



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Table of contents

Who we are	4	Annual Accounts	51
Executive Summary	4	Balance Sheet as at December 31, 2025	51
Our year in numbers	6	Statement of Income and Expenses for 2025	54
Mission, vision and objectives	9	Appropriation of result	55
Realization of Objectives	11	Performance Indicators	55
Realization of Objective 1: Use music to build peace and achieve social change in communities and countries affected by conflict	11	Cash Flow Statement	56
Western Balkans: Music Connects	12	Notes to the Annual Accounts	58
Central East Africa: Kivu Youth Music	14	General	58
Central East Africa: Rwanda Youth Music	16	General notes for valuation assets and liabilities	58
Palestine: Bara'em Ghrass	18	Cash flow statement	58
Jordan: Al-Musiq'a Tajm'ana	20	Reserves and funds	59
Europe: Welcome Notes NL	22	General	59
Europe: Welcome Notes BiH	24	Cost allocation	59
Europe: Welcome Notes Training	26	Transactions in foreign currencies	59
Realization of Objective 2: Grow knowledge, expertise, and the global recognition of music's potential for peacebuilding and social change.	28	Notes to Balance Sheet as at December 31, 2025	60
Introduction	28	Receivables and pre-payments (1)	60
Advocacy	28	Cash and cash equivalents (2)	61
Communications	31	Reserves and Funds (3)	61
Training Dissemination of practical skills	31	Earmarked Funds (3.2)	63
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)	33	Change in reserves and funds during the year 2025	64
Theory of Change	34	Liabilities (4)	65
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.	35	Notes to the statement of income and expenses for 2025	68
Strengthen core resources	35	Income (5)	68
Quality assurance and compliance	35	Income from individuals (5.1)	68
Duty of care, wellbeing, safeguarding, safety	36	Expenses (6)	71
Governance	36	Notes to the allocation of expenses (6)	72
Remuneration of Directors, Supervisory Board members and employees	38	Staff costs (6.1)	75
Conflicts of interest	38	Financial Income and Expenses (6.2)	76
Human resources	38	Adoption of Annual Accounts	76
Safeguarding and integrity	39	Subsequent events	76
Social and environmental responsibility	41	Looking forward: Plans for 2026	78
Communication with stakeholders	41	2026 Budget	78
Main risks facing the organization	42	Program and funding partners	80
Information on financial policies and results	43		
Analysis of the balance of income and expenses	43		
Ratio between expenditure on objectives, fundraising, and management and administration	45		
Fundraising sources and methods	46		
Result	47		
Policy on Reserves and Funds	48		
Our asset management	49		

Who we are

Executive Summary

When asked to reflect on 2025, I take pause. 2025 was marked by urgency and emergency. According to the ACLED (Armed Conflict Location and Event Data) Conflict Index, there were 204,605 “conflict events” worldwide throughout the year ([ACLED, 2025](#)). These numbers are so staggering that it’s easy to forget that every conflict devastates real lives, robs real parents of their children, real children of their parents, and real young people of a future. War destroys communities and cultures. War throws successive generations into a state of emergency, from which it is hard to find back the person you were, and the person you wanted to become.

In our work, we felt both sides of this reality: the overwhelm of unimaginable violence, but also the difference in the life of a child when they experience joy in a drum workshop, or pride in a song they wrote. In the face of fear, grief, and displacement, music brings back humanity, courage, and hope.

With our projects, we create zones of safety, islands of inclusion, in which visions can grow of inclusive, peaceful, and just societies. Because peaceful societies are built from the ground up, and can begin from a place of safety and creativity that grows into a community, that grows into a way of life, that grows into a way of thinking about the world.

In this Impact Report, we report on the work accomplished in 2025. For example in Democratic Republic of the Congo, where over 2,000 children in orphanages and IDP camps participated in music workshops. On the Palestinian West Bank, where 50 children attended daily music and orchestra lessons. And in emergency reception centers in the Netherlands and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where over 3,000 displaced children made music during over 300 workshops.

On behalf of Musicians Without Borders, I want to express our deepest gratitude to our partner organizations in DRC, Rwanda, Palestine, Jordan, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, throughout the European Union, and in the Netherlands. Musicians Without Borders has always worked in close collaboration with musicians and partner organizations who are experts in their regions and their fields. The quality and impact of our work are the result of these collaborations.

Some highlights of 2025:

- Our project in Palestine continued to serve children in the West Bank, despite road blocks, incursions, and escalating regional violence,
- While threats and violence in DRC increased, our project in Kivu responded flexibly, moving activities to orphanages when IDP (internally displaced people) centers closed,
- Despite rising tensions in Northern Kosovo, rock music project Music Connects brought young musicians from divided and marginalized communities in Kosovo and North Macedonia for a daily, mixed music program, with regional and international exchanges in Skopje, Mitrovica, Berlin, and the Netherlands,
- We developed Welcome Notes LOUDER, a project that amplifies the voices of displaced children in emergency reception centers in the Netherlands,
- We collaborated with academic researchers to study the social impact of our music programs,
- We invested in policy development and quality-control structures to ensure the safety, quality and integrity of our work,
- And we developed a strategic plan (2026-2028) to strengthen our project portfolio, invest in networks of changemakers, and amplify the voices of people with lived experience of war and armed conflict.

As always, we extend huge thanks to all who support the work of Musicians Without Borders. Thanks to you, we continue to prove that music can mean resistance to war at the most fundamental level.

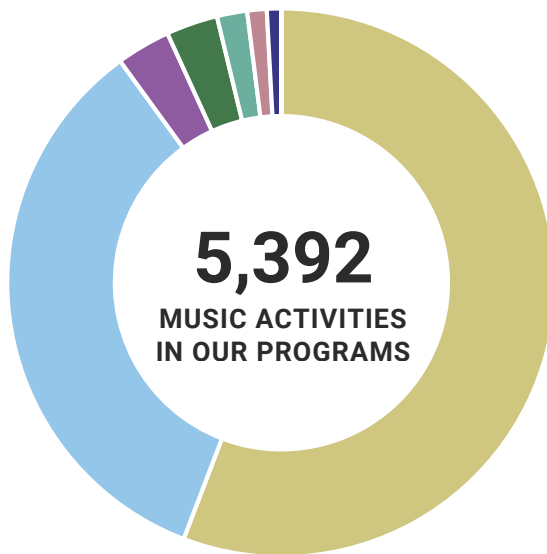


Laura Hassler,
Director

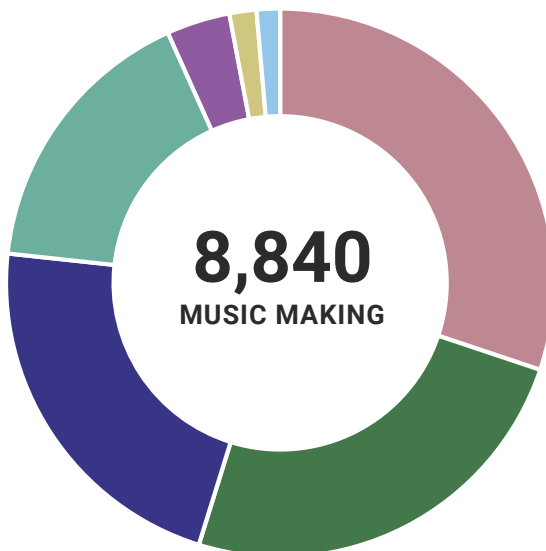
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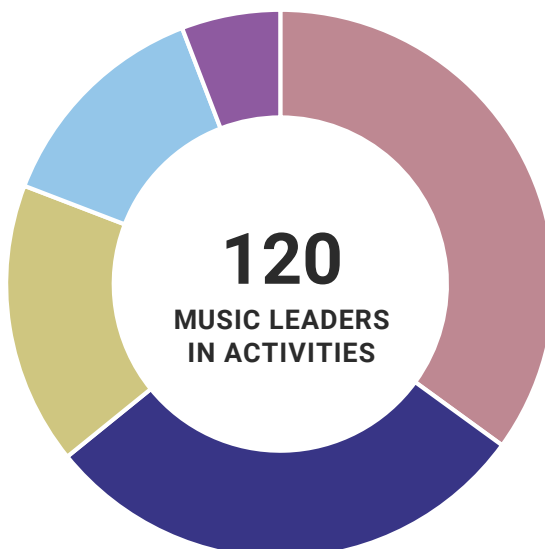
Our year in numbers



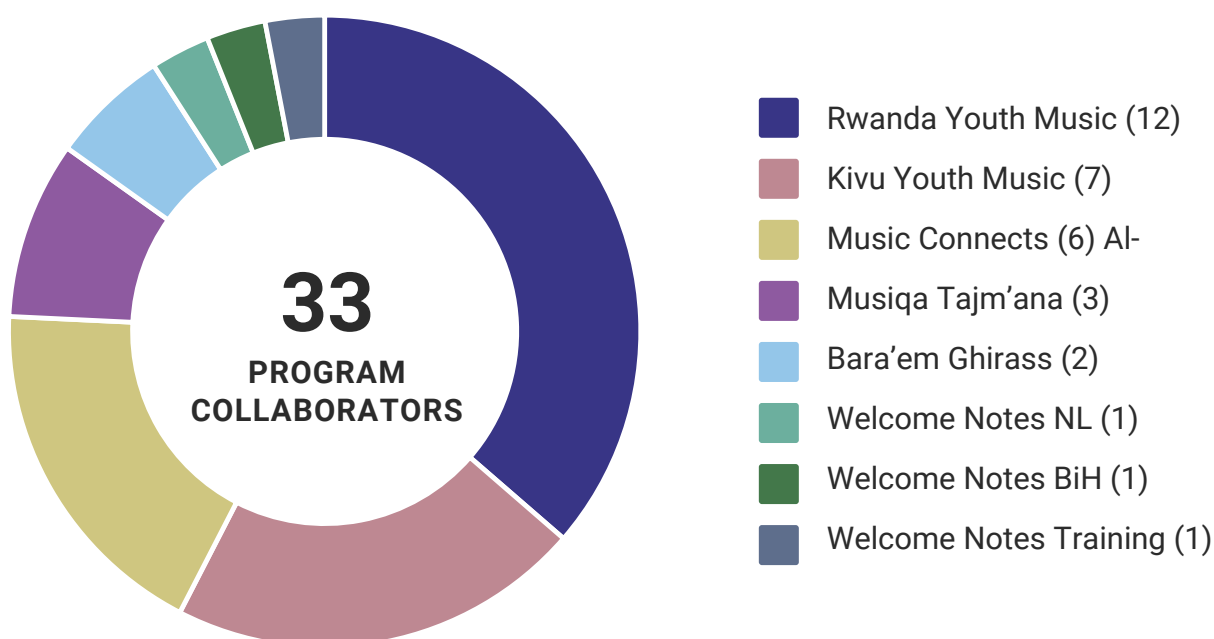
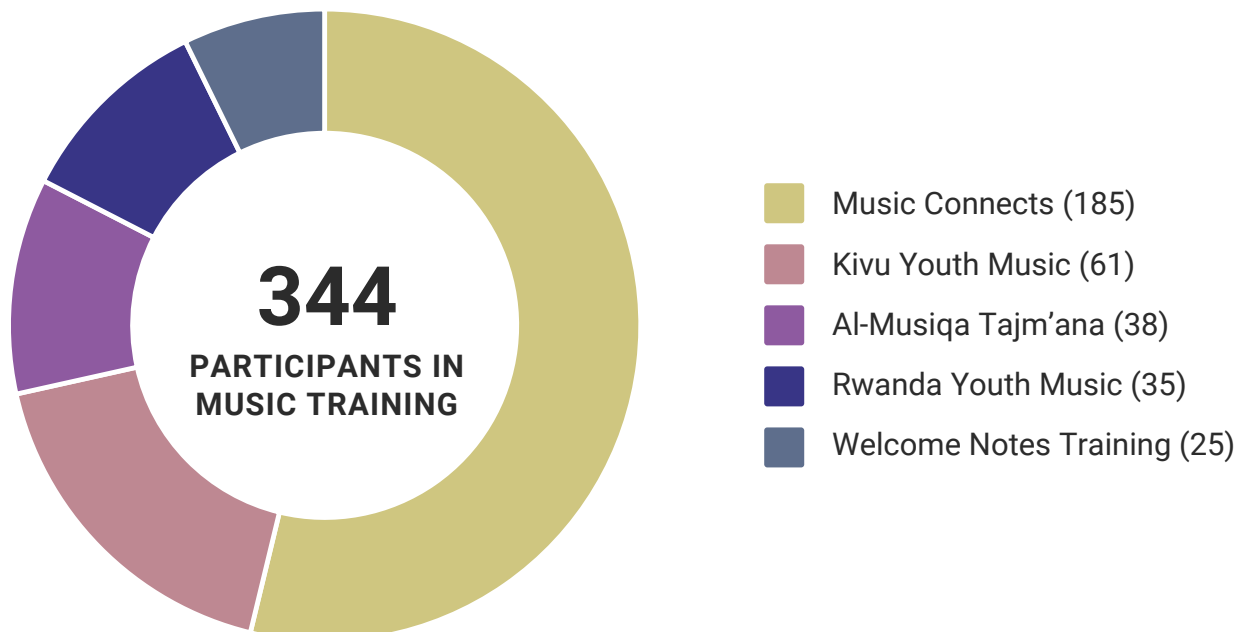
- Music Connects (3,009)
- Bara'em Ghirass (1,843) Al-
- Musiqat Tajm'ana (172)
- Welcome Notes BiH (164)
- Welcome Notes NL (96)
- Kivu Youth Music (62)
- Rwanda Youth Music (45)
- Welcome Notes Training (1)



- Kivu Youth Music (2,664)
- Welcome Notes BiH (2,180)
- Rwanda Youth Music (1,937)
- Welcome Notes NL (1,465)
- Al-Musiqat Tajm'ana (331)
- Music Connects (141)
- Bara'em Ghirass (122)



- Kivu Youth Music (42)
- Rwanda Youth Music (35)
- Music Connects (20)
- Bara'em Ghirass (16)
- Al-Musiqat Tajm'ana (7)



Participants in music making are the final direct beneficiaries of our music programs in target countries.

