inclusive music and arts and crafts activities to engage children, youth and families.

The three organizations have co-developed a training program, designed to provide musicians, artists, teachers, and social workers with the didactic, social and pedagogical skills needed to work with displaced children. The objective is to better equip people already working with these children, but also to grow a pool of workshop leaders to join the Welcome Notes team.

Meanwhile, a flexible team of music workshop leaders travels to reception centers around the country, bringing music to children and youth and their families.

## Context in 2023

During 2023, the situation of the migrant population in Bosnia and Herzegovina reached a degree of stability. The number of people on the move is constant and reception centers are mostly able to accommodate people without being overcrowded. There are reception centers in the Sarajevo, Una Sana and Tuzla cantons.

We established a regular presence in three of these locations, holding weekly or monthly workshops, and we aim to expand our work to five centers in 2024. For this reason, we initiated two training programs: one for musicians and another for primary school teachers, focusing on teachers in schools that welcome children with a migration background, and we worked to identify like-minded organizations and individuals in Bosnia and Herzegovina with whom to develop collaborations.

## Our objectives in 2023

- Provide music and arts activities to children and youth in Bosnian refugee centers, in collaboration with Bosnian organizations,
- Share skills with Bosnian musicians, artists, and teachers working with vulnerable children,
- Develop a mobile music team, to deliver music activities flexibly as needed throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## Who benefited from this program

- Children, youth, and their families primarily fleeing Afghanistan, Syria, Northern Africa, and Central East Africa,
- Bosnian musicians, arts practitioners and educators who were trained within the project.

## Key results

- 2,400 children, youth and adults or families participated in 157 music workshops, in collaboration among the three partner teams,
- Two tailored training courses were led by our first Bosnian Welcome Notes trainers, building the skills of 29 teachers and music and arts practitioners.





# WELCOME NOTES NETHERLANDS

## Why we work here

For more than a decade, the Netherlands has maintained a 'deterrence' policy towards asylum seekers: understaffed, inhospitable reception centers, curtailed rights, and long waiting times are intended to demoralize those who arrive in the country, and persuade others not to try. Today in the Netherlands, thousands of children and their families are facing dangerously inadequate conditions. Many are assigned to temporary emergency shelters that are not suitable for habitation: locations such as tents, gyms and event halls that lack the most basic conditions such as privacy, clean sanitary facilities, beds, decent food and protection against weather conditions. Some have even been left outdoors to survive with no shelter at all.

## What we do

We deliver workshops for children, youth and families in emergency reception centers. The objective is to offer positive, creative activities for asylum-seeking children and families to bring respite from stress and help them feel welcome in Dutch society. We also raise awareness of the situation and needs of children and families living in emergency reception centers by sharing the results of these activities with Dutch and European audiences. We use the project to spread awareness of the conditions of Dutch reception centers and the experience of newly arrived people seeking refuge. The project openly advocates for better treatment of people with a migration background in Europe.

Welcome Notes Netherlands brings music to welcome asylum seekers. Skilled MWB music leaders visit emergency reception centers, making music with children, youth and their families. Making music allows participants to feel safe to express, create, and experience connection. We know that these moments can be life-changing. Welcome Notes Netherlands engages with Dutch society through awareness raising actions, strengthening the social inclusion of asylum seekers in the Netherlands through music activities and through the media; contributing to changing the narratives that are currently dominated by policies of 'discouragement' toward people seeking asylum.

## Context in 2023

In the Netherlands, the government fell in 2023 due to disagreements around policies on family reunification for people who have migrated to the Netherlands seeking asylum. As in other parts of Europe, nationalist narratives are growing and

messages of discouragement and hostility toward people with a migration background take root in our societies. People who migrate are dehumanized by these narratives, which contributes to the erosion of empathy and solidarity within European societies.

The current situation at emergency reception centers is worsening, with overcrowding and substandard conditions as the norm. We see an increased need for the work of Welcome Notes Netherlands, with skilled music leaders visiting emergency reception centers and asylum seeker centers and delivering music workshops for children, youth and their relatives, as well as an increased urgency in the Netherlands to strengthen the social inclusion of people who have migrated.

## Our objectives in 2023

- Offer positive, creative activities for asylum seeking children and families to relieve tedium, stress, and the oppression of their living environment in emergency reception centers,
- Provide connection between people living in emergency reception centers and the wider Dutch community, through the workshops and also through awareness raising actions,
- Strengthen the team of workshop leaders to provide sustained access to music-making for children in emergency reception centers in the Netherlands.

## Who benefited from this program

- Children, youth, and their families fleeing places like Syria, Yemen, Algeria, and East Africa, living in emergency reception centers,
- Dutch citizens and residents,
- Music workshop leaders, active in the use of music for social change.

## Key results

- 1,200 children, youth and accompanying adults or families participated in 60 music workshops, at 17 emergency reception centers and centers for asylum seekers (AZCs),
- 25,000 people were reached through social media and direct mailing,
- Three music workshop leaders with lived migration experience were integrated into our team,
- A new collaboration with the Conservatory of Amsterdam (CvA) was launched, training teachers and students in MWB's Welcome Notes methodology for music leadership,
- A new rap based methodology was piloted.





## WELCOME NOTES TRAINING

Our Welcome Notes Training program trains musicians and music teachers in MWB's music leadership methodology, to strengthen their work with displaced people in Europe. Our music leadership methodology was developed through MWB's 25 years of experience developing music initiatives with people affected by conflict.

### What we do

We share our expertise in music leadership through training courses for individuals and organizations who work through music to contribute to the Welcome Notes goal of strengthening the social inclusion of people with a migration background in Europe.

### Who benefited from this program

- Music practitioners, educators and students who work, or wish to work to strengthen the social inclusion of people who have migrated to Europe,
- Universities and organizations that partner with MWB to deliver training to music practitioners, educators and students.

### Key results

- We delivered two five-day Welcome Notes training courses in partnership with the Landesmusikakademie NRW, Germany,
- We launched a year-long Welcome Notes training course with Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom,
- We delivered Welcome Notes training sessions online for the Academy of Impact through Music (AIM),
- We delivered training sessions for teachers and workshop leaders in partnership with Living Song and Ark Schools, United Kingdom,
- We delivered a three-day Welcome Notes training for music teachers, staff and students from the Conservatory of Amsterdam.





## EL SALVADOR: SOY MÚSICA AND ARMONÍA CUSCATLECA

After six years of collaboration with the Ministry of Education and UNICEF, our role in Soy Música, a project that promotes nonviolence through music among Salvadoran school children, concluded. Our other project in El Salvador, the El-Sistema based orchestra program Armonía Cuscatleca, had fully transitioned to Salvadoran leadership at year-end 2022.

During 2023, we were in regular contact with these partners in El Salvador. We evaluated the possibilities for the further development of the Soy Música project with the Ministry of Education, as Soy Música remains an important methodology in its strategic plans, and MWB will remain involved in any conversations supporting partners in future steps.

During 2023, we supported Armonia Cuscatleca's fundraising efforts, as well as the development of their strategic plans for 2024-2025. Armonia Cuscatleca continues to keep MWB informed of its activities and challenges and remains a valued member of our network.





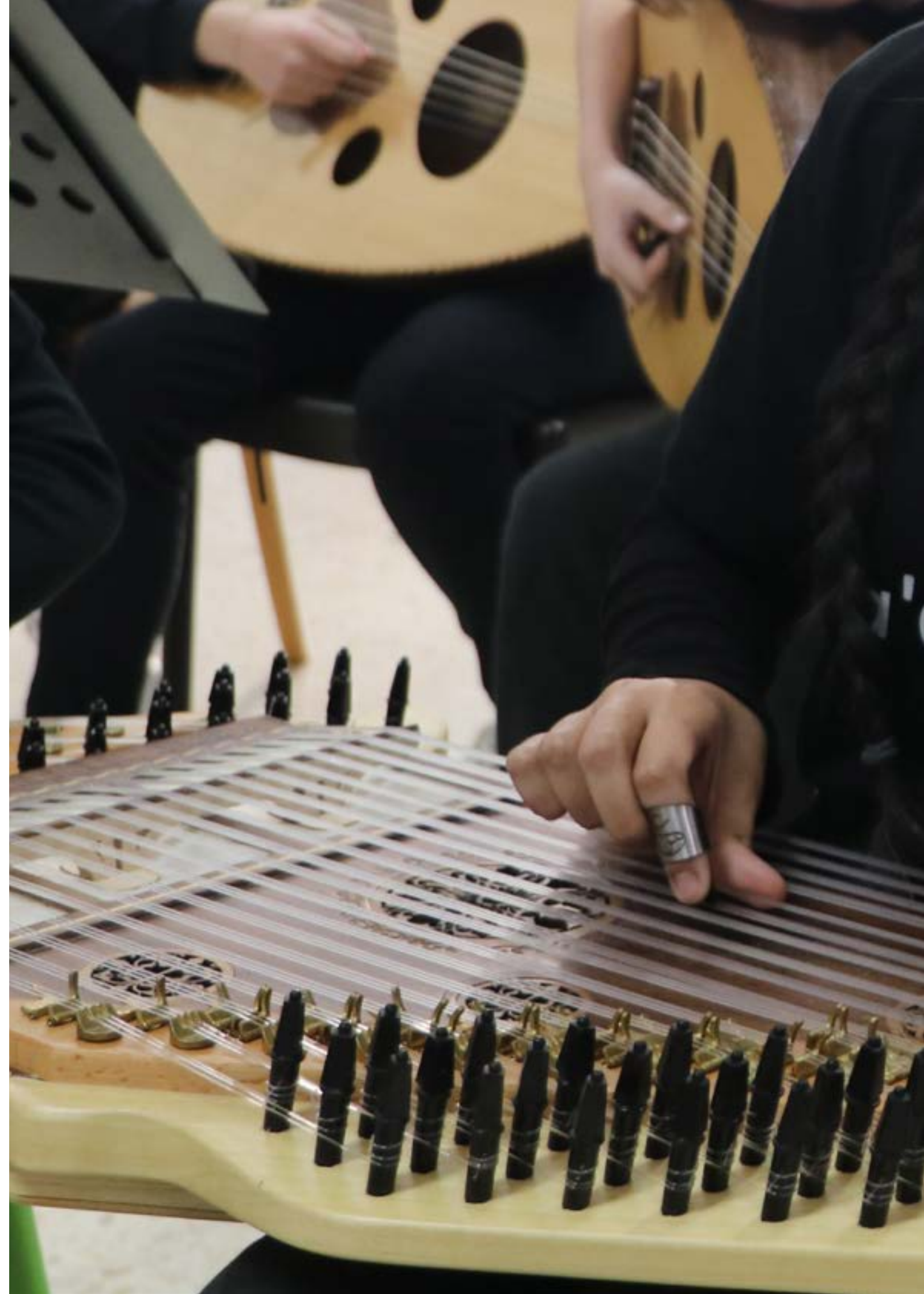
## REALIZATION OF OBJECTIVE 2

### Grow knowledge, expertise, and the global recognition of music's potential for peacebuilding and social change

To promote the vision of music as a tool for peace, MWB gives keynote speeches and presentations at international conferences and expert meetings, collaborates with academic institutions, promotes its work and vision through publications and social networks, and connects with musicians worldwide through public and private online platforms. Additionally, we train practitioners worldwide in best practices for using music to promote social change.