Music Trainees are people trained in music leadership, band coaching, or project management through our music and training program.

Training Hours are the number of hours of training delivered within our music and training program.

Music Leaders are the number of workshop leaders, teachers, and coaches leading activities in our music programs.

Music Activities are music lessons, workshops, concerts, band sessions, training sessions, and other music activities reaching our target groups.

Program Collaborators are the number of organizations partnering or collaborating with our music 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, Musicians Without Borders 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 work is inspired and informed by:

- 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, heal, and strengthen empathy,
- 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 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

At the core of Musicians Without Borders' work sit 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 follows migration streams and responds to the needs of forcibly displaced people as they arise.

In 2025, we delivered nearly 7,000 music activities to over 4,500 mostly young participants in music activities and training. We provided over 100 music leaders with over 1,000 hours of training.

In North Kivu, we shifted from working with large groups of children in temporary camps for internally displaced people to working with smaller, more stable groups of children living in orphanages, providing over 600 children with trauma-informed music activities.

In Palestine, we continued to provide music lessons and social care to children in the West Bank, despite road blocks, incursions, and escalating regional violence.

In the Western Balkans, over 140 young musicians from different ethnic groups produced original music together, and toured the Balkans and the EU, promoting an inclusive future for the region.

And in the Netherlands, we developed our project Welcome Notes LOUDER, amplifying the voices of children in emergency reception centers through artistic collaborations with well-known artists.

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 more so than in Mitrovica, an ethnically divided town in northern Kosovo, where Serbs live north of the river that divides the town, and Albanians in the south. Ethnic prejudice is rife, and the threat of a return to violence looms continually. Over the past two years, tensions have again increased, giving rise to concern about the future of minorities in the region.

In neighboring North Macedonia, the Roma population is the region's most discriminated and marginalized ethnic group. There is structural discrimination against the Roma community in the job market, in education, in access to housing and water, and in the justice system (Council of Europe, 2023). This marginalization extends into the field of culture: while widely celebrated for their strong musical culture, only a very small number of Roma musicians complete higher music education and Roma influence on cultural policy is negligible.

What we do

In Kosovo, Mitrovica Rock School connects young Serb, Albanian, and other musicians through daily band sessions and lessons in rock music instruments and vocals. It is one of the city's most active organizations, and Mitrovica's only NGO whose leadership, staff, and student body are composed equally of members of both communities.

In North Macedonia, Roma Rock School follows a similar model for music education, promoting the inclusion of, and breaking down stereotypes against, Roma youth. Like its Mitrovica counterpart, the program combines music education with music creation and production and uses public-facing events to promote its musicians.

Music Connects is a four-year project with six organizations in five countries, funded by the European Commission. Besides the daily programs in Mitrovica and Skopje, Music Connects brings hundreds of young musicians, music educators, and cultural organizers together through six training events and exchanges throughout the year in Kosovo, North Macedonia, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany.

Context in 2025

During the project period, the situation in Mitrovica and Northern Kosovo in general was unstable. Political tensions surged over economic control of the North, control of various utilities and other infrastructure in the North, mayoral elections, parallel institutions, and the arrest of a prominent Serbian political figure. All these issues played out widely in both Kosovo and Serbian media and politics, potentially adding further pressure on Mitrovica Rock School's inter-ethnic music program.

Nevertheless, we successfully implemented all projected activities, without any negative impact on student participation and activity levels. In North Macedonia, the segregation of the Roma community infringes on Roma economic, educational, health, and cultural rights. Shuto Orizari, a majority Roma district of Skopje, is celebrated as Europe's only Roma-run municipality, with Romani as one of its official languages. But it can also be a dead end for young people growing up there. On the very outskirts of Skopje, Shuto Orizari functions in many ways as a self-contained municipality, with its own primary and high schools and city center, but without job opportunities or chances for young people to develop educationally or professionally. School drop-out rates are high, and the World Bank's 2019 report *Breaking the Cycle of Roma Exclusion in the Western Balkans* identifies lack of role models and lack of trust in education providers as key barriers. Anti-Roma discrimination in North Macedonia – and Europe-wide – is rife, resulting in generational exclusion from society and keeping a majority of Romani citizens locked in poverty. Roma Rock School's daily program provided young Romani and ethnically Macedonian musicians a daily program where they come together in the city center to learn and create new music together.

Our objectives and key results

We aim to

- Promote social resilience and enhance inclusion of ethnically divided and marginalized communities in the Western Balkans,
- Build the capacity of young musicians and music education organizations in the Western Balkans,
- Facilitate transnational co-creation between musicians from the Western Balkans and northern Europe,
- Disseminate best practices.

Reaching

- Youth from Mitrovica and Skopje, who come together across ethnic divisions through music lessons and a program for ethnically mixed bands,
- Dutch, German, and Belgian beneficiaries who learn to use their music and cultural organization skills to affect social change,
- Communities brought together across ethnic lines through concerts and events organized by young musicians,
- The general public in the Western Balkans and the European Union through social media and the press, who learn of inspiring ways to use music to affect social change.

Actions and results

- Organize daily music education programs in Kosovo and North Macedonia, offering 130 youth 2,500 music classes, band sessions, workshops, and other music activities,
 - A total of 141 youth (98 from Mitrovica: 65 North, 33 South; and 43 from Skopje) participated in 3,009 music classes, band sessions, workshops, and other music activities.
- Collaborate with Fontys Rockacademie to train 17 teachers and five student-trainees in band coaching, songwriting, curriculum development, and sound engineering,
 - In 2025, we collaborated with Fontys Rockacademie to train 12 teachers and eight student-trainees in band coaching, songwriting, curriculum development, and sound engineering during four training weeks.
- Organize six international exchanges: a summer school in Skopje, two training weeks in Mitrovica and one in Skopje, teacher training in Tilburg, and an exchange in Berlin,
 - In 2025, we organized six international exchanges: a training week in Mitrovica in March with 26 participants; a teacher training week at Fontys Rockacademie in Tilburg with 17 participants; a songwriting exchange in Berlin with 19 participants; summer school in Skopje in with 66 participants; a songwriting training week in Skopje with 22 participants; and another songwriting training week in Mitrovica in December with 35 participants.
- Publish four methodology videos, two showreels, one documentary-style video, and two music videos of ethnically mixed bands, and promote them through social media.
 - We published two showreels and one methodology video, and one music video. The publication of the three other methodology videos, the documentary film, and the other music video was postponed until 2026.



"What I like about Mitrovica Rock School is the atmosphere and peace between everyone. No matter the side, no matter what we are, what we play, to what music we listen. It's just peace and you feel friendly love everywhere." Emin, Mitrovica Rock School participant and student-trainee.

Central East Africa: Kivu Youth Music

Why we work here

The humanitarian crisis in North Kivu continues to worsen, with massive repercussions for the immediate and long-term mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of children. It is a crisis described as the “epicenter of child suffering in war” topping the world list of grave violations against children ([Save the Children, 2023](#)). Of the two million people displaced by conflict in North Kivu, over half are children. Hundreds of thousands of children are living in desperate conditions, many in vast and overcrowded camps. In this context of chaos, children are placed at high risk of being recruited by armed forces ([Save the Children, 2024](#)).

Furthermore, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) stands at the nexus of conflict, climate change, resource extraction, and global injustice. Minerals that are crucial for wealthy nations’ “green transition” fuel the conflict, poverty, and environmental devastation. Until recently, debates on climate change focused predominantly on ecological and economic impacts, but now recognition is being given to climate breakdown as a threat multiplier, amplifying mass displacement, urban poverty, gender inequality, and political insecurity, among other issues.

What we do

We work with partners to build the infrastructure for displaced children to access mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) through music. Trained community music leaders provide music workshop series for children living in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps. Their skills and knowledge are strengthened through training sessions with MWB trainers, who have specializations in trauma, music therapy and self-care.

We partner with the Dutch branch of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN NL) to engage young people as environmental leaders, in response to the impacts of climate injustice on global conflict. By centralizing culturally embedded knowledge, Kivu Youth Music deepens young people’s cultural connections to nature, and strengthens their climate resilience.

Context in 2025

Throughout 2025, the situation for children living in the eastern states of the DRC deteriorated tragically. Violence surged across the region, with mounting grave violations against children. Reports showed that levels of sexual violence more than doubled, abductions increased sixfold, killing and maiming rose sevenfold, and attacks on schools and hospitals multiplied by 12 ([UNICEF, 2025](#)). Following the rapid and violent offensive led by the M23 in January 2025, taking control of the major cities of Goma and Rubavu in North and South Kivu, institutions and services became paralyzed, displacement camps were closed, and many humanitarian mechanisms broke down.

In 2023, [UNICEF](#) reported that the ongoing conflict disrupted education for 750,000 children in North Kivu and neighboring Ituri province, and over 2,100 schools were forced to close. Those numbers have now been eclipsed. The number of children forced out of education by conflict in Ituri province alone, now stands at 1.3 million ([UNICEF US, 2025](#)). Across Eastern Congo, the number is estimated at 1.8 million children.

Access to education is not only a human right, it also provides safe spaces for children amidst conflict, nutrition in underserved areas, and critical developmental nurturing especially needed for children in dire situations.

In this stark reality, children face the trauma and chronic stress of conflict and displacement, with scant provision for the protective effects of education, or for healthcare, food, and security.

Our objectives and key results for 2025

We aim to

- Provide MHPSS through music for children who have been displaced by war,
- Strengthen Kivu Youth Music as a hub of expertise in the innovative use of music for the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of children in a conflict zone,
- Build climate resilience in young people in rural communities.

Reaching

- Children, youth, and young adults in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps, orphanages, and conflict-affected communities,
- Young community leaders,
- The general public in DRC and worldwide through social media and the press.

Action and results

- Provide MHPSS through music for children displaced by war,
 - Music leaders, trained in trauma-informed approaches, led 50 music workshops across six orphanages (IDP camps closed in February 2025).
 - 632 children received MHPSS through music.
- Facilitate monthly training sessions for the Kivu Youth Music team,
 - 12 training sessions were delivered, focused on musical approaches for regulation of the nervous system and the use of creativity in workshops.
- Develop a new methodology for building climate resilience through music leadership and roll it out through a tiered training and implementation process: Training of Trainers, Training of Leaders, Community Workshops.
- Through partnership with the IUCN NL, we led methodology development and the roll out of tiered training courses in climate resilience through music leadership and cultural knowledge.
- 19 young community leaders completed a six-day training of trainers, led by two MWB trainers from Rwanda and two trainers in indigenous, music-based environmental knowledge.
- 42 scout leaders completed seven-day training courses, facilitated by the new training teams.
- 2,032 children participated in music workshops led by the new music leaders.



"In Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo, children affected by conflict are finding their way back to joy, connection, and a sense of childhood through music.

Before music activities began, 87% of children reported feeling isolated. After just two months of regular music sessions, that number dropped to 31%.

Led by trained music leaders, these workshops create safe spaces where children can move, express themselves, and reconnect, with each other and with themselves."

Central East Africa: Rwanda Youth Music

Why we work here

Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and the DRC suffered brutal violence and conflicts in the 1990s. Although Rwanda has maintained peace, 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.

One consequence of the conflict in the Great Lakes region of Africa was the rapid spread of HIV. During the hundred-day genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994, an estimated 150,000 people contracted HIV.

What we do

Rwanda Youth Music began in 2012 in response to the legacy of genocide in Rwanda. WE-ACTx for Hope invited Musicians Without Borders 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.

Since 2024, we have augmented the expertise of the Rwanda Youth Music team by providing training in approaches from the field of music therapy targeted towards the care of young people facing the physical and social challenges of HIV as well as disability. Trained music leaders began to deliver regular sessions using music as therapy at clinical and educational centers in Kigali, and at the Rwinkwavu District Hospital in the Eastern Province of Rwanda. In 2025, we worked to embed musical support into care provision for children and youth living with physical and developmental challenges.

Context in 2025

Living with disability in Rwanda

Rwanda has adopted strong policies and a legal framework that affirm the inherent dignity, worth, and human rights of persons with disabilities. However, implementation takes time. Stigma, negative perceptions and discrimination are still pervasive. Children with disabilities in Rwanda face discrimination in their education and inadequate service provision in care settings. Families of people with disabilities must supplement their care at high cost despite their lack of resources. Furthermore, the overarching context of poverty and unemployment in Rwanda means that people living with disabilities are faced with multiple vulnerabilities for their future. They face inequitable access to education, limiting their opportunities in a constrained job market, and exacerbating their risks of poverty.

In this context, our project engages with the direct care and the fundamental rights of children and youth living with disabilities.

Our objectives and key results for 2025

We aimed to

- Expand the place of music in care provision for children living with disabilities or HIV.
- Strengthen Rwanda Youth Music as a regional hub of expertise in the innovative use of music for the therapeutic support of children living with disabilities or HIV.

Reaching

- Children and youth living with HIV or with physical and mental disabilities,
- Young community leaders,
- The general public in Rwanda and worldwide through social media and the press.

Actions and results

- Implement a weekly program of activities offering support to children and youth living with HIV, in Kigali,
 - 175 young people living with HIV have participated in regular musical support activities
 - Facilitated by 12 young music leaders, themselves living with HIV
- Expand musical support program for children and youth living with disabilities, through community-based organizations in Kigali and at the Rwinkwavu District Hospital,
 - 517 children and youth have participated in weekly therapeutic music sessions at 10 care and education settings in Kigali
 - 1,245 children and youth have participated in therapeutic music sessions at the Rwinkwavu District Hospital and community settings in the Eastern Province
- Provide training in the therapeutic use of music with children and youth living with physical and developmental challenges.
 - 16 young music leaders, living with HIV, received training in music therapy approaches in October, given by two Rwandan health professionals specialized in working with disabled children.
 - 35 young music leaders, living with HIV, attended 45 weekly team development and wellbeing sessions.
 - Completed a training partnership with the University of the West of England, UK. A musician and trainer with the program, Yves Kana, was awarded a distinction for his thesis - "Evaluating the effectiveness of music therapy in enhancing social inclusion of children with mental health difficulties in marginalized communities of Rwanda".



"The findings consistently demonstrate that music therapy sessions generated positive emotional responses, increased peer interaction, and created safe spaces for children to express themselves without fear of judgement. Caregivers reported observable improvements in mood, sociability, and, in some cases, communication abilities. Teachers and healthcare professionals affirmed music's potential to complement educational and therapeutic efforts, especially in contexts where conventional services are limited or inaccessible."

Yves Kana, evaluation thesis, University of the West of England, "Evaluating the effectiveness of music therapy in enhancing social inclusion of children with mental health difficulties in marginalized communities of Rwanda"

Palestine: Bara'em Ghirass

Why we work here

The urgent need for life-affirming, creative children's music programs in Palestine must be understood in the context of ongoing systematic oppression and violence towards the Palestinian people during almost 80 years of occupation. For most Palestinians, daily life is defined by poverty, state and interpersonal violence, and the absence of infrastructure and services.

On top of that, the marginalization of vulnerable groups of women, children, and refugees have rendered them isolated. Children and youth are at risk of developing low self-esteem and there are few resources available to support their educational and social development. Parents suffer from many problems due to the occupation and instability in the region. Unemployment and lack of perspective influence parents' relationships with their children, sometimes leading to conflict and violence in the family.

The ongoing genocide in Gaza, a sharp increase of occupation-related violence on the West Bank, as well as the war between Iran and Israel in June 2025 have made life much more difficult and dangerous for all in the region. This is especially true for our students and staff who suffer not only from the extra stress of the war, but also from not having shelter or an alarm system warning them of falling bombs.

While it is impossible to predict developments in the coming months, we are determined to continue our music project, organizing activities for children and their mothers whenever possible, and working with Ghirass Cultural Center colleagues to keep life-affirming programs running. At the moment of writing, a new war between the US, Israel and Iran is ongoing and greatly affecting daily life of our team and students. Still, we continue on!

What we do

MWB works in partnership with Ghirass Cultural Center, where we've added a music training and activity component to Ghirass' educational and cultural program. This program serves vulnerable children and youth in the Bethlehem region, including refugee camps and isolated villages.

Twice a week, children from villages and refugee camps in the Bethlehem district learn to play instruments and make music and sing together. We also offer weekly sessions with a social worker, providing a critical space for emotional, social and developmental support. In addition to activities for young people, we organize weekly meetings for their mothers with Ghirass' social worker. This serves to raise awareness about the many benefits of music making and to reduce the immense stress they experience. Once a month, the Orchestra of the South, a program by al-Kamandjati for children in the Hebron and Bethlehem area, rehearses together with our students in the center.

Context in 2025

Israel's actions have brought Gaza's population to the brink of collapse. The killing of more than 72,000 Palestinians has been registered since October 7, 2023. The actual number is probably much higher, with many bodies still missing and being stuck under the rubble. Save the Children stated in September 2025 that already 20,000 children had been killed, one per hour during the last 23 months of war. The offensive has caused unprecedented destruction, leveled entire cities and destroyed critical infrastructure, agricultural land, and cultural and religious sites, thereby rendering large swathes of Gaza uninhabitable.

The ongoing genocide in Gaza and the increased violence of Israeli settlers and army in the West Bank have an immense impact on Palestinian people. This has not only hampered Palestinians' right to movement and increased the threat of violence and arrest, but also caused economic distress. Trade has been severely impacted and many Palestinians have lost their sources of income. Life for everyone in the West Bank has become immensely more stressful, and many people living in refugee camps have been displaced multiple times. Lastly, many West Bank inhabitants have family and friends in Gaza, and are emotionally impacted by daily reports of death and destruction. In such a desperate situation, grief, fear and uncertainty for the future prevail in the minds and hearts of Palestinians.

Because of the dire financial situation and the many road closures, several schools have returned to part-time online learning or shorter school weeks. This means that our students are missing out on their education. Especially after night raids, students are exhausted from lack of sleep. Not only are fathers, cousins and uncles in prison, our teenage students fear being arrested themselves. In order to support their family, some students need to work in the street and miss lessons. Our work in these challenging times has become even more crucial for children and families. In a violent, chaotic world, where children's access to education is continually disrupted, MWB programs in the West Bank offer a safe place to learn, find relief and the chance to be a child just for a moment.

Our objectives and key results

We aim to

- Use music to strengthen the social and emotional skills of vulnerable and under-served youth, children, and mothers in villages and refugee camps in the Bethlehem district,
- Offer children a safe space to be open-minded, and to respect different cultures, religions, and opinions,
- Advocate and attract local musicians to engage in the program as agents for social change,
- Share a different voice from Palestine with an international audience - a voice of agency and dignity.

Reaching

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

Actions and results

- Implement a program of music education activities for 50 children (ages 6-16)
 - We implemented 1,761 music instrument group lessons (violin, oud, qanun, percussion), choir rehearsals, orchestra rehearsals and Takht Sharqi (Arabic ensemble) rehearsals and social work group sessions for 50 children.
 - Our drama therapist gave 28 theater workshops to 32 children, resulting in a theater piece written and performed by the children.
 - We had six Orchestra of the South rehearsals with more than 90 children from the Hebron and Bethlehem area, including blind children.
 - We held a concert for parents and family inside the center and a concert with the Orchestra of the South on the Nativity Square in Bethlehem, attended by more than 500 people.
- Implement a program with social work and music sessions for at least ten mothers,
 - We gave 46 social work group sessions to ten mothers.
 - 45 mothers had one-on-one sessions with our social worker or a session together with their child.
- Provide livelihood support and utilize community expertise in the program by engaging Palestinian musicians to teach musical instruments and lead a choir, and support a local instrument maker,
 - 6 Palestinians from the Bethlehem area are teaching and earning an income, and a Palestinian instrument maker has built and repaired several instruments (oud and qanun).
 - 10 music teachers from al-Kamandjati have joined our teachers during the monthly Orchestra of the South rehearsals and concerts.
- Publish a newsletter with news, interviews and short videos of the program.
- Newsletters have been shared with our audience, as well as videos, pictures and interviews on social media channels of MWB and Ghirass Cultural Center.
- Select videos:
 - [Mother's Day Song Yammo](#): a video clip made by the students, dedicated to all mothers and especially the ones in Gaza (March 2025)
 - [Orchestra Rehearsal of the piece 'Bara'em Ghirass Song'](#), composed by our students (July 2025)
 - [Rehearsal of the Takht Sharqi](#) (July 2025)
 - [PNN \(Palestinian News Network\) video report](#) (June 2025)



"Ghirass Center, you go deep like the roots of a Palestinian olive tree, deeply rooted in history, in heritage, in our homeland, in love, and in hope...Beautiful Sarah, my beloved bird, you have excelled..."

Mother of our student Sarah

"Eight-year-old Sidra is embarking on her journey with hope and light. Born into a family whose parents are deaf and unable to speak, she communicated through sign language. However, she found her own way to express herself through music, making melodies in her beautiful language to share with the world. About a year ago, Sidra joined the music program at the Ghirass Center, accompanying her sister, Siham, who has been enrolled in the music program for four years. Sidra chose the violin as her means of expressing herself. She had previously participated in various activities at the center and displayed remarkable intelligence and curiosity. However, experiencing music has changed her personality greatly; it has made her more confident, calm, and interactive with those around her. She has also demonstrated a remarkable ability to focus and communicate through playing music. Sidra's experience with music confirmed that every child has a unique way of learning and expressing themselves, and that language is not limited to words. Melody can be a bridge between hearts and minds. Sidra is also an outstanding child in her studies, and she is also outstanding when she talks about herself and her family."

Manal al-Ayaseh, project coordinator at Ghirass Cultural Center

Jordan: Al-Musiqat Tajm'ana

Why we work here

Well known for its hospitality, Jordan has accepted refugees from neighboring countries suffering from conflict since 1948, resulting in a mosaic of different cultures. The country currently hosts large communities of Palestinian, Iraqi, and Syrian refugees. In 2021, nearly a million people seeking asylum arrived in Jordan, with the inevitable effect of destabilizing the country on social and political levels.

What we do

Al-Musiqat Tajm'ana (Music Brings Us Together) trains musicians to use music as a tool for social inclusion, stimulating creative development, and bringing hope and joy to children in underserved refugee and host communities. 2025 was the fifth year of the collaboration between MWB and Soka Gakkai. The program includes Music Leadership training focusing on group work with vulnerable children, trauma awareness and self-care, nonviolent communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution. Musicians and educators gain techniques to create spaces of safety, connection, and creativity.

The trained music leaders work with vulnerable young people, including orphaned children, youth in prison, and children who fled from other countries. In 2024, we initiated Manjali, a new project in cooperation with our partner Tajalla, based in Amman. Tajalla aims at developing dynamic relationships across all segments of society through culture and arts by creating platforms for artistic expression. We built on Tajalla's successful music heritage project, providing free music instrument lessons and ensemble playing. In 2025, we added Ana Sowti (I'm My Voice), a children's choir in al-Karak. The children focus on songs from their own rich cultural heritage.

Continuing a successful partnership with Music as Therapy International (United Kingdom), we provided supervision to several specialists working in Jordan with children with special needs, and gave consultation to the MasT team to modernize and re-format the online Music as Therapy course.

Context in 2025

During 2025, the installation of a new cabinet in Syria in March added to instability and insecurity in the region, and the Israel-Iran war in June further negatively impacted stability and the economy in Jordan. Many residents in Jordan are of Palestinian origin and carry a deep sense of hopelessness and survivors' guilt for being unable to be with their family members in Gaza or other parts of Palestine. Furthermore, we also have trainees and teachers from Syria in the program, whose situation has become more uncertain since the changed dynamics in their homeland. Especially now, the need to gather, to spend meaningful time together, to create and to connect, is more urgent than ever.

Our objectives and key results for 2025

We aim to

- Develop an infrastructure of trained music leaders, empowered and equipped to support vulnerable and under-served children through music,
- Enhance the teaching, communication, and leadership skills of musicians involved in social programs,

- Support an impactful program of music lessons and activities that reach vulnerable and under-served children,
- Build a team of Jordan-based trainers capable of training others in the region, thereby increasing impact and ensuring scalability,
- Establish and support a children's ensemble and choir in al-Karak, helping to preserve musical traditions and link generations.

Reaching

- Musicians and educators receiving Music Leadership training
- Children in Za'tari refugee camp and other locations who receive music workshops from our trainees; instrumental, choir and ensemble lessons; and self development/social participation workshops,
- Families and community members attending concerts of the children's ensemble and choir,
- Children with special educational needs who receive music as therapy sessions from our Music as Therapy trainees
- Future trainees and professionals benefitting from an updated and modernized Music as Therapy course,
- The general public in Jordan and worldwide through MWB communications.

Action and results

- Train 15 music teachers in music leadership skills,
 - 35 people received Music Leadership Training (18 Syrian educators from Za'tari refugee camp and 17 musicians).
 - We gave 27 hours of training, including 17 sessions covering group teaching, music and the nervous system, and creating a safe space.
- Provide weekly instrument, ensemble and choir lessons for 35 children in Al Karak,
 - 39 children (33 girls, 6 boys) received weekly instrument, ensemble, theory and choir lessons, as well as four "social participation through music" workshops.
 - The children received 148 music lessons provided by four musicians based in Jordan.
 - Students gave a concert in al-Karak, attended by families, friends and the Minister of Culture.
- Edit and modernize the Music as Therapy training.
 - Three trainees received 2 supervision sessions with Music Therapist Rula al-Barghouti.
 - Three trainees continued giving music as therapy sessions to 292 children with special needs in Amman.
 - MWB provided consultation to Music as Therapy International to renew and re-format their online Music as Therapy course, to be implemented in Jordan and Palestine in the future.



"I really like the idea of working with children outside of Amman, or as they call them, 'the less fortunate', or children living in difficult places and refugee camps, because these children are very creative and special, more than we can imagine. And, if we know how to support them, they release incredible energy for the whole world.

Every day I learn from the children. And in addition, with the help of Qased (our music coordinator), I learn many things and while working with the children, I remember what I learned in the past about Arabic music. And for me, this is something very positive. On top of that, the workshops with Fabienne (our program manager and trainer) add a lot to my teaching career in many ways, [such as] dealing with children, breaking the ice, and games that I apply in general everywhere I work since I learned them. This is proof that the program not only develops the children but also the teachers. This project adds positivity to my day and my life in general, and affects me personally as a human being."

Lin, violin teacher Manjali

"The training is really wonderful, and we benefited from it and learned new, beautiful things. Really."

Mahmoud, trainee from Za'tari refugee camp

"The training is really beautiful and wonderful, we didn't feel the time passing. We benefitted a lot. And I hope there will be more training in the future that I can participate in."