As an organization that sets the development and dissemination of best practices at its core, we prioritize quality control and monitoring, evaluation and learning within our own organization, to ensure that our programs are aligned with the needs of the communities we serve and are delivered in a safe manner according to the highest standards of integrity.

We are proud to have played a significant role in introducing the arts as a powerful approach to peacebuilding and social change worldwide. Begun in a time when there was little understanding of the power of the arts to affect social change, Musicians Without Borders is now a world leader in developing and sharing methodologies and approaches to peacebuilding through music.





# ADVOCACY

Advocacy has always been a core element of our work. We aim to raise our voices on the multifaceted global issues we encounter firsthand in our music programs worldwide. Furthermore, we want to demonstrate to those involved professionally in peacebuilding the potential of music (and other arts) to enrich their own efforts; and to inspire musicians around the world to use their talents to impact their own communities.

To achieve these advocacy objectives, we provide speakers for conferences and panels, contribute to and organize events, write articles and blogs and host the podcast ReSounding.

## Music and peacebuilding

In 2023, MWB speakers joined 29 different presentations, lectures, panel discussions and events, hosted and organized by academic institutions, the press, partner organizations, donor organizations, other non-profit organizations, and MWB. Highlights included:

Date	Host or location	Subject	By	Notable results
January 16	Conservatory of Amsterdam, Teachers' Café	MWB's Welcome Notes NL featured in panel discussion on the role of musicians in engaging with newcomers in the Netherlands.	Director Laura Hassler	This event finally led to a collaboration with CvA, including an MWB training for teachers and students.
April 12	Rotary clubs in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Germany and Belgium	Presentation Rwanda Youth Music Program	Program Manager Chris Nicholson and Director Laura Hassler	Relationship building with funding partners
May 31	Dutch Culture / Creative Europe Desk Netherlands	Presentation of Music Connects in the context of the European Commission's Creative Europe Program	Program Manager Wendy Hassler-Forest	Engagement with some 150 (future) diplomats for the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
June 9-11	Borletti-Buitoni Trust, London	Participation in 20th anniversary celebration of donor Borletti-Buitoni Trust	Director Laura Hassler and Associate Professor Dr. Angela Impey (SOAS, University of London)	Relationship building with funding partners
September 11, October 10, November 13, December 11	Tolhuistuin Amsterdam	Sing for a Good Cause: circle singing events led by Nicoline Snaas	Wendy Hassler-Forest, Laura Hassler, Chris Nicholson, Otto de Jong	Increased awareness of MWB's work in Amsterdam, our head office location

Date	Host or location	Subject	By	Notable results
November 28	Invited by a Colombian organization with interest in collaborating with MWB	Music and peace, from a gender viewpoint	Program Manager Miguel Ortega	First connection with potential partner ACORDES por la Paz, and introduction to Kofi Anan Foundation and Colombian organization Batuta
December 5	William and Mary College	Guest lecture as part of a course on Music and Diplomacy	Program Manager Fabienne van Eck	Inspire students to engage in social action, promote MWB's work in the Middle East

# INTERSECTIONALITY

Grounded in a fundamental understanding of the interconnections between global issues—war and militarism, exploitation and unequal distribution of resources, climate break-down, poverty, hunger and displacement – Musicians Without Borders advocates for an intersectional understanding of peacebuilding and social change in (post-)conflict environments.

## The right to protest

Following the arrest of climate activists in the Netherlands for promoting a nonviolent demonstration on social media, directors of Dutch civil society organizations came together to publicly defend the rights of citizens to protest. MWB Director Laura Hassler was one of the signatories in a campaign that began in February 2023.

## Climate justice

Throughout the year, many musicians and other artists joined Extinction Rebellion's (XR) nonviolent actions, protesting the Dutch government's subsidies to the fossil fuel industry. Laura Hassler was a speaker at a large support demonstration in The Hague on September 9, where she focused on the power of nonviolence– a vision shared by XR and MWB– and the power of music for social change.

## Palestine

In response to the armed Palestinian revolt on October 7, and the subsequent Israeli military attack on Gaza and its population, Musicians Without Borders agreed on a public statement, which we shared on October 19.

MWB was signatory to a campaign in support of the law suit initiated by Dutch peace and human rights organizations Oxfam, Amnesty International, PAX and the Rights Forum, that successfully challenged the Netherlands' provision of armaments to Israël in the context of an ongoing genocide in Gaza.



# COMMUNICATIONS

Our communications channels, both online and offline, help raise awareness and support fundraising efforts. Musicians Without Borders relies on the support of our international network of partners, donors, participants, and musicians. Our team ensures that the network is informed and up to date, publishing news from our programs and partners, as well as sharing opportunities to donate and support our work.

The communications team ensures visibility for all MWB programs and activities, sharing the positive impact with others around the world. Communications show the many ways that music connects, helps to heal the wounds of war, and promotes just and peaceful societies. We inspire musicians around the world to become changemakers, using the power of music to create positive change in their communities.

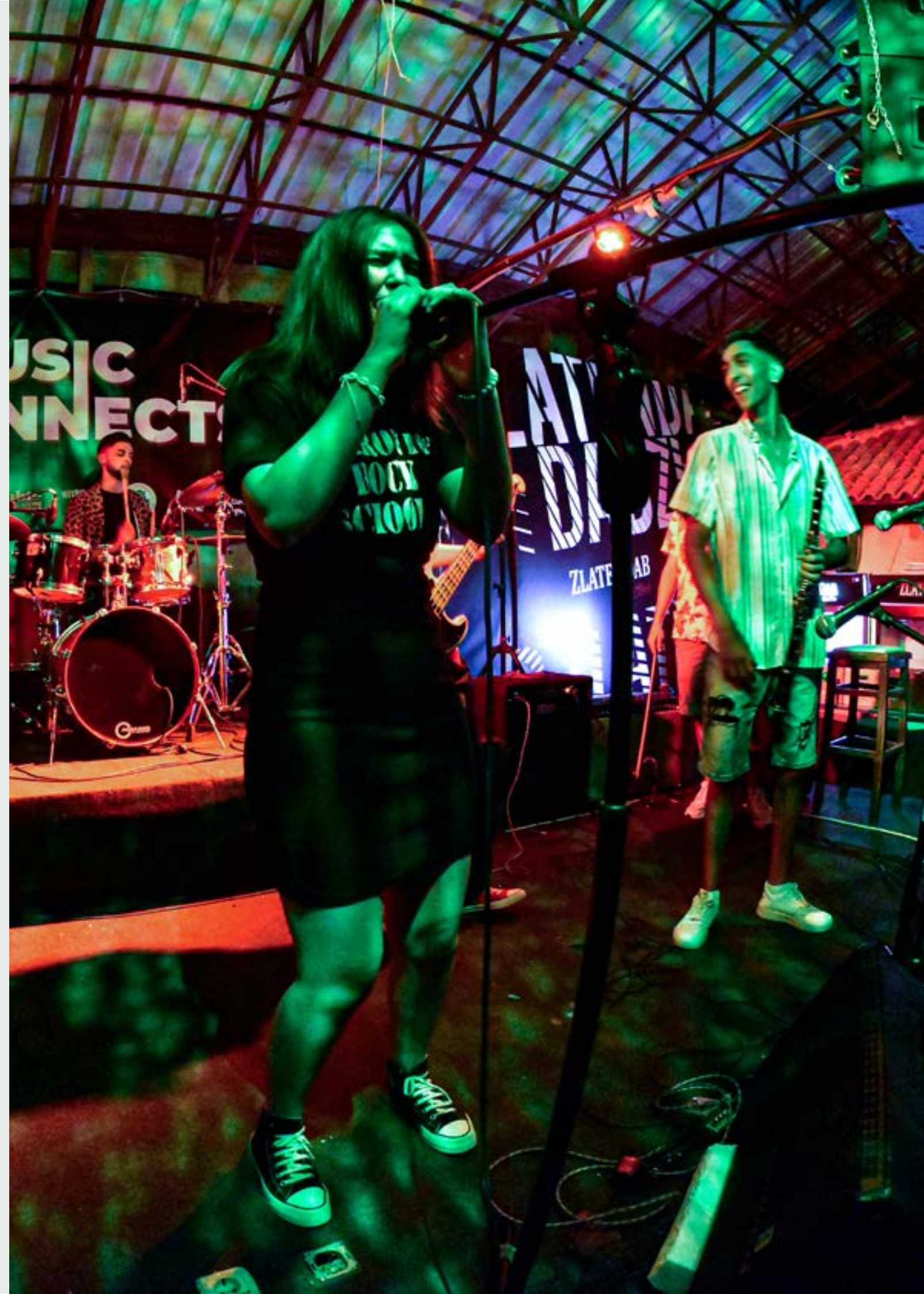
## Our objectives in 2023

- Promote MWB as a leader in using music for social change,
- Enhance visibility of our programs, both regionally and internationally,
- Grow our network of partners and supporters,
- Promote advocacy on topics of peacebuilding, migration and refugee rights, and climate justice.

## Key results

- We integrated these goals into content across our [website](#) and social media platforms ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Youtube](#)). Some highlights:
- Supported program goals with communications messages across all our platforms on a structural storytelling basis. Special attention for the launch of the Kivu Project in DRC, and the new cooperation with IUCN, our statements on Palestine and the engaging communication on the Tolhuistuin events.
- Sent out 20 newsletters to our mailing audience community of 12,000 in English and Dutch languages,
- During the year we ran three fundraising campaigns, with a new approach for the end-of-year fundraiser raising €65,000 in December, ,
- Published 22 [news items on our website](#), including blogs by our director, program managers and staff.