Khadija, trainee from Za'tari refugee camp

"I found that music can be a great way to break down barriers, as a shy child can express themselves through playing or clapping instead of singing. I also discovered that as a teacher, I had to be flexible and find the best way. Each child interacts with music differently, and I had to find the best way for each child to get the most out of it. This experience not only helped me improve my skills in managing music classes, but it also changed my view on education in general. I became more aware of the importance of interactive methods in education. I realized that learning shouldn't be just rote learning [focusing on repetition and memorizing], but should be fun and inspiring. I also gained new ideas about how to use music in teaching children with special needs, especially those with disabilities. They find it difficult to express their feelings in words. By the end of the course, I felt like a completely different person than the hesitant and fearful person who started this journey. I was no longer worried about my ability to use music in education or my shyness about singing and composing songs."

Heba, Music as Therapy trainee.

Europe: Welcome Notes NL

Why we work here

In the Netherlands, years of restrictive immigration policies have created an increasingly difficult environment for people forced to migrate. Designed to discourage asylum seekers, these Dutch policies have produced lengthy and opaque application processes, minimal services, and frequent relocations that prevent any sense of stability, isolating people and severing connections with local communities.

Public discourse has done little to ease this reality. Certain politicians and media outlets continue to stigmatize refugees, scapegoating them for broader social frustrations and hardening public sentiment. In 2025, migration has become the defining fault line of Dutch politics: the far-right coalition government collapsed over demands for an even harsher asylum crackdown, triggering new elections and cementing migration as the central theme of an increasingly polarized national debate.

In this climate, spaces of solidarity and human connection matter more than ever. Welcome Notes NL responds directly to this need, bringing music programs into reception centers and actively working to counter harmful narratives about refugees. Through shared musical experience, these sessions offer asylum seekers something that policy too often denies them: a genuine sense of belonging.

What we do

Welcome Notes NL provides creative music workshops for children, youth, and families in emergency reception centers in the Netherlands. Since 2022, trained music leaders have created a sense of community and relief for people living in challenging conditions, fostering connections through shared musical experiences. By working with trained skilled music facilitators, including those with a lived migration experience, Welcome Notes NL strengthens community ties and offers moments of joy to people in the asylum process.

Context in 2025

In 2025, Europe recorded a significant drop in asylum applications and irregular border crossings compared to the peak years of 2022 to 2024. In the Netherlands, first time applications fell by 33%. Yet the number of people living in reception centers has grown steadily since 2020, due to years of underfunded infrastructure for people who have migrated, more arduous procedures, and longer wait times for asylum procedures and even for approved housing/relocation applications. This has led to overcrowded facilities, poor basic and psychosocial support, and slow legal procedures leaving tens of thousands of lives on hold, cut off from Dutch society.

Our objectives and key results for 2025

We aim to

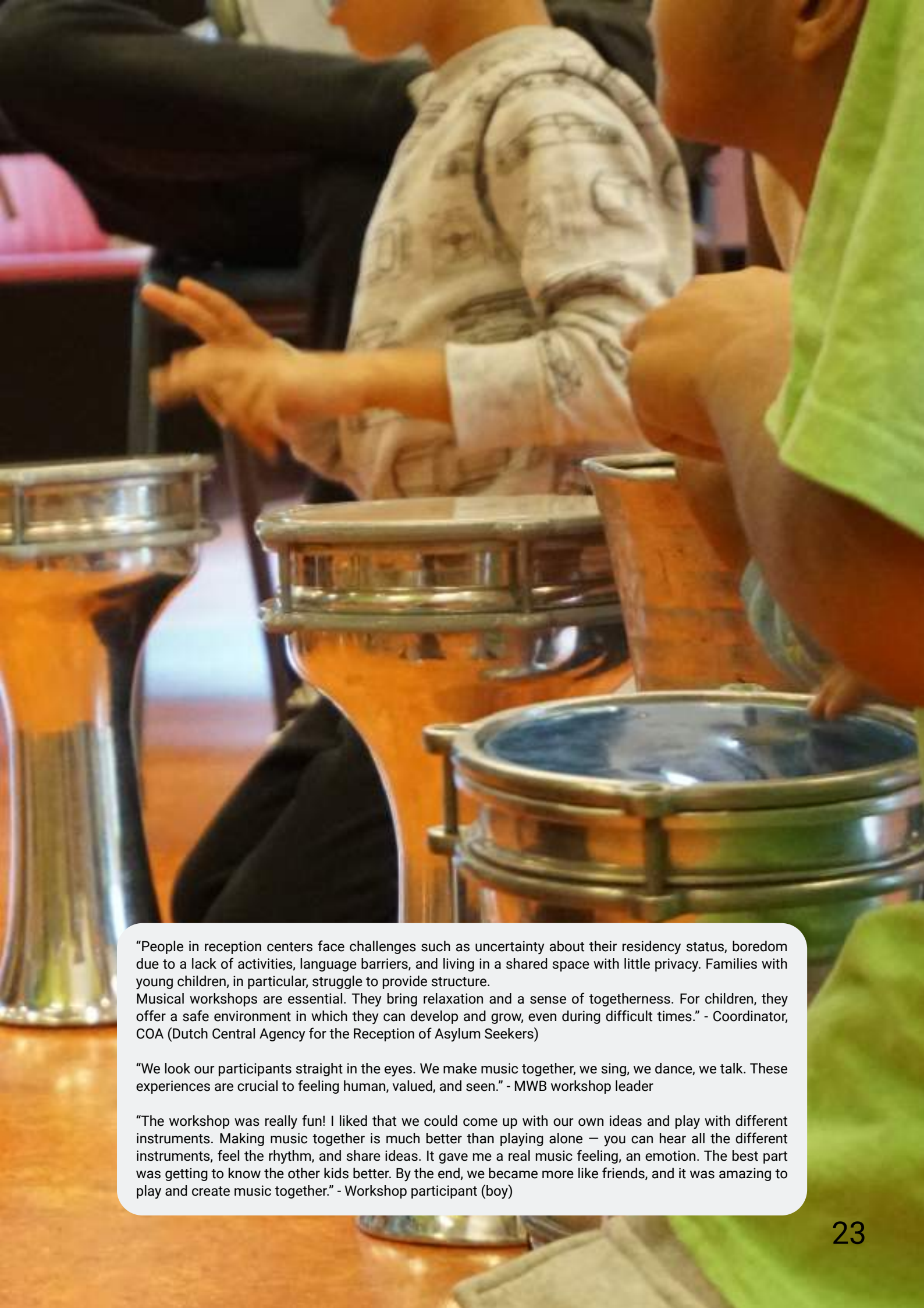
- Provide hope, joy, and relief through music to displaced people in the Netherlands,
- Strengthen collaborations with other relevant institutions in the Netherlands from the education and social sectors.

Reaching

- Children, youth, adults, and families residing in crisis and emergency reception centers and asylum centers in the Netherlands,
- Unaccompanied youth residing in asylum centers in the Netherlands,

Action and results

- Deliver 80 music workshops for 1,500 children youth and families living in asylum centers.
 - We delivered 88 music workshops for 1,465 children, youth and families living in asylum centers.
- Pilot a series of rap workshops with unaccompanied minors in asylum centers in the Netherlands,
 - A full rap workshop series of 8 consecutive sessions resulted in two co-created recorded songs.
- Increase the presence of workshop leaders and musicians with a refugee background in the MWB team,
 - Rather than onboarding new workshop leaders with a refugee background, MWB focused on strengthening and developing the work of our current teams.
- Engage with Dutch society through awareness raising actions, countering dehumanizing messaging in politics and in the media.
 - 17 pieces of project content posted across multiple social media platforms of MWB and external sites.
 - 7 content pieces shared to subscribed newsletter followers, including 2 front stories.
 - 2 video-documentaries published featuring the Rap workshops with unaccompanied minors and workshops with children and families in emergency centers.



"People in reception centers face challenges such as uncertainty about their residency status, boredom due to a lack of activities, language barriers, and living in a shared space with little privacy. Families with young children, in particular, struggle to provide structure.

Musical workshops are essential. They bring relaxation and a sense of togetherness. For children, they offer a safe environment in which they can develop and grow, even during difficult times." - Coordinator, COA (Dutch Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers)

"We look our participants straight in the eyes. We make music together, we sing, we dance, we talk. These experiences are crucial to feeling human, valued, and seen." - MWB workshop leader

"The workshop was really fun! I liked that we could come up with our own ideas and play with different instruments. Making music together is much better than playing alone — you can hear all the different instruments, feel the rhythm, and share ideas. It gave me a real music feeling, an emotion. The best part was getting to know the other kids better. By the end, we became more like friends, and it was amazing to play and create music together." - Workshop participant (boy)

Europe: WELCOME NOTES BiH

Why we work here

In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the effects of forced migration are as complex as they are pressing. Positioned along the Balkan route, BiH has become a transit point for many people on the move on their way to the European Union. Still recovering from its own history of war, division and displacement, the country faces the additional challenge of supporting vulnerable people who are themselves living through upheaval. While some people choose to remain, most continue their journey, uncertain of what lies ahead.

Temporary Reception Centers (TRCs) across the country provide basic shelter and essential services. Yet these resources fall short of offering people in forced migration the sense of community and human connection they so deeply need.

What we do

In response, MWB partners with Caritas BiH to bring music programs to reception centers, easing tension and offering a genuine sense of welcome. Our teams offer music workshops in key locations, including Sarajevo, Tuzla, and Bihac, where forcibly displaced people find temporary shelter. These activities give people on the move a space apart from their often harsh daily realities, room for joy, creativity and connection. Building on a longstanding tradition of collaborative music work in Bosnia, MWB supports children, young people and adults to find moments of belonging, even in the most transitory of circumstances. This includes tailored sessions for diverse groups, from unaccompanied minors to young single men who are often overlooked in support services. Through shared music experiences, these programs nurture resilience and understanding, and provide much-needed opportunities for community building and expression for people navigating uncertain futures along the Balkan route.

Context in 2025

Across Europe, asylum applications and irregular border crossings fell significantly in 2025 compared to the peak years of 2022 to 2024. Along the Western Balkans route, irregular crossings dropped by 47% in the first eight months of the year. Yet falling numbers do not mean falling need. Stricter border controls, pushbacks and biometric measures have pushed many migrants onto smaller and more dangerous routes, increasing vulnerability. The IOM and UNHCR continue to warn that global forced displacement remains at record levels.

In BiH, the closure and restructuring of several reception facilities left gaps in support across the region, greatly affecting families with children and unaccompanied minors. Furthermore, young men, who comprise the majority of the migrant population, are hosted in overcrowded centers whose services are strained.

Our objectives and key results for 2025

We aim to

- Provide hope, joy, relief and opportunities for expression through music to people on the move in BiH.

Reaching

- Children, youth and families, and single men residing in reception centers in BiH.

Action and results

- Deliver 150 music workshops for over 2,000 children, youth, their families and young single men primarily from refugee and migrant backgrounds, in three locations (Sarajevo, Tuzla and Bihac) in BiH,
 - We implemented 164 workshops with 2,180 children, youth, and adults.
- Build stable teams of workshop leaders who will deliver workshops across different locations in BiH,
 - We established three teams to work regionally in Sarajevo, Tuzla and Bihac.
- Build a team in BiH who will replicate the model of rap workshops for unaccompanied minors, with external coaching and support from two MWB trainers.
 - We continue to recruit and engage musicians for this work. Until now, our desired team is not in place.



"A very emotional moment took place during one of the workshops. Jusuf, a man who had tried several times to cross the border, shared a few words at the end of the session. He thanked everyone for the time spent together and said he was returning home as a "different person", fulfilled, calm, and ready for a new beginning. His words deeply touched everyone present. He emphasized that during his stay in the Safe House, he came to understand how important and beautiful the small moments are, and that family comes first.

Jusuf also offered valuable advice to three participants who were continuing their journey to the West, because he had already traveled that path. His words were full of understanding, support and wisdom. In a symbolic gesture, the participants named the darbuka he always played "Jusuf's darbouka", as a lasting memory of him. The messages exchanged and the heartfelt goodbyes made this workshop especially moving and meaningful for everyone present." - Workshop leader

"What I witnessed that day was far more than a performance. At the beginning, you could sense tension and uncertainty in the room, but as soon as the percussion started, something shifted. The rhythm drew people in, and gradually they stopped being observers and became participants — playing, singing, dancing, even stepping up to the microphone. The usual distinctions between migrants, staff, and officials seemed to disappear, replaced by a shared human presence. It was carefully facilitated so that everyone felt included, and you could see how hesitation turned into confidence. When the formal program ended, people did not want to leave; they stayed, talking, playing, and connecting. It felt as though a real sense of community had been built through something as simple, and as powerful, as shared rhythm." - Workshop leader

Participant quotes:

"We love music – darbuka, guitar – but we didn't have time for that in Morocco. We just watched and listened to others play."

"When I played the tarabuka yesterday, I felt free. I played with my heart."

"When we play, we remember Morocco, the route, everything we went through. We feel good."

"I thought it was difficult to play. I never used these 'machine' instruments. But now, when I tried, I realized that I can. And now I love the guitar, I love music."

"I felt like a man. Those people looked at me with respect, not as a Muslim from Morocco, but as a man."

"The whole time I was here I felt accepted and respected."

"This should not be closed. Many migrants need a place like this, these people, these workshops. These activities are good and necessary." (about Safe House Tuzla closing)

"I am a migrant. On this trip I met many people, had support. But I want to say with all my heart that respect and love should prevail among us - to feel humanity. We are grateful to everyone in the house. I have never used these instruments before. Now I love the guitar, I love instruments, I love music, thank you teacher."

Europe: WELCOME NOTES TRAINING

Why we work here

Our Welcome Notes training program trains musicians and music teachers in MWB's Music Leadership methodology, to strengthen their work with people experiencing forced migration 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 experiencing forced migration in Europe.

Our objectives and key results for 2025

We aim to

- Strengthen the skills of musicians in Europe and the United Kingdom to run music workshops with people experiencing forced migration.

Reaching

- 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.

Action and results

- Partner with allied academic and implementing organizations to deliver Welcome Notes training courses in countries including Germany and the United Kingdom.
 - Training course delivered for 25 trainees in collaboration with the Landesmusikakademie NRW, Heek, Germany.
 - Planned training course at Leeds Beckett University, postponed until January 2026.



Realization of Objective 2

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

Introduction

MWB is 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, MWB is now a world leader in developing and sharing methodologies and approaches to peacebuilding through music.

MWB promotes the vision of music as a tool for peace through keynote speeches and presentations at international conferences, collaborations with academic institutions, publications, dialogue through social networks, and participation in virtual and live events that connect musicians worldwide. Additionally, MWB trains practitioners to use music for promoting social change.

As an organization that sets the development and dissemination of best practices at its core, we prioritize monitoring, evaluation, and learning within our own organization. This ensures 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.

Advocacy

Advocacy is a core element of our work. We aim to raise our voices on the multifaceted global issues we witness firsthand in our music programs worldwide. We want to demonstrate to peacebuilding professionals the unique potential of music to contribute to more peaceful societies, as we inspire musicians around the world to use their talents to serve their communities.

As the funding landscape shifted in 2025 and conflicts intensified across many of our project regions, we worked as a team to strengthen and clarify our advocacy strategy. We reflected on how to position ourselves as an organization in order to respond effectively to these changes, and the result is becoming more vocal in denouncing injustice and creating more strategic allyship in the NGO and cultural communities. This direction is clearly reflected in our Strategic Plan 2026–2028, where advocacy plays a bigger role than in the past.

To achieve our advocacy objectives, we speak at conferences and panels, contribute to and organize music events, and write articles. In 2025, MWB carried out 19 advocacy and events initiatives including 13 panel discussions and presentations, five media publications, and one international training. Partnering in these initiatives and projects helps build a community of peacebuilders, and for this reason, MWB collaborates with other non-profits, music, art and culture organizations, academic institutions and media.

Highlights in 2025 included:

- Eight concerts organized by the Netherlands Wind Ensemble (Nederlands Blazers Ensemble, or NBE), across the Netherlands. As a special guest in these concerts, MWB workshop leader and musician Ahmad Naffory presented MWB and shared his personal experience of forced migration with NBE audiences. He also performed alongside NBE musicians in post-concert programs, reaching a total audience of approximately 4,000 people.
- An MWB-organized singing circle event titled “Sing! When silence is not an option” aiming at raising awareness of the power of music as a form of activism (50 participants).
- One music leadership training week was organized in Heidelberg, Germany, for the musicians of the Myanmar Jazz Club to provide them with the tools to support communities affected by war and environmental disasters.
- We joined and spoke at the ELJA Foundation’s bi-yearly award event and were honored with the main award (EUR 75,000). This provided more opportunities to network with organizations in our sector and our work was presented in front of a full Delamar Theater in Amsterdam.

Intersectionality

Grounded in a fundamental understanding of the interconnections between global issues – war and militarism, exploitation and unequal distribution of resources, the environmental crisis, poverty, and displacement – MWB advocates for an intersectional understanding of peacebuilding and social change in active and 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. Out of this has grown a network of Dutch civil society organizations, including Musicians Without Borders, now taking on a broader range of critical issues for the non-profit sector in the Netherlands.

Climate justice

In collaboration with Global Vision for Africa (GVA) and the international climate organization IUCN, our project Kivu Youth Music explores the interconnections between climate, conflict and music. Traditional songs from elders that convey indigenous wisdom about caring for the land are documented and taught to children.

We have continued to support initiatives of climate organizations in the Netherlands, adding our endorsement of shared petitions, appeals and marches.

Palestine

Musicians Without Borders, stands in solidarity with the Palestinian people. During these years of unprecedented violence and destruction perpetrated by the Israeli government and military, backed up by many Western powers, we felt called to use our voice to speak out.

MWB published and promoted ten blog pieces related to Palestine including testimonies of project participants and the project manager, director’s blogs and organizational statements on geopolitical developments. Please visit our [website](#) for more information.



Communications

Our communications channels, both online and offline, help us to raise awareness and support fundraising efforts. MWB relies on the support of our international network of program partners, funding partners, participants, and musicians for success in our work. We aim to keep our network informed and connected to our work by publishing news from our programs and partners, as well as sharing opportunities to donate and support our initiatives.

The communications team ensures visibility for all MWB programs and activities, sharing the positive impact with others around the world through the stories of people directly involved. Strong, informative communications show the many ways that music connects, helps to heal the wounds of war, and promotes just and peaceful societies. Through our contact with program and funding partners, and those interested in our work, we hope to inspire musicians and music-lovers around the world to become changemakers in their communities.

Our objectives in 2025

- Grow awareness of the MWB brand and our reputation as a world-leading organization in the field of music for peacebuilding and social change:
- Establish a firmer presence in Amsterdam and the Netherlands with a view to becoming a household name in the country,
- Grow awareness amongst corporate brands and government institutions through strategic partnerships,
- Grow public audiences on all of our communications channels, with a specific focus on a younger audience, solidifying our audience engagement into the future,
- Expand network and deepen our network among fellow non-profits, cultural institutions, and professional musicians,
- Increase the impact of program communications, in order that our work on-the ground is fully expressed and takes center stage in MWB's visibility and identity.

Key results

We integrated these goals into content across our platforms and direct communications. Below are some of our highlights from 2025.

- We supported our programs through creating and promoting compelling storytelling from our projects around the world across all our platforms. We also shared and promoted statements by our Director and from the organization as a whole relating to events of global significance around our project areas,
- We sent out 47 newsletters to our mailing audience community of over 12,000 subscribers in English and Dutch languages. These include:
 - 12 monthly newsletters,
 - three event newsletters,
 - two newsletters specific to updates happening in the Palestine project,
 - 29 newsletters relating to fundraising campaigns.

- During the year, we ran two fundraising campaigns, with a new approach for the mid-year fundraiser. In total, we raised EUR 111,541 through campaign activity, up from a target of EUR 100,000
- We published 27 [news items on our website](#), including blogs by our Director, program managers, and staff on a range of topics,
- We began working with Source Elements, the first corporate partner with whom we envision a long-term relationship,
- We successfully tested a new offline outreach product, a fundraising stall "selling" air guitars, at the Offline Festival, Amsterdam.
- We initiated a two-day brand sprint to kick off a process to hone our future positioning and messaging.

In 2025, our organic social media posts had 298,625 unique views - fewer than the 357,559 unique views in 2024. The decrease could be a direct consequence of algorithms used by social media companies that actively censor content related to Palestine and global conflict in general.

Nonetheless, our follower base on Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube grew continuously throughout the year - Instagram grew by 8.65%, LinkedIn by 23.84%, and YouTube by 3.92%. However, our Facebook audience dropped by 0.75% from 2024. The start of this decline correlates with wider trends that are showing a declining number of users on the platform.

We ramped up our social media advertising efforts to support fundraising campaigns and to attract new people to our mailing list. Throughout 2025, our ads reached 852,475 individuals.

Training - Dissemination of practical skills

One of our most impactful methods of disseminating best practices is through practical training courses delivered through strategic partnerships. In 2025, we worked with the Myanmar Jazz Club to train a team of fifteen music workshop leaders. We delivered a series of online training sessions to the music leaders in Yangon, and three days of in-person sessions during their visit to Heidelberg, Germany.

The team of trained music leaders developed their own "Sounds of Hope" project, delivering workshops to hundreds of children and families who had been displaced in the earthquake-stricken region of Mandalay.



Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

What we do

Evaluation and research help us to understand the reach and impact of our work and to be accountable to our program and funding 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 further 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 we reach

- 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, with continual learning and improvements to provide the best possible services for participants.

Our objectives in 2025

- Monitor and evaluate program impacts across 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.

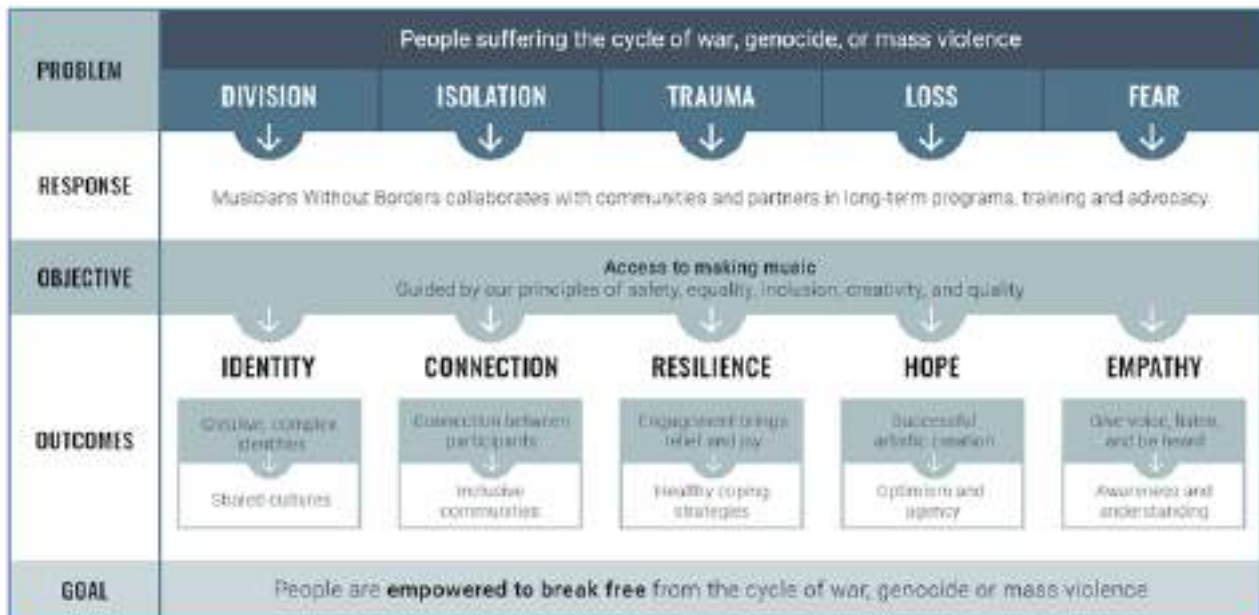
Key results:

Our academic partnership with Leeds-Beckett University, United Kingdom, continued in the "Cohesive Harmonies" project,

Prof. Dr Angela Impey, Professor and Researcher in Ethnomusicology at SOAS, University of London, United Kingdom, collaborated with the Congolese ethnomusicologist Thomas Kusenge, to research and archive traditional songs containing knowledge of biodiversity and conversation in Eastern DRC.

Prof. Dr Angela Impey conducted an evaluation of our Music Connects project, including a site visit to program activities and interviews with program participants and staff.

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.

The year 2025 was crucial for MWB, as we worked on the new three-year Strategic plan (2026-2028) for the organization. Due to the unpredictability of today's world and the shrinking of funding for peacebuilding, the development of this plan was at the core of our efforts, setting ambitious yet achievable goals in order to keep supporting populations affected by conflicts through music. During the last six months of 2025, we came together as a team for several strategic workshops in a comprehensive, coordinated, and collaborative process. Please find the new Strategic Plan [here](#).

Strengthen core resources

In 2025, after some years of financial and human resources instability we found a place of balance.

Regarding human resources (HR), our team experienced several changes throughout the year. These were managed effectively, with capable replacements identified promptly and no major gaps emerging, particularly in the finance and communications functions. We grew more ambitious in how we position ourselves within our sector, seeking to be more present and vocal, and recognized that achieving our objectives would require additional capacity. Although our situation does not allow us to hire more human resources at the moment, we were able to engage professional volunteers through De Nieuwe Gevers to strengthen our work in branding and marketing.

Ultimately, this year marked significant progress in strengthening our fundraising efforts. With expertise in a data-driven, structured, digital fundraising approach, and income from individual giving campaigns that surpassed expectations.

We also worked to refine our corporate fundraising strategy based on learnings from 2024, as a part of the ongoing attempts to diversify our fundraising portfolio. We end the year with one multi-year relationship with a company, one working and evolving relationship with another organization, and a number of potential leads that we will continue developing into 2026.

While initial financial results on corporate sponsorship have been limited, the lessons learned in 2025 will be instrumental in refining our approach for the year ahead. We understand that corporate fundraising is a long-term approach, and securing the future funding of the organization is a priority for us. We are confident that these foundations will strengthen our fundraising impact in 2026 and beyond.

Quality assurance and compliance

During 2025, MWB maintained its unqualified audit opinion as well as its certification from Netherlands Fundraising Regulator CBF.

MWB conducted a comprehensive self-assessment of its compliance with CBF standards under its then classification as a category C member. We prepared for our recategorization in 2026 as a large organization, or category D member, under CBF's assessment system.

Additionally, we continued our work to systematize strategic planning and reporting processes across the organization. By introducing structured processes, we collectively produced strategic documents in a timely way, strengthening strategic alignment within the team and with the Supervisory Board.

Duty of care, wellbeing, safeguarding, safety

The health, security, and well-being of our personnel are a top priority. We believe that both staff and volunteers deserve a supportive work environment that enables them to thrive. Our goal is to ensure that everyone can work effectively and sustainably, whether in project locations or at our office.

In 2025, we reviewed our recruitment policy and procedure in line with our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion objectives. We also finalized a new Volunteer policy to ensure a safe environment for those who give their time and talent to the service of MWB.