In 2023, we reached over 527,000 unique viewers on our posts. Our followers across MWB social media channels slightly increased on all channels, with LinkedIn growing by more than 25%. We are active on four channels: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.





# ART27

## What we do

art27 - Arts for Social Inclusion is a platform for artists, arts educators and arts organizations working for inclusive societies, hosted and coordinated by MWB. Art27's overall goals for 2023 were to promote social inclusion through the arts and influence the public narrative about migration, and those made vulnerable due to their refugee status.

## Who benefited from this program

Stakeholders include artists across the professional spectrum, arts organizations, arts collectives, and arts educators. The program's activities are supported by a core of highly active members who attend and support art27's events and initiatives. The art27 network constitutes 94 organizational members and reaches 424 newsletter subscribers.

## Our objectives in 2023

In 2023, the art27 team focused on offering advocacy and training events, supporting member organizations with promotion, and facilitating new collaborations. Funding limitations prompted a shift towards the development of the [ReSounding podcast](#), as the most successful strand of art27's advocacy work aimed at amplifying voices of artists with a migration background.

## Key results

- art27 hosted two online workshop events, platforming guest workshop leaders from member organizations. The two events commemorated International Women's Day and International Day of Peace, and covered topics including ecological awareness, embodied therapy for practitioners, the role of musicians in public policy, and the importance and construction of storytelling and safe spaces for participants with a migration background.
- The art27 podcast, ReSounding, hosted conversations with artists and activists who use the power of the arts to promote, advocate and enact the principles of human rights for all, especially people in forced migration. We produced 13 editions of ReSounding. ReSounding guests included renowned cartoonist Mr. Fish, human rights activists Godfrey Lado and Yigit Aksakoglu, exiled singers Mai Khoi and Ghawgha Taban, and multimedia artist Luciana Abait.
- Through its communications channels, art27 shared expertise and resources from its member organizations. Members' activities were regularly amplified through three weekly social media posts as well as across 12 newsletters.





# MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

## What we do

Evaluation and research help us to understand the reach and impact of our work and to render account to our donors and partners. The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) team develops strategies for each of our programs and activities, guided by our theory of change. Our research committee advises on engagement with external evaluators and researchers.

We disseminate findings through reports to program and funding partners, our annual report, and through publications and presentations.

## Who benefited from this program

- Program participants, whose feedback informs the design of project activities,
- Program and funding partners, who receive full and accurate information,
- Professionals, organizations, media, and the wider public, who have access to evaluation reports and research findings,
- MWB as an organization, to keep learning and improving to provide the best possible services for the participants.

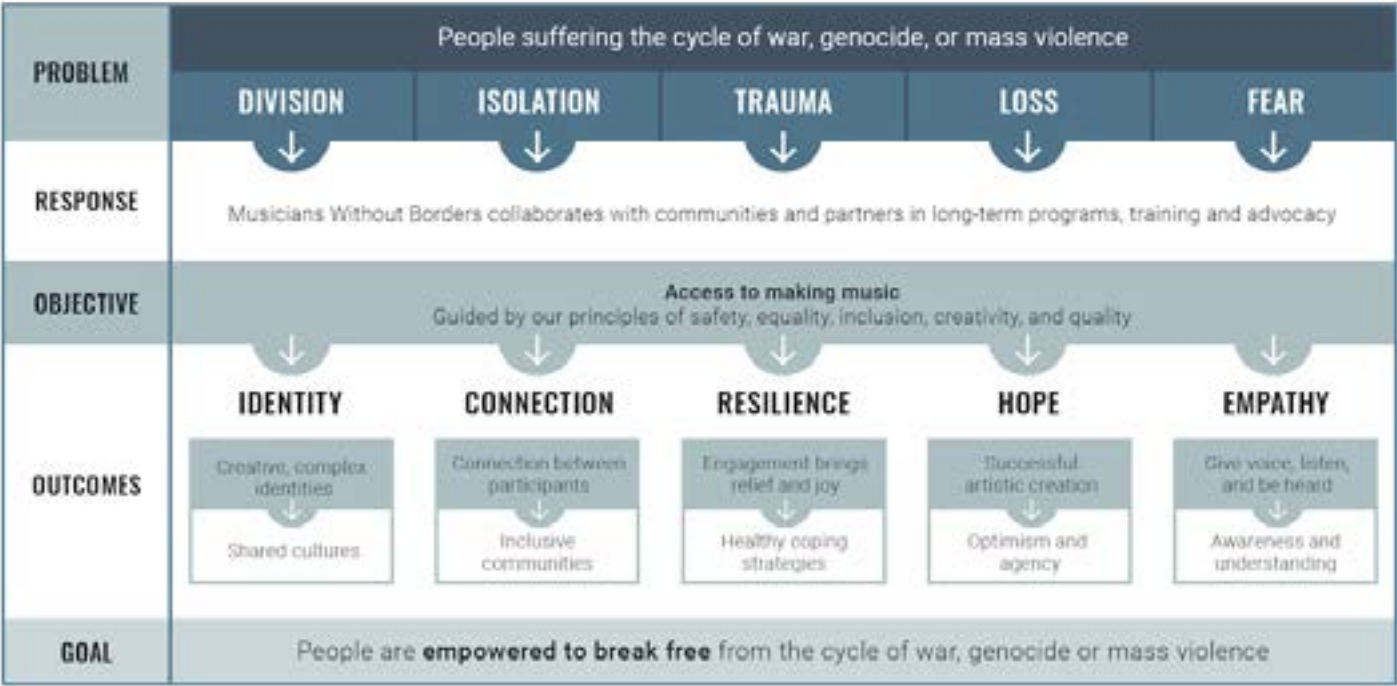
## Our objectives in 2023

- Expand MEL capacity and evaluate programs according to Theory of Change, zooming in on the different levels at which change takes place - individual, community, and infrastructure,
- Engage in academic partnerships to build the evidence base for music and peacebuilding, and disseminate research and evaluation of MWB’s work.

## Key results

- MWB’s latest Theory of Change was applied to new program design and evaluation, focussing impact objectives towards achieving transformation on individual, community and infrastructure levels,
- A new academic partnership was launched with Leeds-Beckett University, United Kingdom, in the “Cohesive Harmonies” project,
- Prof. Dr. Angela Impey, Professor and Researcher in Ethnomusicology at SOAS, University of London, United Kingdom, was engaged in the development and evaluation of the “Treasures of the Landscape” pilot project in North Kivu, DRC,
- Prof. Dr Angela Impey, Professor and Researcher in Ethnomusicology at SOAS, University of London, United Kingdom, paid a site visit to program activities in the context of her evaluation of the Music Connects project.

# THEORY OF CHANGE





# REALIZATION OF OBJECTIVE 3

## Build the capacity and quality-assurance systems needed to function as a stable, values-led organization in the field of music and peacebuilding.

Over the past eight years, Musicians Without Borders has worked to professionalize its operations and increase accountability towards its stakeholders. This process included the ongoing development of and training in integrity policies; transitioning to a full annual organizational audit; and seeking CBF (Netherlands Fundraising Regulator) certification.

For 2023, we identified three action areas to continue our organizational professionalization:

1. Consolidate the organization in terms of human and financial resources,
2. Maintain and improve MWB's quality assurance systems and ensure transparency and accountability in our management and administration structure,
3. Prioritize our duty of care and the wellbeing of staff and beneficiaries and make sure our standards are the highest possible to protect the safeguarding of both staff and participants.

### Human and financial resources

To sustain and grow our program and advocacy work, we identified three priority areas to fortify in 2023: fundraising, communications, and operations and policy coordination. These roles were filled during 2023, with the engagement of an Operations Coordinator/Policy Officer from June, and an external Communications and Fundraising Consultant from September.

The Operations Coordinator and Policy Officer streamlines organizational planning and reporting processes (see quality assurance below), supports our programs, manages human resources, and is responsible for our integrity policies and duty of care (see duty of care below).

The Communications and Fundraising Consultant manages our external communications and works with our management team on short- and long-term fundraising strategies to support our work.

### Quality assurance

During 2023, MWB maintained its unqualified audit opinion as well as its certification from Netherlands Fundraising Regulator CBF.

Additionally, we systematized strategic planning and reporting processes across the organization. By introducing structured processes, we produced strategic documents collectively and timely, strengthening strategic alignment within the team and with the Supervisory Board.

### Duty of care

The health and wellbeing of our personnel are of critical importance. We believe that staff and volunteers deserve a supportive work environment that allows them to thrive. We strive to ensure that everyone is able to work effectively and sustainably, both in our programs and in the office.

MWB's Employee Handbook contains the contractual provisions that apply to all employees, including wellbeing provisions relating to workstation, working-time reduction, working-from-home and ICT allowance, as well as disability accommodations.

As part of our policies promoting a supportive and healthy work environment for our team, we engaged a dedicated Well-Being and Integrity Consultant in 2023, who conducted a review of our existing well-being and duty of care policies, practices and accommodations. A new wellbeing framework was developed, which will be rolled out in 2024.

## GOVERNANCE

### Organizational form

MWB is a nonprofit foundation (*stichting*) established in the Netherlands with public benefit status (*ANBI*). MWB was granted certification by Netherlands Fundraising Regulator CBF in 2021, which was maintained through 2023.

The organization's leadership consists of a Supervisory Board (*Raad van Toezicht*) and an Executive Board (*Raad van Bestuur*).

### Executive Board

The Executive Board is charged with the organization's management under the supervision of the Supervisory Board and is formed by a single member: Founder and Director, Laura Hassler.

### Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board is composed of members with a wide and relevant range of backgrounds and expertise. Members are appointed for a period of four years, and may be reappointed for a maximum additional four years. 2023 saw some shifts of membership, as terms expired, and we welcomed several new members.



**Laila Abid (Chair through June 2023)**

Appointed June 1, 2015; term expired June 2023

VP/Head of Corporate Communications and PR at Paramount  
Member of Supervisory Board at HKU and Theater Rotterdam  
Chair RvT Volksuniversiteit Amsterdam and Chair Rose Stories



**Eduard Nazarski (ad interim Chair from June 2023)**

Appointed January 1, 2016

Chair of Supervisory Board at Pax for Peace, Chair of Supervisory Board at Oostpool (theater company), Chair of Netherlands Peace Studies Foundation



**Bertus Borgers**

Appointed March 4, 2020

Independent musician, producer, writer  
Co-founder and Executive Director Fontys Rockacademie 1999-2012.