We were not able to fully review the Security and Safety policies in 2025 as we had planned, as the person who was identified to carry out this task became unavailable due to unforeseen circumstances. However, in response to deteriorating contexts in Palestine and the DRC, we reinforced context monitoring, risk analysis and security measures to safeguard our project staff and operations.

Governance

Organizational form

MWB is a nonprofit foundation (stichting) established in the Netherlands with public benefit status (ANBI). MWB was certified by Netherlands Fundraising Regulator CBF in 2021, and this status was maintained through 2025.

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. 2025 saw some shifts of membership, as terms expired.

The Supervisory Board met four times in 2025: on March 7, June 20, September 9, and December 19. The main topics discussed were positioning and funding strategies, financial, and programs updates, the Supervisory Board's self-evaluation, the review of its composition, and the potential future leadership transition. The Annual Report was unanimously approved by the Supervisory Board.

Members



Marit van Lenthe (Chair)
Appointed on June 20, 2024
MD, Senior program manager School for Moral Ambition.



Rens van de Walle (financial expert)
Appointed on March 27, 2024
Head of Finance and Operations at PAX for peace.



Bertus Borgers
Appointed March 4, 2020 - end of mandate in September 2025.
Independent musician, producer, writer
Co-founder and Executive Director Fontys Rockacademie 1999-2012.



Leslie Snider
Appointed October 13, 2017 - end of mandate December 2025.
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.



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
Head of Communications and Public Affairs at Goede Doelen Nederland.

Remuneration of Directors, Supervisory Board members and employees

Supervisory Board members are not remunerated for their work with MWB.

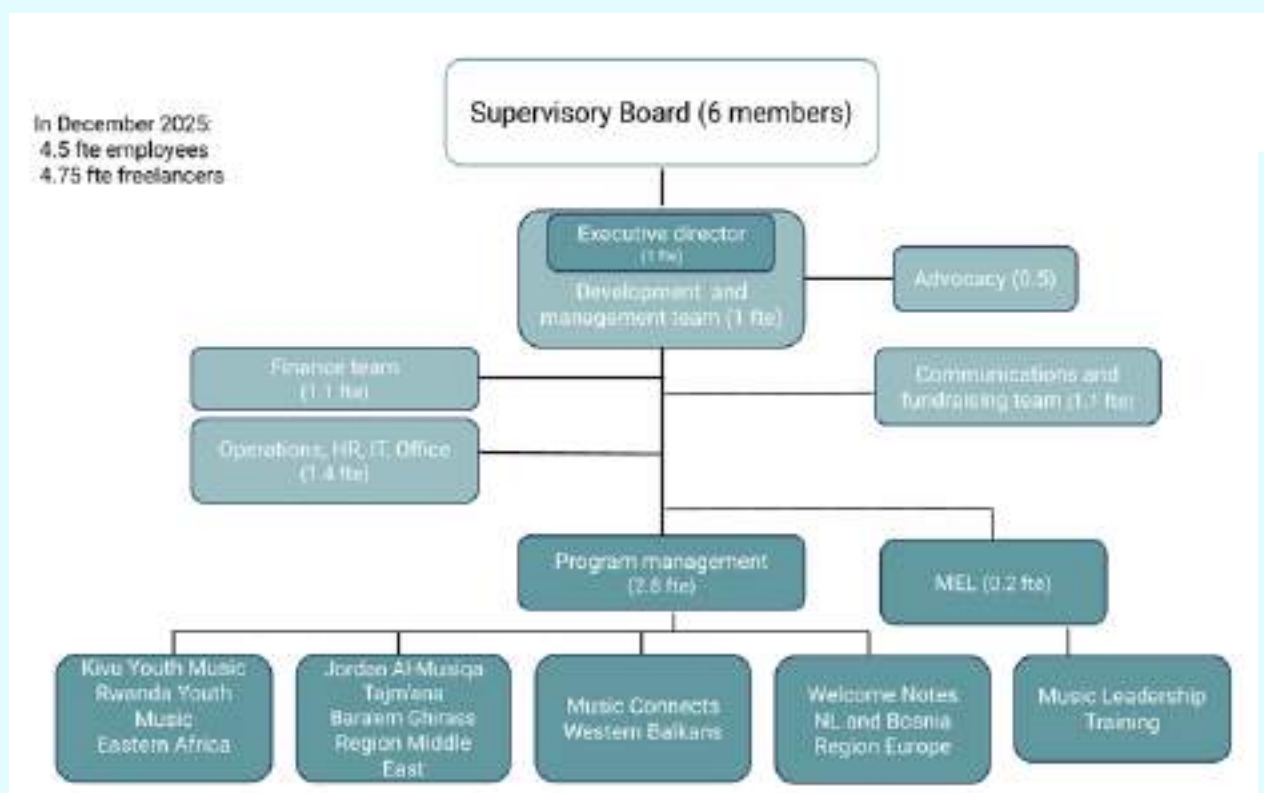
The remuneration of Director Laura Hassler (Executive Board) is determined by the Supervisory Board in accordance with the Remuneration Scheme for Charity Organizations (Regeling Beloning Goede Doelen Organisaties) drawn up by Goede Doelen Nederland. The remuneration and any compensation of the Executive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

Governance

No conflicts of interest have arisen in 2025.

Human resources

In 2025, MWB employed five people representing a total of 4.5 FTE. Additionally, we worked with five freelancers representing an average of 4.75 FTE, and three volunteers.



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 where and the people with whom we work – be they participants, partners, 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 integrity policies listed below. Where necessary and possible, we provide additional training in these areas:

- 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,
- 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.

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 2025

In 2025, MWB received two reports under our Safeguarding and Integrity reporting system, and no complaints through our complaints form. We promptly investigated the two reports and resolved them effectively.

Evaluation of integrity policies and procedures across the organization in 2025

Evaluation of the integrity policies and procedures in the context of reported incidents, concerns, and feedback from partner organizations

In November 2025, we evaluated our integrity policies and procedures against reported incidents and concerns and against feedback received from and needs and risks identified at our partner organizations. Specific risks and concerns identified included:

- Risks related to transferring funds to DRC during bank closures as a result of the ongoing war, and
- Risks relating to a fluctuating workshop leader team within our Welcome Notes NL project.

Conclusions:

- Based on the review above, we found that our integrity policies sufficiently provided for the concerns reported and risks identified, so that no policy revisions were needed.
- We updated the 2025 risk assessment, expanding it with several integrity risks.
- We kept detailed documentation of financial decision-making in relation to the banking situation in DRC.
- At least once a year, we will include a safeguarding training as part of the Team Day of Welcome Notes NL project.

Evaluation of integrity mechanisms within the organization

Our evaluation found that we have an effective process in place for minimizing integrity risks within our operations, proportionate to the size of our organization. Staff, volunteers, and freelancers working in the office and at project locations sign agreements of which our integrity policies are declared an integral part, sign our Code of Conduct, and are briefed on integrity policies and our Code of Conduct. Prevention measures are in place across all projects, including annual safeguarding assessments, annual policy reviews, safeguarding training where possible. Moreover, we have worked with our partners to ensure that other preventive measures such as windowed or open doors, and avoiding one-on-one sessions where possible, are in place. When an incident or concern is reported, incident reports are filed. Partner organizations are required under our partnership agreements to ensure that they have safeguarding policies and procedures in place. We keep a safeguarding check list to review partner practices. Under the partnership agreements, safeguarding concerns that relate to a joint project or activity are to be reported to MWB. The overall residual risk is assessed as medium.

The main challenge in our integrity practice are budget constraints, which prevent us from providing more systematic training to staff and participants at partner organizations. As a result, awareness of safeguarding measures and reporting mechanisms varies across project locations. Reporting channels are not always used, as concerns are often communicated informally through staff at partner organizations. Key priorities for improvement include ensuring that all project staff and participants receive regular training, and preparing posters and other materials on reporting mechanisms to be displayed on different locations.

Social and environmental 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). 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. However, air travel is limited to a minimum and is planned according to the shortest route and with direct flights where available. This, and other actions to ensure our environmental responsibility are outlined in our [Environmental Policy](#).
- **Gender balance:** MWB maintains a gender balance at all levels of its 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 a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy has supported 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. Please find the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy](#).
- **Knowledge sharing:** We invest heavily in mutual learning in our programs, by training musicians and program staff, and by encouraging and facilitating mutual learning among our partner organizations.

Communication with stakeholders

MWB involves its stakeholders in co-creative 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.

- **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. They 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 and opportunities and risks relating to the project's context; provide formal and informal feedback from target populations during meetings with program managers, visits, and 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 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, attending events, responses on social media, and subscriptions to newsletters.

Main risks facing the organization

MAIN RISKS FACING MWB AS AN ORGANIZATION IN 2026–2028

Last update: December 11, 2025

Risk	Description	Probability	Severity	Risk assessment	Mitigation measures
1. Strategy					
Program or organizational growth and/or recruitment challenges overextend staff capacity	Growth and development of new programs or practices put additional pressure on existing team.	Medium	Medium	Low-Medium	Assessment and budgeting of staffing needs accurately and realistically. Where needed, re-evaluate staff priorities and re-define roles.
Decline in program portfolio and program scope	Programs end (loss of funding, end-of-project cycle) and are not replaced by new programs.	High	Medium	Medium-High	Identify and implement new, relevant, and feasible actions to enhance programs impact, replacing any reduced activities as needed. Streamline program activities, to maintain impact despite reduced funding where possible.
Loss of relevance of program contexts 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	Regular monitoring of contexts and program development analysis, in order to plan for such changes. Including by design program impacts that will remain relevant and durable beyond MWB's presence in a context.
2. Operations					
Brain drain at program level	Loss of key trained and talented staff in program locations due to the unstable economic context in project countries.	Medium-High	Medium	Medium	Continuous training of young talents, building trust with partner organizations, proactively creating opportunity to grow and take up leadership positions, program-led decision making, long-term financial commitment when possible.
Safeguarding and integrity incidents	The occurrence of one or more incidents as described in MWB's Safeguarding, Bullying and Harassment, or Anti-Corruption Policies and Procedures.	Low	High*	Medium	Safeguarding policies and procedures that are in place, implementation of safeguarding measures (e.g. background checks, briefings, preventative measures such as windowed doors), reporting systems with external channels available.
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.	Low	Medium	Low-Medium	Partnership assessment, ongoing collaborative meetings and monitoring visits, strong networks in program regions.
3. Finance					
Loss of financial support from contributors/credit risk	Significant reduction in grants and donations due to decreased government funding, shifting donor priorities, and increased competition among NGOs.	Medium	High	Medium-High	Spread out fundraising strategy over multiple funding sources. Financial decision-making throughout the year, in line with fundraising progress. Maintain the continuity reserve so that the sudden loss can be temporarily absorbed.
Liquidity risk	MWB to advance a percentage at the end of major grants before final project closing.	Medium-High	High	Medium-High	Build and maintain continuity reserves in proportion to the organizational and operational scope. Work with a cash forecasting tool to anticipate risks. Pursue funding opportunities for subsequent project cycle to cover the liquidity shortfall.
4. External Environment					
Safety and security at programs	Risk of security incidents incurred by staff in program countries, community backlash against program participants.	Medium	Medium	Medium	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 and Security Policy, incident reporting, travel insurance.
Anti-NGO legislation	Anti-NGO legislation in program countries or in countries from which MWB receives funding, could restrict operations, increase pressure on partner organizations, and hinder fundraising efforts or the ability to transfer funds to target countries.	Medium	Medium-High	Medium	Monitor political and regulatory developments and maintain strong partnerships. Diversify the donor base internationally. Strengthen engagement with development platforms and advocacy networks. Communicate transparently with donors about potential political and regulatory changes.

Information on financial policies and results

MWB is committed to the highest standards of financial transparency and accountability, ensuring clear insight into the acquisition of funds, the allocation of expenditures, the purposes for which resources are used, and the way in which we account for our work. We believe that ethical and transparent financial management is essential for sustaining trust, safeguarding our mission, and supporting the organization's long-term development. MWB operates based on both internal policies and external audits. We have developed a comprehensive Financial Manual, which includes financial policies and procedures, as well as an Anti-Corruption Policy, to guide management and staff in maintaining transparency and accountability in all actions.

The annual financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Guideline RJ650, which applies to Dutch fundraising organizations, and are subject to an annual audit conducted by an external auditor. Additionally, MWB follows the Director's Remuneration Recognition Scheme for fundraising organizations, utilizing the Basic Score for Management Positions (BSD) calculation tool provided by the Dutch Association for Fundraising Organizations, Goede Doelen Nederland.

MWB is a Recognized Charity (Erkend Goed Doel) certified by the Netherlands Fundraising Regulator (Centraal Bureau Fondsenwerving, CBF), and is subject to organizational audits by CBF to maintain this certification. In 2025, MWB maintained its CBF certification and prepared for its recategorization under the CBF assessment system.

Analysis of the balance of income and expenses

The year 2025 concluded with a positive result of EUR 213,821, continuing the positive trend of the previous year. This is a successful outcome, considering the financial challenges of the year, and is due in large part to a legacy gift received in 2025 from a longtime MWB supporter, and the ELJA Award granted for our work in Dutch emergency reception centers.

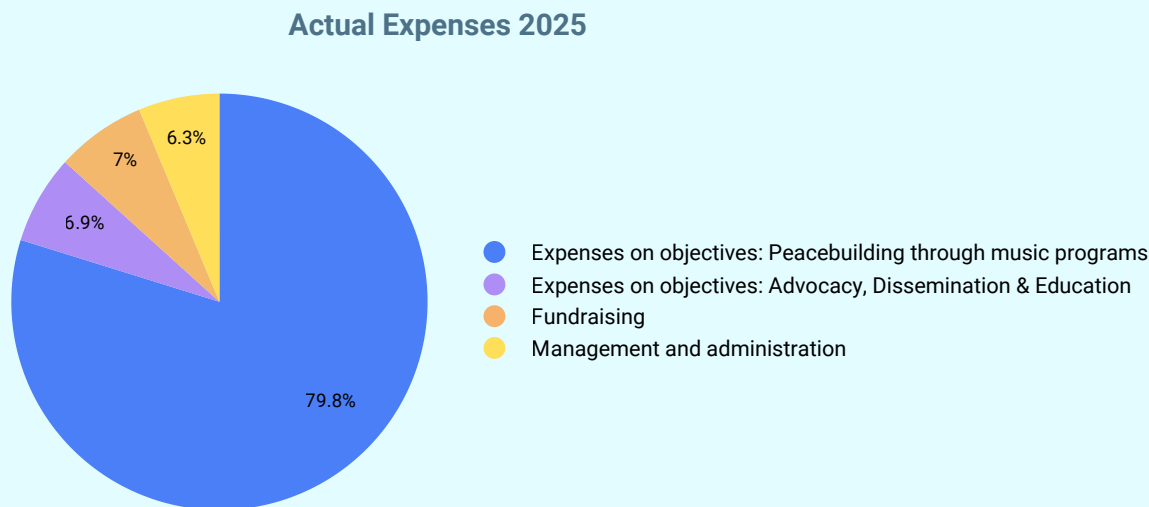
In 2025, Musicians Without Borders raised EUR 1,183,968, which is approximately 105% of the budget and represents a 3.4% increase compared to the total income raised in 2024. The year ended with a positive result and without any withdrawal from the Continuity Reserve. The positive result of EUR 213,820 has been allocated to the Continuity Reserve for an amount of EUR 242,643, while EUR 28,822 was withdrawn from Earmarked Funds.

Musicians Without Borders' total expenditure in 2025 amounted to EUR 972,121 or approximately 87% of the budget. This represents a decrease in expenditure of 15% compared to the previous year: a reflection of conservative spending in a shrinking and increasingly competitive fundraising environment. These funds were used to support our international music programs, reaching some 4,500 direct beneficiaries through nearly 7,000 music activities, as well as our advocacy, educational, and outreach activities.

Information on financial policies and results

Income and Expenses		Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
TOTAL INCOME		1,183,968	1,128,000	1,144,794
TOTAL EXPENSES		972,121	1,119,000	1,142,930
Result before allocation of financial income and		211,847	9,000	1,865
Financial Income and expenses (6.2)		1,974	-	3,491
SUM OF INCOME AND EXPENSES		213,821	9,000	5,356

Ratio between expenditure on objectives, fundraising, and management and administration



In 2025, MWB prioritized expenditures directly related to its core objectives, including costs of music programs, training, and advocacy. The total expenditure on objectives accounted for 86.7% of total expenses, in line with both the budget and MWB’s commitment to ensure that the largest possible share of resources is used for mission-related activities.

For 2025, MWB set a desired ratio of direct fundraising costs to total fundraising income of approximately 6%. This desired ratio was approved as part of the annual budget and was considered reasonable in light of MWB’s need to maintain and strengthen its fundraising capacity while keeping fundraising costs proportional to the income raised. Fundraising costs include activities such as donor acquisition and retention, donation collection, donor communications, campaign management, event management, and relationship building with private donors, institutional funders, and major supporters.

The actual ratio of direct fundraising costs to total fundraising income in 2025 was 5.8%, below the desired ratio of 6.0% and below the 2024 level of 7.8%. This reflects careful cost management, a successful year-end campaign, and the positive effect of one-off income received during the year. MWB considers the 2025 ratio reasonable and explainable: fundraising investment remained necessary to support income diversification and future continuity, while the actual costs remained modest in relation to the funds raised.

Management and administration costs amounted to 5.1% of total income, compared with a budgeted ratio of 5.0% and 5.5% in 2024. MWB recognizes the importance of robust planning, control systems, administration, management, and maintaining integrity. We aim to balance efficiency with quality, operating with a lean team to keep management costs in line with funds raised. We are constantly exploring ways to reduce management and administration costs, such as utilizing NGO discount programs, pro bono advisory services, digital archiving, and reducing fixed costs, all while maintaining high-quality standards.

Performance indicators	Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
Total costs of direct fundraising in % of total fundraising income	5.8%	6.0%	7.8%
Total costs of management and administration in % of total income	5.1%	5.0%	5.5%
Total expenditures on objectives in % of total expenditures	86.7%	89.0%	86.8%

There was no exceptional expenditure in 2025.

One-off and annually recurring income

MWB raised all the necessary funds to support its activities and operations. The funds acquired are of two types: those allocated to specific projects or actions, and general funds that support the overall functioning and development of the organization. MWB ensures that these funds are used in accordance with the agreements in place and follows the financial policies developed to guarantee responsible and transparent use of donations.

In 2025, the majority of our income (95%) was of a one-off nature. This included single donations from private donors, grants for specific project cycles, and income generated from specific services or sales. The remaining 5% of our total income, amounting to EUR 54,480, came from 242 donors who pledged recurring contributions to MWB.

It is important to note that several funding partners providing one-off grants and donations are long-term supporters who have contributed to MWBs for many years. We categorize these donations as "one-off" because they are often tied to specific activity cycles or events and are contingent upon the approval of applications submitted by MWB.

Fundraising sources and methods

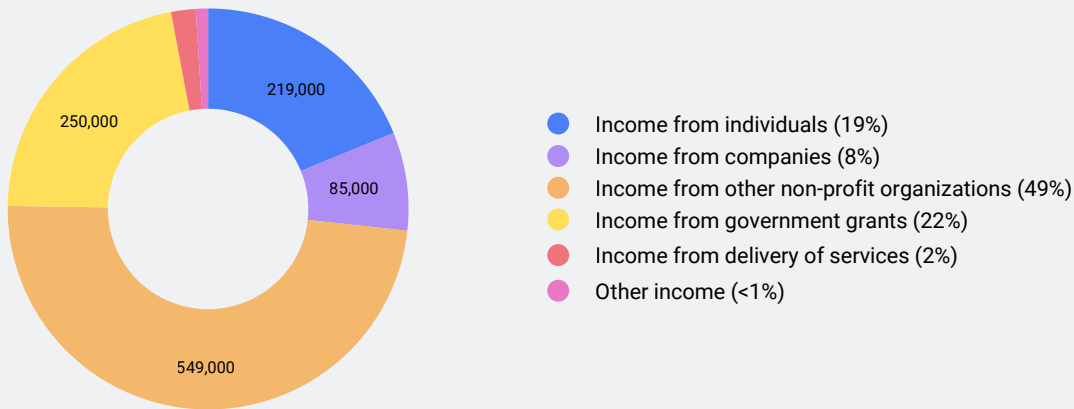
We recognize the importance of building a stable and diverse portfolio of income sources to reduce dependence on short-term fundraising outcomes. This is particularly crucial as we commit to multi-year projects and partnerships, and work in vulnerable contexts where unexpected changes or urgent needs can arise at any time. MWB's strategy focuses on expanding its donor base and securing multi-year support to ensure income stability, reduce reliance on any single source or type of donation, and increase the sustainability of our organization and its programs.

In 2025, MWB continued to experiment with new short- and long-term ideas. Inevitably, some were more successful than others, but we continued to gain valuable knowledge to take into the future.

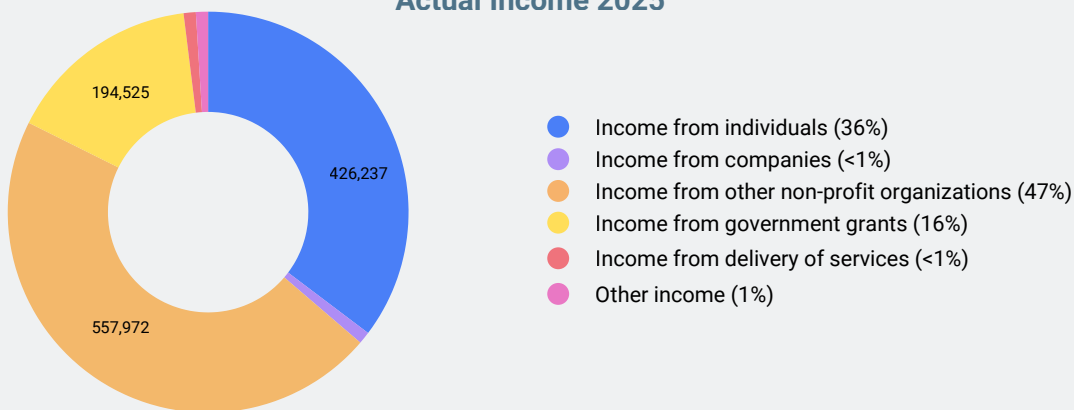
Our fundraising channels include:

- **Institutional fundraising:** Engaging with governmental, semi-governmental, international and supranational organizations, embassies, foundations, religious, and other independent organizations,
- **Private fundraising:** Targeting one-off and recurring donors through social media and email campaigns, as well as direct fundraising efforts,
- **Benefit concerts and events:** Organizing events to raise funds and awareness,
- **Sponsorships:** Mainly from the music industry, supporting our initiatives,
- **In-kind support:** Contributions from both corporate and private donors,
- **Income generation:** Including revenue from training programs, merchandise sales, and event ticket sales,
- **Legacy and in-memorandum giving:** Gifts from people in their wills, or left by people in honor of someone's death.

Budget Income 2025



Actual Income 2025



Result

The final result of EUR 213,821 has been allocated as follows. EUR 242,643 has been added to the Continuity Reserve, bringing the total to EUR 314,137 at year-end 2025. EUR 28,822 was withdrawn from the Earmarked Funds, bringing the total to EUR 51,098 at year-end 2025. These Earmarked Funds are restricted to specific actions and will be allocated for use in 2026.

Appropriation of result			
In euros			
Addition to/withdrawal from:	2025		2024
Continuity Reserve	242,643		-
Earmarked Funds	-28,822		5,355
Total changes in reserves and funds	213,821		5,355

Policy on Reserves and Funds

The Continuity Reserve is designed to address short- and medium-term risks, ensuring that the organization can meet its future obligations and continue its activities in the event of temporary loss of income, delays in grant payments, unexpected operational costs, or other disruptions. The Supervisory Board and Executive Board have agreed that the desired minimum level of the Continuity Reserve should be no less than 10% of the following year's budget. This amount is intended to cover approximately three months of fixed operating costs and to mitigate the organizational risk of loss or delay of income.

The desired size of the Continuity Reserve is formally substantiated through MWB's annual financial and operational risk assessment. This assessment considers the organization's income profile, the share of one-off and restricted income, the timing of grant payments, liquidity requirements related to project commitments, obligations towards partner organizations, staff and office commitments, security and safeguarding risks in program countries, and the potential impact of the loss of a significant donor or funding partner.

This risk assessment is reviewed at least annually as part of the annual planning and budgeting cycle, and more frequently if material changes occur in the organization's funding position, program portfolio, liquidity forecast, or operating environment. The Executive Board monitors liquidity and reserve levels throughout the year, and the Supervisory Board reviews financial risks, mitigation measures, and the adequacy of the Continuity Reserve through its regular financial oversight.

In 2025, MWB foresaw a liquidity issue due to the confluence of three main factors: the need to advance the final tranche of a large grant for the project Music Connects; the shortfall in external sources of co-funding for Music Connects; and the discontinuation of a core funding partner from 2026. This liquidity risk was expected to materialize from the third quarter of 2025. We mitigated this risk through the following actions: we circulated a call among loyal MWB supporters to "Invest in MWB," which resulted in approximately EUR 115,000 in liquidity donations (of which EUR 73,000 granted as a loan); we supported partner organizations in their grant writing efforts, raising some EUR 90,000 in co-funding for Music Connects; and we managed expenditure prudently, reducing costs by 15% compared to 2024.

A legacy gift from a long-time friend of the organization announced in Q2 of 2025 and a financial award granted in Q4 of 2025 enabled MWB to strengthen its Continuity Reserve and avert the liquidity risk identified earlier in the year. Given the uncertain environment, particularly in the cultural, development, and cooperation sectors, we anticipate that the Continuity Reserve may be used in 2026 to ensure the continuation of program operations.

MWB continues to focus on income diversification strategies to support sustainable growth and financial stability in alignment with our mission.

Our asset management

Musicians Without Borders manages its assets prudently and in accordance with Dutch legislation, RJ650 guidelines, CBF requirements, and ANBI regulations. The organization does not hold investments or engage in speculative financial activities. Available funds are maintained in cash and bank accounts and are used to support the continuity of operations and the implementation of our mission.

Since the majority of our income is of a one-off nature which requires careful liquidity planning and active monitoring of cash flow, liquidity is reviewed regularly by management and the Supervisory Board. Strengthening and maintaining the Continuity Reserve remains a priority, particularly in light of the volatile funding landscape, multi-year project commitments, and the risks identified in the annual risk assessment.

More information on MWB financial insight is provided in the annual accounts below.