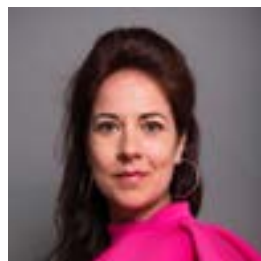


**Heba El-Kholy**

Appointed March 4, 2020

Former United Nations Resident Coordinator  
Independent advisor, International Development and Peace-building  
Non-Executive Board Member at ODI Europe  
Member of Governing Council, Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation





**Charmayne Sijm**  
Appointed December 1, 2020

Attorney at Hogan Lovells Law Firm



**Leslie Snider**  
Appointed October 13, 2017

Founder of Peace in Practice, psychiatrist and global consultant in mental health and psychosocial support in humanitarian settings  
Member of the Olympic Refugee Foundation Think Tank



**Jaap Wortel (ad interim until December 31, 2023)**  
Appointed April 17, 2023

Treasurer, Netherlands GroenLinks Party; Treasurer of national board of Netherlands GroenLinks Party; Treasurer of International Foundation GroenLinks; Treasurer of the Historical Association Broek in Waterland; Treasurer of Waterlandsmuseum De Speeltoren; Chair of Broeker Bridge Club



**Yiğit Aksakoğlu**  
Appointed June 14, 2023

Co-founder of Mahalle Art & Kultur Providing solutions for the employment of artists with a refugee, asylum seeker, paperless, and/or in exile background.



**Kick van der Mark**  
Appointed September 13, 2023

Corporate Communications Manager at Plan International

## Remuneration of Directors, Supervisory Board members and employees

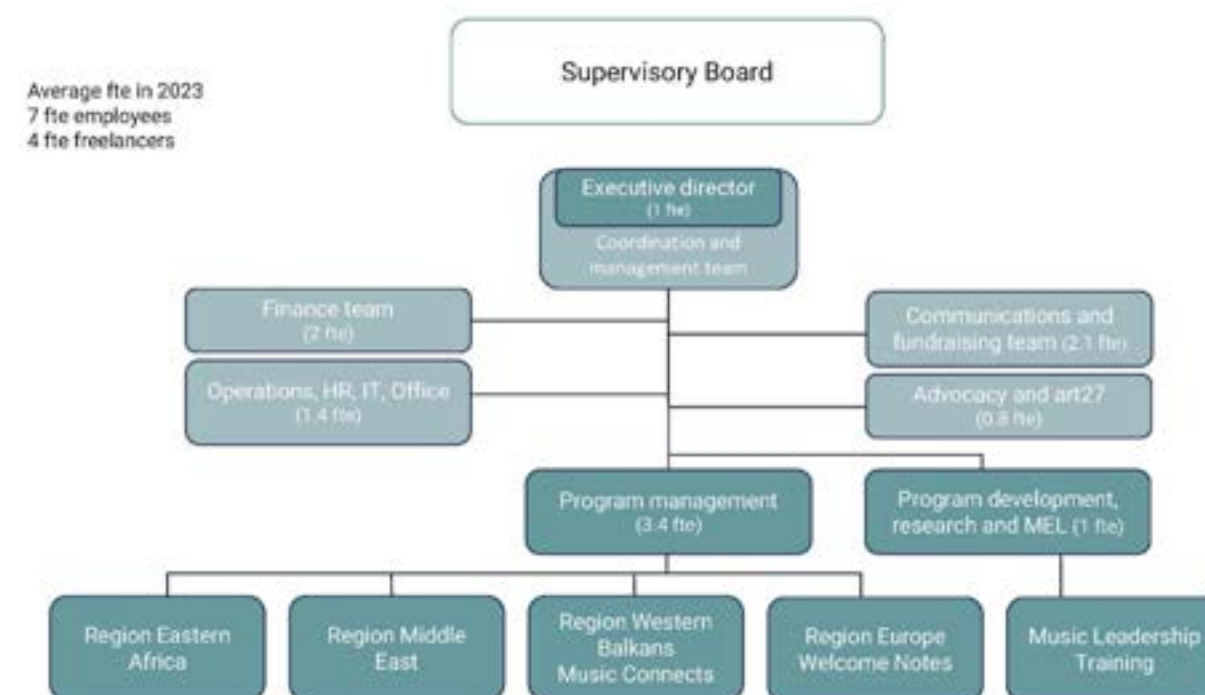
Supervisory Board members are not remunerated for their work on MWB's Supervisory Board.

The remuneration of Director Laura Hassler (Executive Board) is determined by the Supervisory Board in accordance with the Remuneration Scheme for Charity Organizations [*Regeling Beloning Goede Doelen Organisaties*] drawn up by Goede Doelen Nederland. The remuneration and any compensation of the Executive Board is clarified in the annual accounts.

## Human resources

In 2023, MWB employed eight people representing a total of 7.0 FTE. Additionally, we worked with nine freelancers representing an average of 4 FTE. We had three volunteers in 2023.

## Organizational chart





# SAFEGUARDING AND INTEGRITY

## Policies and procedures

MWB works in diverse environments, often with vulnerable populations. We believe in professionalism, equality, and accountability. We respect the communities we work in and the people with whom we work – whether participants or colleagues. MWB does not tolerate any form of harassment, discrimination, bribery, or corruption. To this end, we have developed and adopted policies to protect participants and stakeholders. By signing a contract with MWB, staff, freelancers, volunteers, interns, and partners agree to the policies listed below. Where necessary and possible, we provide additional training in these areas

- Safeguarding: ensuring the protection of children and vulnerable adults benefiting from our work,
- Bullying and harassment: ensuring the protection of personnel, volunteers, and interns,
- Anti-corruption: promoting honest and ethical behavior throughout the organization, and providing mechanisms for reporting unethical conduct,
- Safety and security: providing mechanisms to ensure the safety of personnel traveling to project locations,
- Privacy and data protection: enforcing the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Netherlands General Data Protection Regulation (*Algemene verordening gegevensbescherming*, AVG),
- Cyber security: protecting our organization from cyber risks and attacks,
- Code of conduct: providing guidelines for appropriate and professional conduct for our personnel, freelancers, interns, and volunteers, as well as key safeguarding principles. The code of conduct is signed by all individuals entering into a contractual relationship with MWB.

## Reporting system

MWB has a reporting system in place where staff, volunteers, interns, partners, and beneficiaries can report any concern, violation or transgression relating to our policies or code of conduct. This reporting system includes an external reporting channel and anonymous reporting forms. Our Safeguarding and Integrity Reporting system applies to all our integrity policies.

For more information, please refer to the [Safeguarding and Integrity page](#) on our website.

## Reports and complaints in 2023

In 2023, MWB received no reports under our Safeguarding and Integrity reporting system, and no complaints through our complaints form.

## Social responsibility

We promote social responsibility within the organization and programs through the following policy measures:

### Environment and travel

To minimize our carbon footprint, local and regional travel is organized by the most environmentally efficient means (public transport for distances under 500 km where possible). While, due to the international, cooperative nature of our work, the distance between program countries, and the poor infrastructure in several program countries, it is not possible to entirely avoid air travel, air travel is limited to a minimum and is planned according to the shortest route and with direct flights where available.

### Gender balance

MWB is a predominantly female-led organization. Most of our programs are designed to empower girls and young women through central roles in activities: as band leaders, workshop leaders, sound engineers, organizers, and project leaders. In some programs, we set quotas to ensure a minimum percentage of female trainees and trainers, to create equal opportunities for learning and career development and prevent implicit bias from teachers in favor of male participants. The roll-out of an EDI policy in 2024 will further support the inclusion of people of all gender identities in our work.

## Inclusion and diversity

Our programs are specifically designed to promote inclusion and diversity. This can refer to ethnic minorities, gender minorities, health minorities or other vulnerable groups.

## Knowledge sharing

We invest heavily in mutual learning in our programs, by training musicians and program staff, by engaging in learning conversations with our partner organizations, and by encouraging and facilitating mutual learning among our partner organizations.

## Communication with stakeholders

MWB involves its stakeholders in its decision-making processes around the development of new projects, the development of new activities in existing projects, the offer of training, and the geographic scope of our work, through a process of co-creative decision making.

- People living in or coming from war and conflict affected areas directly or indirectly participating in music projects are part of the process of project development and then provide feedback and input through surveys, Most-Significant-Change interviews, interviews with evaluators and researchers, and conversations with representatives of partner organizations and our project managers. The development of (pilot) projects and the planning of new project cycles are informed by the perspectives of these beneficiaries.
- Educators, activists, and community organizers living or working in war and conflict affected areas provide input on target populations' needs, opportunities and risks relating to the project's context, formal and informal feedback from target populations, during meetings with program managers, during site visits, during interviews by evaluators and researchers, and are involved in the writing of project proposals and reports.
- Educators, activists, community organizers, and researchers engaging with music and social change are reached through our training program and provide feedback through surveys and through follow-up interviews. Feedback is incorporated by the training team and used in subsequent training cycles.
- Grantmakers, policy makers, diplomatic missions, and members of the NGO community provide strategic input and direction through grant priorities in calls for proposals, during meetings with program managers and our Director, and in their verbal and written responses to narrative reports. MWB additionally engages with these stakeholders through conferences, panel discussions and round tables.
- Press and opinion makers: visit our programs, meet and interview beneficiaries, partners, trainers, and program managers, and report on our work. MWB has a practice of requesting a first draft for fact-checking to ensure accurate representation of our work and prevent harm to beneficiaries. Beneficiary consent is always sought prior to engaging with the press.
- Private donors, musicians organizing or hosting benefit events, and other parties supporting or raising awareness of our work: engage with us through donations, through attendance of events, through responses on social media, and subscriptions to newsletters.



# MAIN RISKS FACING THE ORGANIZATION

Risk	Description	Probability	Severity	Risk assessment	Mitigation measures
Strategic					
Program growth and/or recruitment challenges overextend staff capacity	Growth at programs and development of new programs puts additional pressure on existing team.	High	Medium	Medium-High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Assessment and budgeting of staffing needs to enable growth of the team as needed.</li></ul>
Loss of relevance of programs to peacebuilding mission	External context in program region evolves in a way where music activities cease to contribute strategically to MWB's peacebuilding mission.	Low	Medium	Low-Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Annual program assessment in consultation with program stakeholders.</li></ul>
Operational					
Brain drain at projects	Loss of key trained and talented staff in project locations.	Medium-High	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continuous training of young talents, capacity building by partner organizations.</li></ul>
Safeguarding and integrity risks	The occurrence of one or more incidents as described in MWB's Safeguarding, Bullying and Harassment, or Anti-Corruption Policies and Procedures	Medium	High	Medium-High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Safeguarding and Integrity policies are assessed every year, staff are trained on policies, measures are in place (windowed doors, avoidance of one-on-one situations etc.), internal audits are conducted annually.</li></ul>
Disruption of relationships with partner organizations	The occurrence of integrity issues, financial and organizational instability, communication or capacity issues of partner organizations may impact the continuity of programs.	Medium-High	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Partnership assessment, ongoing collaborative meetings and monitoring visits, strong networks in program regions.</li></ul>
Financial					
Loss of financial support from contributors/credit risk	Significant reduction in grants and donations from one or more sources of income.	Medium	High	Medium-High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Spread out fundraising strategy over multiple funding sources.</li><li>Financial decision-making throughout the year, in line with fundraising progress.</li><li>Maintain the continuity reserve so that the sudden loss can be temporarily absorbed</li></ul>
Liquidity risk	MWB to advance a percentage at the end of major grants before final project closing	Low-Medium	Medium-High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Build and maintain continuity/general reserves in proportion to the organizational and operational scope.</li><li>Work with a cash forecast tool to anticipate risks.</li></ul>
External					
Safety and security at programs	Risk of security incidents in program countries, community backlash against program participants, risk of incidents incurred by international staff	Medium-High	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In depth context monitoring, risk assessments for programs, close communication with partner organizations, temporary suspension of activities or changing nature or location of activities, Safety &amp; Security Policy, incident reporting, travel insurance.</li></ul>
Anti-NGO legislation	Program countries introduce anti-NGO legislation putting pressure on local partners and/or making it difficult to transfer funds to target countries	Medium	Medium-High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Knowledge of the region and political context, communication with and screening of local partners. Non-political perception/image of programs helps programs fly below radar.</li></ul>



# INFORMATION ON FINANCIAL POLICY AND RESULTS

## Analysis of the balance of income and expenses

In 2023, MWB ran six international music programs alongside its advocacy, educational and outreach activities, pursuing its three strategic objectives. We focused on consolidating and stabilizing our current main programs.

We set an ambitious fundraising goal for 2023, increasing our annual budget to €1,347,920, compared to a total expenditure of €992,788 in 2022: a 36% increase for our fundraising team. This increase was justified by the fact that a portion of 2023 program funding had been raised in 2022 and by the intention to diversify income sources.

While we were unable to achieve our total goal, we raised €1,075,028: a 30% increase compared to our total income raised in 2022. Through careful financial planning, we were able to reduce the budget shortfall, achieving a total expenditure of €1,150,445 (85% of the budget), increased by approximately 16% compared to 2022. 90% was spent on objectives (€1,031,245), 4% on fundraising (€49.979), and 6% on management costs (€69,221).

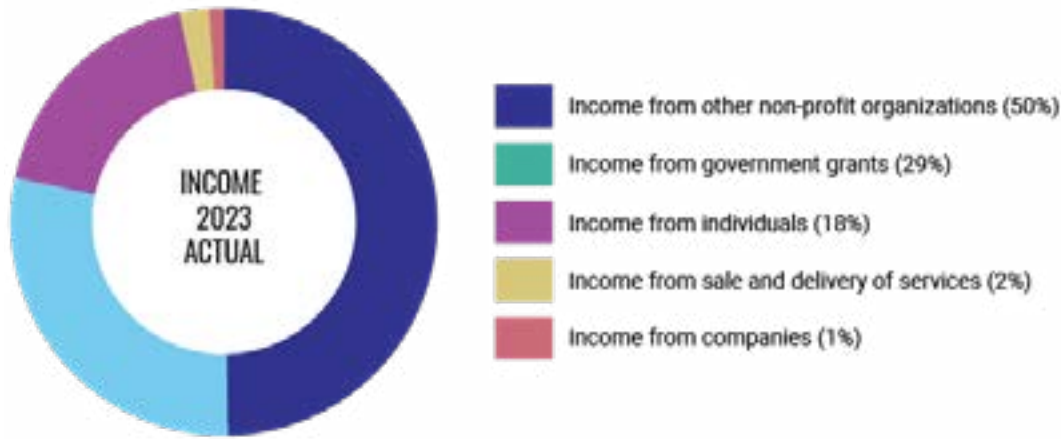
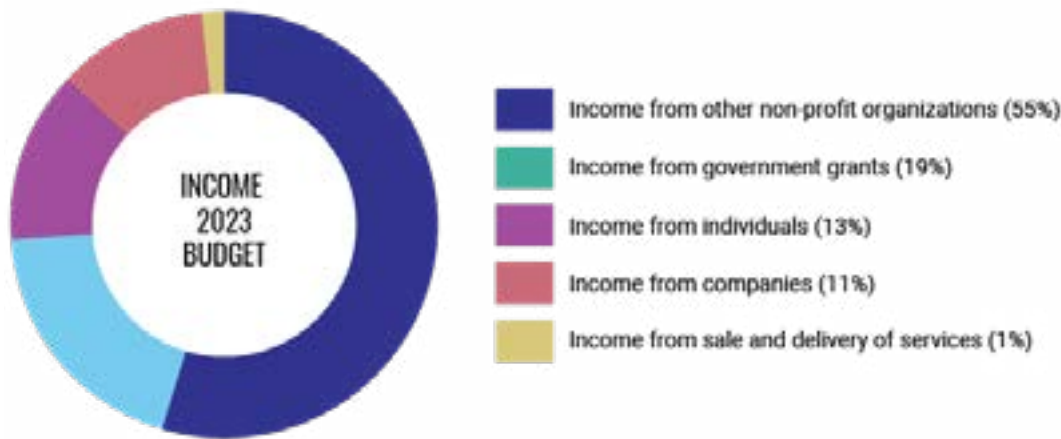
While we mitigated the loss through a successful year-end campaign, we closed the year with a negative result of €75,417 (before allocation of financial income and expenditure).

The negative result was due to a combination of factors: long-term fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, setbacks in recruitment processes and unforeseen HR costs. The 2023 loss was also related to measures taken to strengthen our longer-term sustainability by investing in fundraising to stabilize our income, and investing in operations to relieve our overburdened team. We expect that these measures will lead to recovery in 2024 and beyond.

## Income and expenditure distribution

We recognize the importance of building a stable and diverse portfolio of income sources to decrease dependency on short-term fundraising outcomes, especially as we are committed to multi-year projects and partnerships, and working in vulnerable contexts where unexpected changes or urgent needs may arise at any moment.

While our budget prioritizes expenditure on objectives (90%) and seeks to minimize expenditure on management and administration, we recognize the importance of adequate systems of planning and control, administration, management, and safeguarding and integrity, and we strive to find a good balance between efficiency and quality.



There was no exceptional expenditure in 2023.

## One-off and annually recurring income

The majority of the income (95%) raised in 2023 was of a one-off nature. This included single donations from private donors, grants for specific project cycles, and income generation tied to specific services or sales. Recurring donations represented the remaining 5% of our total income: €50,747 from about 280 donors who pledge regular contributions to MWB.

We should note that several donors who provide one-off grants and donations are long-term supporters and have donated to us over many years. We have defined income derived from these donors as “one-off” as these grants and donations were tied to specific activity cycles or events and contingent upon the approval of applications from MWB.

## Fundraising methods used

Over the years, we have developed a diversified fundraising portfolio, reducing dependence on a single source or single type of donation, and increasing the sustainability of our organization and programs.

Our fundraising channels include:

- Institutional fundraising (governmental, semi-governmental, international and supranational organizations, embassies, foundations, and religious organizations),
- Private fundraising (members who donate on regular basis), as well as one-off and recurring donors who donate in response to social media and other campaigns, direct mailings, and direct fundraising,
- Benefits concerts and other events,
- Sponsorships (mainly from the music industry),
- In-kind support (both corporate and private),
- Income generation (training revenue, merchandise sales, and tickets from events).



**Ratio between expenditure on objectives, on fundraising, and on management and administration**  
The distribution of expenses was 90% on objectives (budget 89%), 4% on fundraising (budget 5%), and 6% on management and administration (budget 6%).



**Ratio between fundraising costs and benefits raised**  
The total cost of fundraising as a percentage of the total income from fundraising was 5% in 2023, in line with the budgeted ratio.

**Policy regarding reserves and funds**  
Information on our policy regarding reserves and funds is provided under Notes to the Financial Statements and Notes to the Balance Sheet.

*Laura J. Hassler*

**Laura Hassler,**  
Director







# ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2023

After appropriation of results, in euros

Assets	31/12/2023	31/12/2022
Current assets		
Receivables and prepayments (1)	79,013	91,322
Cash and cash equivalents (2)	551,704	921,321
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>630,717</b>	<b>1,012,643</b>
Liabilities		
Reserve and funds (3)		
Continuity Reserve (3.1)	71,494	135,000
Designated Reserve (3.2)	-	28,796
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>71,494</b>	<b>163,796</b>
Earmarked Funds (3.3)	74,565	56,590
<b>Total reserves and funds</b>	<b>146,059</b>	<b>220,386</b>
Liabilities (4)		
Current liabilities	484,658	792,257
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>630,717</b>	<b>1,012,643</b>



# STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES FOR 2023

In euros

## Income (5)

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Income from individuals (5.1)	197,216	173,100	123,915
Income from companies	10,128	150,000	11,079
Income from other non-profit organizations	534,392	717,860	516,760
Income from government grants	308,812	250,000	135,121
<b>Total fundraising income</b>	<b>1,050,548</b>	<b>1,290,960</b>	<b>786,875</b>
Income from sale of products and delivery of services	23,549	18,000	36,603
Other income	931	3,000	882
<b>Total income</b>	<b>1,075,028</b>	<b>1,311,960</b>	<b>824,360</b>

## Expenses (6)

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Peacebuilding through music programs	859,671	970,591	718,174
Advocacy, dissemination, and education	171,574	232,066	183,113
<b>Expenses on objectives</b>	<b>1,031,245</b>	<b>1,202,657</b>	<b>901,287</b>
Fundraising	49,979	69,205	42,773
Management and administration	69,221	76,059	48,728
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>1,150,445</b>	<b>1,347,920</b>	<b>992,788</b>
Result before allocation of financial income and costs	- 75,417	- 35,960	- 168,428
Financial income and expenses (6.2)	- 1,090		864
<b>Sum of income and expenses</b>	<b>- 74,327</b>	<b>- 35,960</b>	<b>- 169,292</b>

## Appropriation of result

In euros

Addition to/withdrawal from:	2023	2022
Continuity Reserve	- 63,506	10,000
General Reserve		
Designated Reserve	- 28,796	465
Earmarked Funds	17,975	- 179,757
<b>Total changes in reserves and funds</b>	<b>- 74,327</b>	<b>- 169,292</b>

The result for 2023 amounts to -€74,000. The negative result is covered from the reserves intended for this purpose.

## Performance indicators

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Total costs of direct fundraising in % of total fundraising income	5%	5%	5%
Total costs of management and administration in % of total income	6%	6%	6%
Total expenses on objectives in % of total expenses	90%	89%	91%



# CASH FLOW STATEMENT

In euros

	2023		2022	
Result		- 74,327		- 169,292
Depreciations				-
Change in working capital				
Changes in receivables and prepayments	12,309		- 31,129	
Changes in current liabilities	- 307,599		670,837	
Total change in working capital		- 295,289		639,708
Cash flow from operating activities		- 369,617		470,416
Investment tangible fixed assets	-		-	
Cash flow from investing activities		-		-
Net cash flow		- 369,617		470,416
Opening balance cash and cash equivalents		921,321		450,905
Closing balance cash and cash equivalents		551,704		921,321





# NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

## General

The annual accounts are drawn up according to the accounting principles generally accepted in the Netherlands in accordance with the guideline RJ 650 (Fundraising Organizations). The annual accounts are compared to the approved 2023 budget and the actual accounts for 2022.

The 2023 annual accounts form an integral part of Musicians Without Borders’ Annual report (*Jaarverslag*). The Annual Report gives a detailed overview of and accounts for Musicians Without Borders’ activities, programs and results.

The 2023 Statement of Income and Expenses is based on the period from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023.

All the amounts and figures are presented in euro.

## General notes for valuation assets and liabilities

### Receivables and liabilities

Receivables are recognized at nominal value less any provision of doubtful accounts. The current liabilities are recognized at nominal value.

Receivables, pre-payments and accrued income are recognized in the balance sheet from the moment of the establishment of contractual rights.

Current liabilities are recognized in the balance sheet at the moment of the establishment of the contractual obligations.

## Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement is compiled according to the indirect method. Cash flows from foreign currencies are converted into euro at the exchange rate ruling at the balance sheet date. All cash is available to the Foundation.

## Reserves and funds

Reserves and funds of Musicians Without Borders include the Continuity Reserve, the Designated reserve and the Earmarked Funds. Additions and withdrawals to/from the reserves and funds are determined from the appropriation of the result. The Supervisory and Executive Boards determine the desired levels of the Continuity and Designated Reserves.

## General

Revenues and expenses in the Statement of Income and Expenses are allocated to the period to which they relate. The result is determined as the difference between income generated by contributions and other sources, and the costs and other charges for the year.

## Cost allocation

Expenses are allocated to the year to which they relate. All expenses are allocated among the following categories:

- Expenses on objectives,
- Expenses on fundraising,
- Management and administration.

## Transactions in foreign currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are converted into euros at the exchange rate of the transaction date. Transactions in foreign currencies from implementing partner organizations are converted into euros at the real exchange rate determined at the moment of the transfer of funds to partners.

# NOTES TO BALANCE SHEET AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2023

In euros

## RECEIVABLES AND PREPAYMENTS (1)

The receivables and prepayments are:

	2023	2022
Receivables from donors (1.1)	26,807	28,737
Receivables from delivery of services	1,602	-
Other receivables	1,935	9,619
Prepayments to project partners	45,992	49,834
Other prepayments	2,677	3,132
<b>Total receivables and prepayments</b>	<b>79,013</b>	<b>91,322</b>

## Receivables from donors (1.1)

	2023	2022
Grants	9,000	25,486
Contribution and pledges	170	205
Donations and gifts	17,637	3,045
<b>Total receivables from donors</b>	<b>26,807</b>	<b>28,737</b>

All receivables originated in 2023 and are qualified as short-term and expected to be received within one year. A provision for doubtful debts is unnecessary.

- **Receivables from donors** refer to donations, pledges, grants and other benefits granted in 2023 but not yet received per December 31, 2023.
- **Other receivables** originated mainly from bank interest to be received.
- **Pre-payments to project partner organizations** are amounts paid in advance to implementing partner organizations under (multi-)year partnership agreements, for which Musicians Without Borders will receive financial reports according to project deadlines and activity plans.
- **Other pre-payments** include costs paid in advance relating to the following year(s), for costs of website domains, software subscriptions, insurance and deposits.



## CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS (2)

	31/12/2023	31/12/2022
Cash at bank	550,086	919,313
Cash and cash equivalents	1,618	2,008
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>551,704</b>	<b>921,321</b>

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in-hand and bank balances.

The cash is freely available to the foundation.

The decrease of the cash balance available to the Foundation at the end of 2023 is explained by the pre-financing payment of €800,000 received in June 2022 from the European Education and Culture Executive Agency, implementing agency of the European Commission's Creative Europe program, for a 48-month grant for the Music Connects project that started in July 2022. The cash balance at the end of 2023 includes the amount of the grant allocated to the next period.

## RESERVES AND FUNDS (3)

In euros

### Continuity Reserve (3.1)

The changes in the Continuity Reserve are:

	2023	2022
Opening balance January 1	135,000	125,000
Appropriated result	-63.506	10,000
<b>Closing balance December 31</b>	<b>71,494</b>	<b>135,000</b>

The Continuity Reserve is intended to offset short and medium-term risks and ensure that the Foundation can meet its obligations in the future. The Supervisory Board and Executive Board have determined that the desired level of this reserve based on the perceived risk should be no less than 10% of the following year's budget. This represents approximately three months of operating costs of the following year's budget, mitigating the organizational risk of loss of income.

As per year-end 2023, the Continuity Reserve is not in line with this amount, having decreased to approximately €71,000. The organization experienced an unanticipated situation related to staff capacity which impacted the reserve. We monitored the situation during the year and took several mitigation measures to reduce the risk that the Continuity Reserve decreases further. The Foundation commits to increasing the Continuity Reserve over the next years, striving to restore the level of 10% by year-end 2025.

The Continuity Reserve is in compliance with the requirements of the standards set out by *Goede Doelen Nederland*. These standards stipulate that the maximum amount of the Continuity Reserve should not exceed 1.5 times the organization's annual costs. This calculation is made in accordance with Annex 3 of guideline RJ650 issued by the Dutch Accounting Standards Board [*Raad voor de Jaarverslaggeving*], and amounted to a maximum of €685,956 for Musicians Without Borders in 2023.

### Designated Reserve (3.2)

The changes in the Designated Reserve are:

	2023	2022
Opening balance January 1	28,796	28,331
Appropriated result	-28,796	465
<b>Closing balance December 31</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28,796</b>

Designated Reserve are funds with a specific purpose, for which the Executive Board determines a restriction on spending. The Designated Reserve is not required to be paid by year-end. At the end of 2023 the Designated reserve was fully spent towards the Foundation's objectives and operating loss.

### Earmarked Funds (3.3)

The changes in the Earmarked Funds are:

	2023	2022
Opening balance January 1	56,590	236,348
Appropriated result	17,975	-179,758
<b>Closing balance December 31</b>	<b>74,565</b>	<b>56,590</b>

	2023	2022
Palestine: Bara'em Ghirass	26,413	44,701
Europe: Welcome Notes	2,724	3,360
Jordan: Al-Musiqa Tajm'ana	36,333	8,027
Training	8,593	-
Other funds	502	502
<b>Total Earmarked Funds</b>	<b>74,565</b>	<b>56,590</b>

The Earmarked Funds are earmarked by donors and must be spent on specific purposes (e.g. project costs). The funds allocated are vital to the continuation of the Foundation's national and international projects.

The Earmarked Funds reserved as of December 31, 2022, were nearly fully spent during 2023, in line with planned project activities and operations. The balance at the end of 2023, €74,565, consists mainly of funds raised for the project Bara'em Ghirass in Palestine, whose project period does not coincide with the financial year, and the project Al-Musiqa Tajm'ana, Jordan, on hold for most of the year due to administrative processes in the project location.



# Change in reserves and funds during the year 2023

In euros

	01/01/2023	Decrease	Increase	31/12/2023
Continuity Reserve	135,000	78,490	14,984	71,494
Designated Reserve	28,796	28,796	-	-
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>163,796</b>	<b>107,286</b>	<b>14,984</b>	<b>71,494</b>
<b>Earmarked Funds</b>				
Palestine: Bara'em Ghirass	44,701	44,701	26,413	26,413
Europe: Welcome Notes	3,360	3,360	2,724	2,724
Jordan: Al-Musiqa Tajm'ana	8,027	8,027	36,333	36,333
Training	-	-	8,593	8,593
Other Funds	502	-	-	502
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>56,590</b>	<b>56,088</b>	<b>74,063</b>	<b>74,565</b>
<b>Total reserves and funds</b>	<b>220,386</b>	<b>163,374</b>	<b>89,047</b>	<b>146,059</b>





CURRENT LIABILITIES (4)

In euros

The current liabilities are:

	2023	2022
Accounts payable	49,985	35,571
Accounts payable to partner organizations	3,115	37,500
Grants received in advance	405,181	694,643
Personnel liabilities	26,377	24,544
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>484,658</b>	<b>792,257</b>

The decrease in liabilities at the end of 2023 is mainly due to the decrease of the **grants received in advance** which consists of restricted funding received by MWB in the financial year, while the related project expenses have not yet been incurred. Due to the nature of the grant contracts, income is not accounted for in the period in which the funds are received, but in the period in which the related expenses are recorded. The expenses related to grants received in advance in 2023 were in line with expected budget and the amount decreased accordingly.

**Accounts payable** refer to costs that the organization has incurred to implement projects and activities run during 2023. These are in line with the previous year, are short-term and are expected to be paid within the year. Under the expense recognition principle, all accounts payable refers to operational expenses related to the financial year 2023 for which the invoices received, or expected to be received, are not yet paid.

**Personnel liabilities** refer to the tax and social premiums that the Foundation will pay in 2024, payroll tax of December, paid in January 2024, and the holiday reserve paid in the Netherlands annually to all employees in May.

**Obligations that are not included in the Balance Sheet.** The annual liability for rent of the main office is €11,460. Rent is paid in advance at the end of every preceding month.

NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES FOR 2023

In euros

INCOME (5)

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Income from individuals (5.1)	197,216	173,100	123,915
Income from companies	10,128	150,000	11,079
Income from non-profit organizations	534,392	717,860	516,760
Income from other government grants	308,812	250,000	135,121
<b>Total fundraising income</b>	<b>1,050,548</b>	<b>1,290,960</b>	<b>786,875</b>
Income from sale of products and delivery of services	23,549	18,000	36,603
Other income	931	3,000	882
<b>Total income</b>	<b>1,075,028</b>	<b>1,311,960</b>	<b>824,360</b>

Incomes from individuals (5.1)

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Contributions	50,747	57,950	49,537
Donations and gifts	146,469	115,150	74,378
<b>Total income from individuals</b>	<b>197,216</b>	<b>173,100</b>	<b>123,915</b>

In 2023, Musicians Without Borders raised EUR 1,075,028, approximately 82% of the income budgeted, and some 30% more than the income raised in 2022. The deficit in funds raised is mainly due to the unraised funds from companies and other non-profit organizations, due to recruitment setbacks in our fundraising team in the first quarter of 2023. Mitigating actions deployed during the year led to a growth in income from individuals.

Further explanations per income source

MWB's main sources of income consisted of **donations from individuals and donations from non-profit organizations**, mostly private funds and foundations to which MWB applies directly for support of its international projects and core operations. Funds and foundations supporting MWB's work in 2023 included Porticus - Community Arts Lab, Soka Gakkai, Stichting Weeshuis der Doopsgezinden, Fondation Alta Mane, Foundation for International Information and Communication, De Nolte Stichting, Stichting Eekhoorn, Iona Stichting, Stichting Doopsgezind Wereldwerk, Haëlla Stichting, Elja Foundation, Borletti-Buitoni Trust, Stichting van Well van der Snoek, Rotary Club Bilthoven.



**Income from individuals** includes all donations received from private donors, restricted and unrestricted, throughout the year as result of MWB fundraising actions to support its work.

**Income from individuals** includes all donations received from private donors, restricted and unrestricted, throughout the year as result of MWB fundraising actions to support its work.

**Income from individuals - contributions** refers to individual donors who pledge regular contributions to MWB. In 2023 MWB received a total of €50,747 from approximately 280 contributors, in line with past years. This is an important contribution MWB can count on to sustain its core operations and support its objectives.

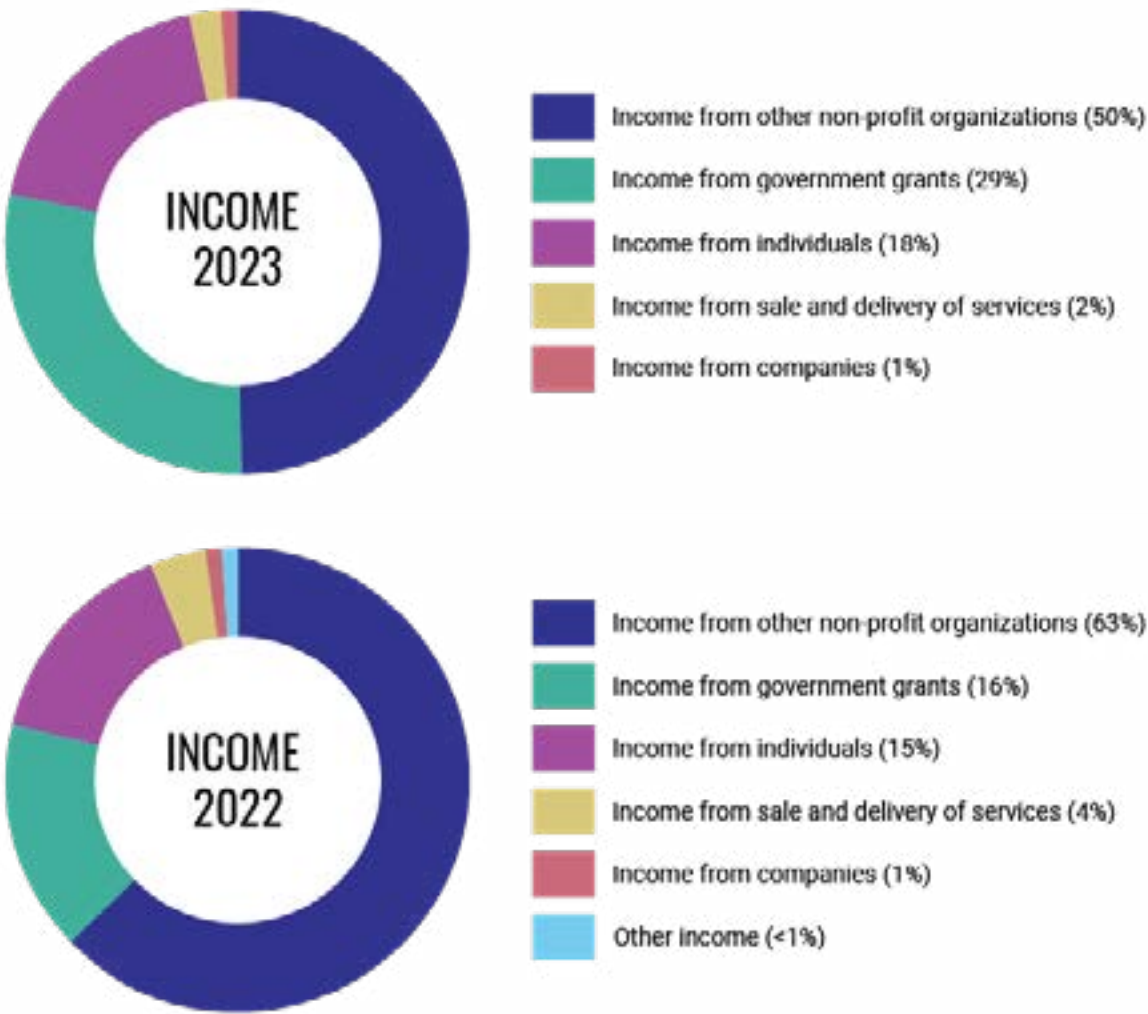
**Income from government grants:** In 2022 MWB received the pre-financing payment (80% of the total grant) of €800,000 from the European Education and Culture Executive Agency for the 48-month project “Music Connects: Rock Music Powers Inclusion Across Europe”, which started in July 2022. The amount of the grant allocated in 2023 reflects the total spent on activities that year.

Besides individual donations, MWB receives **donations from companies**. The largest donation in 2023 was received from Rational Games Inc.

The **income from sale of products and delivery of services** is part of the income generated from the delivery of training courses and activities related to advocacy and dissemination. MWB organized and implemented Music Leadership training in collaboration with Landesmusikakademie NRW (Germany), the Conservatorium of Amsterdam and the Leeds Beckett University (UK).

EXPENSES (6)

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Peacebuilding through music programs	859,671	970,591	718,174
Advocacy, dissemination, and education	171,574	232,066	183,113
Expenses on objectives	1,031,245	1,202,657	901,287
Fundraising	49,979	69,205	42,773
Management and administration	69,221	76,059	48,728
Total expenses	1,150,445	1,347,921	992,788





NOTES TO THE ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES (6)

	Expenses on objectives		Fundraising	Management and administration	Total expenses 2023	Budget 2023	Total expenses 2022
	Peacebuilding through music programs	Advocacy, dissemination, and education					
Contributions to implementing partners	334,647				334,647	412,997	321,693
Purchases and acquisitions	69,433	2,117	257	1,946	73,752	96,666	59,857
Outsourced work/Contracted services	198,285	62,062	14,243	12,686	287,275	278,097	179,693
Communications costs	8,117	2,035	2,553		12,705	61,283	32,107
Staff costs (6.1)	216,711	93,773	26,475	48,137	385,097	440,100	351,134
Housing costs	10,282	4,731	3,000	3,000	21,012	22,700	22,599
Office and general costs	22,196	6,857	3,452	3,452	35,956	36,077	25,706
Depreciation							
Total expenses	859,671	171,574	49,979	69,221	1,150,445	1,347,920	992,788

The above classifications are in accordance with the Model 3 of the Dutch RJ650 guidelines.

Contributions to implementing partners	Installments paid to partner organizations for project implementation expenses
Purchases and acquisitions	All goods procured from third parties (not outsourced), for example flights, accommodations, venue rental for project activities
Outsourced work/contracted services	Contracted services and costs of implementation outsourced by the organization to a third party
Communication costs	Costs of visibility and publicity targeting donors and the general public (advertisement, mailing, events, audio/video, promo material)
Staff costs	All personnel expenses
Housing costs	Rental, utilities and office cleaning costs
Office and general costs	Post, ICT, bank costs, audit administration and other general costs
Depreciation	Depreciation costs

Expenses are allocated to the cost category indicated in the approved annual budget. Small adjustments can be made as required for the implementation of activities.

Communications costs are allocated across both fundraising and objectives, as the actions of public engagement include both components of fundraising and awareness raising (Advocacy, dissemination and education).

The majority of purchases are occurred at project locations by the partner organizations; purchases made directly by MWB are mainly linked to costs on objectives.

Staff costs are allocated per category in proportion to time spent by personnel on the different types of activities. Working as a small team means that no single resource is 100% allocated to e.g. management and administration. Rather, everyone's costs are allocated to the different areas in proportion to the time dedicated to each.

Fundraising costs mainly consist of staff costs, allocated in proportion to employees' time dedicated to fundraising.

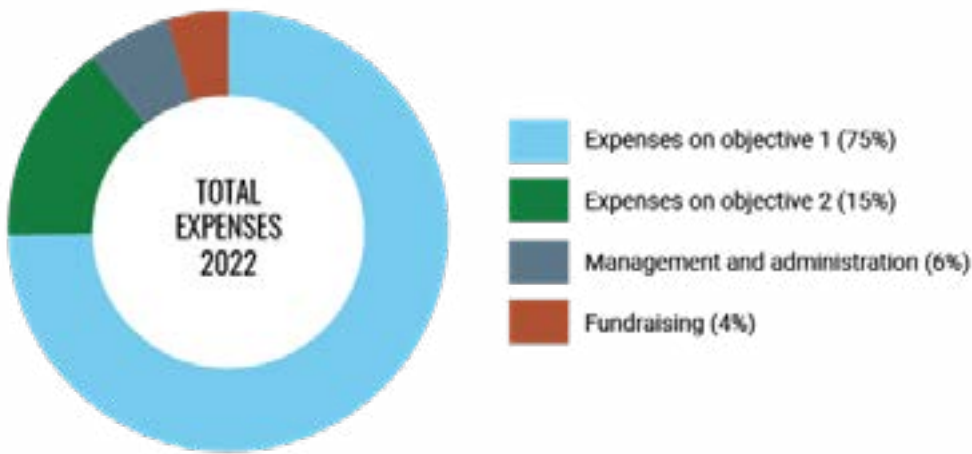
In 2023, MWB spent approximately 85% of the total budget, an increase of about 16% compared to the previous year. In 2023, the organization prioritized the achievement of Objective 1 (International music programs), where foreseen objectives were fully achieved. To mitigate the operating loss, a more restricted regime was followed with respect to Objective 2 (Advocacy and training) and Objective 3 (Professionalization), but also there the main objectives were achieved. Spending restrictions mainly affected training, international travel outside of programs, and general organizational costs.



Total expenses 2023

In euros

	Total	%
Expenses on objectives: peacebuilding through music programs	859,671	75%
Expenses on objectives: advocacy, dissemination, and education	171,574	15%
Fundraising	49,979	4%
Management and administration	69,221	6%
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>1,150,445</b>	<b>100%</b>



Staff costs (6.1)

In euros

	2023	2022
Salaries and wages	333,587	353,028
Social security and pension	51,326	49,393
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>384,913</b>	<b>402,421</b>
Other costs employees	7,076	5,861
Benefit WAZO	-6,892	-17,195
Subsidies NOW Noodmaatregel Overbrugging Werkgelegenheid	-	-39,953
<b>Total payroll expenses</b>	<b>385,097</b>	<b>351,134</b>
<b>Employees</b>	<b>6.7 FTE</b>	<b>7 FTE</b>

Salaries and wages of management

In euros

Below is a breakdown of salary and wage of the management in 2023:

Name	L.J. Hassler
Function	Executive board/Director
<b>Employment</b>	
Contract	Permanent
Hours	40
Part-time rate	100
Period	1/1/2023 - 31/12/2023
<b>Annual income</b>	
Gross salary	53,152
Holiday payment	4,252
Other remuneration	433
Total annual income	57,837
Pensions premium (employer part)	10,000
Payments termination of employment	-
Taxable allowance	-
Total remuneration and benefit 2023	67,837
Maximum annual salary (determined by Goede Doelen Nederland)	108,255
Ratio	64,54%
Total remuneration and benefit 2022	65,075

The Executive Board of Musicians Without Borders consists of one person, the Director, who is appointed by the Supervisory Board. The remuneration of the Director (Executive Board) of MWB, is €57,837 which is well below the maximum of €108,255 (one full-time employee for 12 months) as set by the guideline for Directors’ Remuneration of the Dutch association for fundraising organizations Goede Doelen Nederland (GDN), based on a BSD score for MWB of 365 points.

The annual remuneration together with all taxable allowances and all employer’s charges, pension compensation and other remuneration on the long term is €67,837 which is also well within the maximum set by the guidelines (€221,400).

At year-end the Director (Executive Board) does not have any outstanding loans, advances or guarantees from Musicians Without Borders.

Financial income and expenses (6.2): €-1,090

This amount is paid by Musicians Without Borders as positive interest applied to the banks in the Netherlands.



## ADOPTION OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

On March 27, 2024, Musicians Without Borders' Supervisory Board discussed and approved the annual accounts, result appropriation and management report prepared by the Executive Board.

The members of the Supervisory Board as per March 27, 2024, are:

- Eduard Nazarski (Chair),
- Embertus (Bertus) Borgers,
- Charmayne Sijm,
- Leslie Snider
- Heba El-Kholy
- Jaap Wortel
- Yiğit Aksakoğlu
- Kick van der Mark

## SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No subsequent events.





# LOOKING FORWARD: PLAN FOR 2024

In 2024, we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

Under Objective 1, to use music to build peace and achieve social change in communities and countries affected by conflict, we will:

- Continue working towards the stabilization of our programs in the Middle East, Central East Africa, the Western Balkans, and in Europe, and develop a new strategy for a sustained presence in Central America,
- Focus on MWB's strategic positioning in a context of increased polarization and heightened conflict and militarization.

Under Objective 2, to grow knowledge, expertise, and the global recognition of music's potential for peacebuilding and social change, we will:

- Showcase programs and methodology across MWB platforms (social media, newsletters, website),
- Pursue and accept engagements to present our work, our methodologies, and best practices at public events and conferences,
- Deliver training in our "music leadership" methodology.

To ensure that we have the capacity to implement the first two objectives according to standards of quality and integrity, we have defined a third objective: to build the capacity and quality-assurance systems needed to function as a stable, values-led organization in the field of music and peacebuilding.

Under Objective 3, we will:

- Invest in our fundraising and communications strategy to grow our reach and impact under Objectives 1 and 2,
- Enhance quality assurance systems: conduct annual external and internal audits, maintain CBF certification, and invest in MEL,
- Prioritize Wellbeing, Safeguarding and Safety: implement a Wellbeing Framework, encompassing policies, guidelines, and support mechanisms,
- Conduct program-specific safeguarding audits, identifying training needs and implementing necessary improvements,
- Strengthen context monitoring and security measures in project locations.

Please see our [2024 Annual Plan](#).

## 2024 Budget

	2024
Income	€
Income from individuals	224,000
Income from companies	111,000
Income from government grants	250,000
Income from other non-profit organizations	647,000
Total fundraising income	1,232,000
Income from sale of products and delivery services	20,000
Other Income	3,000
Total Income	1,255,000
Expenses	€
Peacebuilding through music programs	958,676
Advocacy, dissemination, and education	157,267
Expenses on objectives	1,115,943
Fundraising	89,870
Management and administration	68,591
Total Expenses	1,274,404
Result before allocation of financial income and expenses	(19,404)
Financial income and expenses	0
SUM OF INCOME AND EXPENSES	(19,404)



# PROGRAM AND FUNDING PARTNERS

Musicians Without Borders is proud of our long term relationships with trusted partners and donors, who are integral to the impact of our projects around the world.

We are especially grateful to collaborate with partners and donors who appreciate the long-term engagement needed to bring about lasting social change, particularly when working with people and communities whose lives have been disrupted by the impacts of war and armed conflict. Special thanks to:

## General partners



## In-kind donors



## Al-Musiqat Tajm'ana partners



## Bara'em Ghirass partners



## Bara'em Ghirass donors



## Music Connects partners



## Music Connects donors



## Rwanda Youth Music partners



## Rwanda Youth Music donors



## Soy Música partners



## Welcome Notes partners



## Welcome Notes donors





## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To: The board of directors and supervisory board of Stichting Musicians Without Borders

### A. Report on the audit of the financial statements 2023 included in the annual report

#### Our opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Stichting Musicians Without Borders based in Amsterdam.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of Stichting Musicians Without Borders as at 31 December 2023 and of its result for 2023 in accordance with the 'RJ-Richtlijn 650 Fondsenwervende instellingen' (Guideline for annual reporting 650 'Fundraising organisations' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board).

The financial statements comprise:

1. the balance sheet as at 31 December 2023;
2. the profit and loss account for 2023; and
3. the notes comprising of a summary of the accounting policies and other explanatory information.

#### Basis for our opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Dutch law, including the Dutch Standards of Auditing. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report.

We are independent of Stichting Musicians Without Borders in accordance with the Verordening inzake de onafhankelijkheid van accountants bij assurance-opdrachten (ViO, Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, a regulation with respect to independence) and other relevant independence regulations in the Netherlands. Furthermore we have complied with the Verordening gedrags- en beroepsregels accountants (VGBA, Dutch Code of Ethics).

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### B. Report on the other information included in the annual report

In addition to the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon, the annual report contains other information that consists of:

- Directors' report;
- Other information as required by Dutch laws and regulations.

Based on the following procedures performed, we conclude that the other information is consistent with the financial statements and does not contain material misstatements.

We have read the other information. Based on our knowledge and understanding obtained through our audit of the financial statements or otherwise, we have considered whether the other information contains material misstatements.

By performing these procedures, we comply with the requirements of the Dutch Standard 720. The scope of the procedures performed is substantially less than the scope of those performed in our audit of the financial statements.

Management is responsible for the preparation of the other information, including the Directors' report in accordance with the 'RJ-Richtlijn 650 Fondsenwervende instellingen' (Guideline for annual reporting 650 'Fundraising organisations' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board).

### C. Description of responsibilities regarding the financial statements

#### Responsibilities of management and the supervisory board for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the 'RJ-Richtlijn 650 Fondsenwervende instellingen' (Guideline for annual reporting 650 'Fundraising organisations' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board). Furthermore, management is responsible for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

As part of the preparation of the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern. Based on the financial reporting framework mentioned, management should prepare the financial statements using the going concern basis of accounting, unless management either intends to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Management should disclose events and circumstances that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern in the financial statements.

The supervisory board is responsible for overseeing the company's financial reporting process.

#### Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objective is to plan and perform the audit engagement in a manner that allows us to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence for our opinion.

Our audit has been performed with a high, but not absolute, level of assurance, which means we may not detect all material errors and fraud during our audit.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. The materiality affects the nature, timing and extent of our audit procedures and the evaluation of the effect of identified misstatements on our opinion.





We have exercised professional judgement and have maintained professional scepticism throughout the audit, in accordance with Dutch Standards on Auditing, ethical requirements and independence requirements. Our audit included among others:

- identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, designing and performing audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control;
- evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management;
- concluding on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting, and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause a company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluating the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures; and
- evaluating whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the supervisory board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant findings in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Hilversum, June 25, 2024

**KAMPHUIS & BERGHUIZEN**  
Accountants/Belastingadviseurs

**T. Wagenaar AA**





## CONTACT INFORMATION

Tolhuisweg 1  
1031 CL Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

RSIN Fiscal Number  
8093 84 322

+31 (0)20 330 5012  
[info@mwbn.org](mailto:info@mwbn.org)  
[musicianswithoutborders.org](http://musicianswithoutborders.org)