Annual Accounts

Balance Sheet as at December 31, 2025

After appropriation of results, in euros

		31/12/2025		31/12/2024
Assets				
Current Assets				
Receivables and Pre-payments (1)		259,098		47,004
Cash and cash equivalent (2)		334,310		415,410
TOTAL		593,408		462,414

31/12/2025

31/12/2024

Liabilities

Reserves and Funds (3)				
Continuity Reserve (3.1)		314,137		71,494
TOTAL RESERVES		314,137		71,494
Earmarked Funds (3.2)		51,098		79,920
TOTAL RESERVES AND FUNDS		365,235		151,414
Liabilities (4)				
Long-term liabilities (4.1)		73,000		-
Current liabilities (4.2)		155,173		311,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES		228,173		311,000
TOTAL		593,408		462,414



Statement of Income and Expenses for 2025

In euros

INCOME (5)

	Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
Income from individuals (5.1)	426,237	219,000	206,009
Income from companies	1,192	85,000	11,600
Income from other non-profit organizations	557,972	549,000	588,859
Income from government grants	194,525	250,000	310,650
Total Fundraising Income	1,179,926	1,103,000	1,117,118
Income from sale of products and delivery services	3,782	22,000	26,382
Other Income	260	3,000	1,294
Total Income	1,183,968	1,128,000	1,144,794

EXPENSES (6)

	Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
Peacebuilding through music programs	775,694	854,622	836,299
Advocacy, Dissemination & Education	67,242	136,424	156,208
Expenses on objectives	842,936	991,046	992,507
Fundraising	68,390	66,815	87,527
Management and administration	60,795	61,139	62,896
Total expenses	972,121	1,119,000	1,142,930
Result before allocation of financial income and costs	211,847	9,000	1,864
Financial income and expenses (6.2)	1,974	0	3,491
Sum of income and expenses	213,821	9,000	5,355

Appropriation of result

In euros

Addition to/withdrawal from:		2025		2024
Continuity Reserve		242,643		-
Earmarked Funds		-28,822		5,355
Total changes in reserves and funds		213,821		5,355

The result for 2025 amounts to EUR 213,821. Of this amount, EUR 28,822 has been deducted from the Earmarked funds and EUR 242,643 has been added to the continuity reserve.

Performance Indicators

Performance indicators		Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
Total costs of direct fundraising in % of total fundraising income		5.80%	6.00%	7.80%
Total costs of management and administration in % of total income		5.10%	5.00%	5.50%
Total expenditures on objectives in % of total expenditures		86.70%	89.00%	86.80%

Cash Flow Statement

In euros

	2025			2024	
Cash flow from operational activities					
Result		213,821			5,355
Depreciations		-			-
Change in working capital:					
- changes in receivables and prepayments	-212,094			32,010	
- changes in current liabilities	-155,827			-173,658	
- changes in long-term liabilities	73,000			-	
Total change in working capital		-294,922			-141,648
Cash flow from operating activities		-81,101			-136,293
Investment tangible fixed assets				-	
Cash flow from investment activities		-			-
Net cash flow		-81,101			-136,293
Opening balance cash and cash equivalents		415,410			551,703
Closing balance cash and cash equivalents		334,309			415,410



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 guideline RJ650 (Fundraising Organizations). The annual accounts are compared to the approved 2025 budget and the actual accounts for 2024.

The 2025 annual accounts form an integral part of MWB's annual report (jaarverslag). The annual report gives a detailed overview of and accounts for Musicians Without Borders' activities, programs and results.

The 2025 Statement of Income and Expenses is based on the period from January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025.

All the amounts and figures are presented in EURO.

Going concern

The going concern assumption has been applied in the preparation of these financial statements.

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.

Long-term and 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 organization.

Reserves and funds

Reserves and funds of MWB include the Continuity Reserve and Earmarked Funds. Additions and withdrawals to and from reserves and funds are determined through the appropriation of the result. The Supervisory Board and Executive Board determine the desired level of the Continuity Reserve, based on the organization's financial and operational risk assessment. There was no Designated Reserve at year-end 2025.

The Continuity Reserve is intended to safeguard the continuity of the organization and to absorb short- and medium-term financial and operational risks. Earmarked Funds consist of funds restricted by funders for specific purposes, projects, or activities and are spent in accordance with funder agreements.

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" and "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, 2025

Receivables and pre-payments (1)

In euros

The receivables and pre-payments are:

	2025		2024
Receivable from donors (1.1)	226,875		24,083
Receivable from delivery of service	510		998
Other receivables	1,974		3,491
Pre-payments to projects partners/projects costs	26,794		14,396
Other prepayments	2,945		4,035
TOTAL RECEIVABLES AND PRE-PAYMENTS	259,098		47,004

Receivables from donors (1.1)

Receivable from donors (in transit) (1.1)			
	2025		2024
Grants	157,359		4,477
Donations and gifts	69,515		19,606
	226,874		24,083

All receivables originated in 2025 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 2025 but not yet received per December 31, 2025.

Other receivables originated mainly from bank interest to be received.

Pre-payments to project partner organizations/project costs are amounts paid in advance to implementing partner organizations under annual or multi-year partnership agreements, for which MWB receives financial reports according to project deadlines and activity plans. Direct project costs paid in advance are included in this figure as well.

Other pre-payments include costs paid in advance relating to the following year or years, for costs of website domains, software subscriptions, insurance, and deposits.

Cash and cash equivalents (2)

In euros

	31/12/2025		31/12/2024
Cash at bank	332,776		414,127
Cash and cash equivalents	1,534		1,283
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	334,310		415,410

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in-hand and bank balances.
The cash is freely available to the organization.

Reserves and Funds (3)

In euros

Continuity Reserve (3.1)

The changes in the Continuity Reserve are:

	2025		2024
Opening balance January 1	71,494		71,494
Appropriated result	242,643		-
Closing balance December 31	314,137		71,494

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 fixed operating costs and mitigates the organizational risk of loss or delay of income.

The risk assessment underlying the desired size of the Continuity Reserve is reviewed at least annually as part of the planning and budgeting cycle. It considers, among other factors, the organization's reliance on one-off and restricted funding, liquidity risks arising from grant payment schedules, commitments to partner organizations, staff and office obligations, safeguarding and security risks in program countries, and the potential impact of the loss of a major donor or funding partner. Mitigation measures include income diversification, active cash-flow monitoring, prudent expenditure management, maintaining strong program and funding partner relationships, and maintaining a Continuity Reserve proportionate to the organization's risk profile.

As per year-end 2025, the Continuity Reserve was increased to EUR 314,137, equal to 28% of the 2026 annual budget. The goal to restore the Continuity Reserve to at least 10% of the annual budget has therefore been achieved.

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 fixed operational 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 EUR 537,500 for Musicians Without Borders in 2025.

Earmarked Funds (3.2)

The changes in the Earmarked Funds are:

	2025		2024
Opening balance January 1	79,920		74,565
Appropriated result	-28,822		5,355
Closing balance December 31	51,098		79,920

	2025		2024
Palestine: Bara'em Ghirass	17,953		38,116
Rwanda Youth Music and Kivu Youth Music	-		5,267
Refugees in Europe: Welcome Notes NL	8,203		13,300
Jordan: Al-Musiqa Tajm'ana	13,552		23,237
Music Connects	11,390		-
Total Earmarked Funds	51,098		79,920

Earmarked funds

The Earmarked Funds are restricted by funders and must be spent on specific purposes or activities. These funds are vital to the continuation of MWB's national and international projects and are spent in accordance with funder agreements, approved budgets, and project plans. The Earmarked Funds reserved at December 31, 2024, were spent during 2025, in line with planned project activities and operations. The balance at the end of 2025, EUR 51,098, consists mainly of funds raised for the project *Bara'em Ghirass* in Palestine, whose project period does not coincide with the financial year, Welcome Notes NL due to the timing of incoming funds, and funds for the project *Al-Musiqa Tajm'ana* in Jordan, which was on hold for most of the year due to administrative process in the country. Furthermore, part of the "Invest in MWB" donations will be used to cover 2026 activities of the project Music Connects.

Change in reserves and funds during the year 2025

In euros

	01/01/2025		Decrease		Increase		31/12/2025
Continuity Reserve	71,494		0		242,643		314,137
TOTAL RESERVES	71,494		0		242,643		314,137
Earmarked funds							
Palestine: Bara'em Ghirass	38,116		38,116		17,953		17,953
Music Connects	0		31,946		43,336		11,390
Refugees in Europe: Welcome Notes NL	13,300		5,097		0		8,203
Jordan: Al-Musiqa Tajm'ana	23,237		9,685		0		13,552
Rwanda Youth Music and Kivu Youth Music	5,267		5,267		0		0
TOTAL FUNDS	79,920		90,111		61,289		51,098
TOTAL RESERVES AND FUNDS	151,414		90,111		303,932		365,235

Liabilities (4)

In euros

Long-term liabilities (4.1)

The long-term liabilities are:

	2025		2024
Long-term liability: Invest in Mwb	73,000		-

Long-term liabilities

Long-term liabilities relate to loans received under the “Invest in MWB” initiative. This initiative was launched in 2025 as a temporary liquidity measure to bridge expected cash-flow pressure related to the Music Connects project and to safeguard the continuity of MWB’s activities. Loyal supporters of MWB provided both loans and donations under this initiative.

The loans are recognized at nominal value and will be repaid in accordance with the individual loan agreements. The loans are interest-free and mature ultimately in the beginning of 2027. No security has been provided. Amounts falling due within one year after the balance sheet date should be presented as current liabilities; the remaining balance is presented as long-term liabilities.

Current liabilities (4.2)

The current liabilities are:

	2025		2024
Account Payable	30,263		37,865
Accounts Payable to partner organizations	11,619		38,717
Grants received in advance	89,185		215,579
Personnel liabilities	24,106		18,839
TOTAL LIABILITIES	155,173		311,000

The decrease in liabilities at the end of 2025 is mainly due to the decrease of the Grants **received in advance** which consists of restricted funding received by MWB in the financial year, and previous years, while the related project expenses have not been incurred yet. Due to the nature of the grant contracts, income is not accounted for in the period that the funds are received, but in the period in which the related expenses are recognized. The expenses related to grants received in advance in 2025 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 run activities during 2025. These are in line with the previous year, are short-term and are expected to be paid within one year. Under the expense recognition principle, all accounts payable refer to operational expenses related to the financial year 2025 for which the invoices received, or expected to be received, have not yet been paid at year-end.

Personnel liabilities refer to the tax and social premiums that MWB will pay in 2026, payroll tax for December paid in January 2026, the vacation days reserve, and the holiday allowance 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 EUR 11,779. Rent is paid in advance at the end of every preceding month.



Notes to the statement of income and expenses for 2025

In euros

Income (5)

	Actual 2025	Actual 2025	Actual 2025
Income from individuals (5.1)	426,237	219,000	206,009
Income from companies	1,192	85,000	11,600
Income from other non-profit organizations	557,972	549,000	588,859
Income from government grants	194,525	250,000	310,650
Total Fundraising Income	1,179,926	1,103,000	1,117,118
Income from sale of products and delivery services	3,782	22,000	26,382
Other Income	260	3,000	1,294
Total Income	1,183,968	1,128,000	1,144,794

Income from individuals (5.1)

	Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
Legacies	225,418	-	-
Contributions	54,480	66,000	51,186
Donations and gifts	146,338	153,000	154,823
	426,237	219,000	206,009

In 2025, MWB raised **EUR 1,183,968**, approximately 105% of the budget and approximately 3.4% more than the income raised in 2024. The difference compared to the budget is mainly due to a legacy gift from a long-time supporter and the ELJA Award granted for MWB's work in Dutch emergency reception centers. Income from other non-profit organizations was higher than budgeted, while income from companies and income from the sale of products and delivery of services were below budget.

MWB's main source of income is constituted by **donations received from individuals and donations received 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 2025 included Porticus - Community Arts Lab, Soka Gakkai, Fondation Alta Mane, Pro Victimis Foundation, Peace of Mind Foundation, Stichting IUCN Nederlands Comité, Iona Stichting, Haella Stichting, Stichting Weeshuis Doopegezinden, Janivo Stichting, KFHein Fonds, Fundatie van den Santheuvel Sobbe, ELJA Foundation, VSB Fonds and Stichting van Well van der Snoek.

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. In 2025, this category included a legacy gift of EUR 225,418, regular contributions of EUR 54,480, and one-off donations and gifts of EUR 146,338. These came from 498 donors in total.

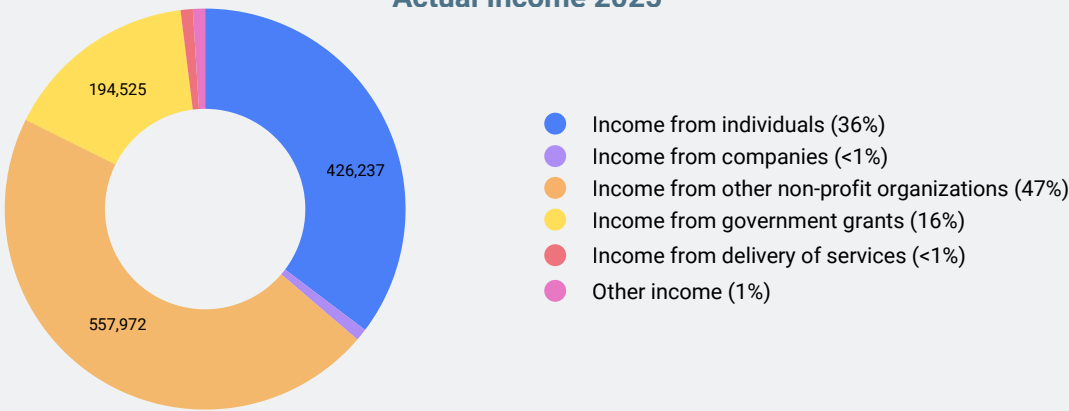
Income from individuals - contributions, refers to individual donors who pledge regular contributions to MWB. In 2025, MWB received a total of EUR 54,480 (2024: EUR 51,186) from 242 contributors, which is a slight increase compared to past years. This is an important contribution that MWB can count on to sustain its core operations and support its objectives.

Income from government grants relates fully to the European Commission's Creative Europe grant 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 2025 reflects the total spent on eligible activities that year.

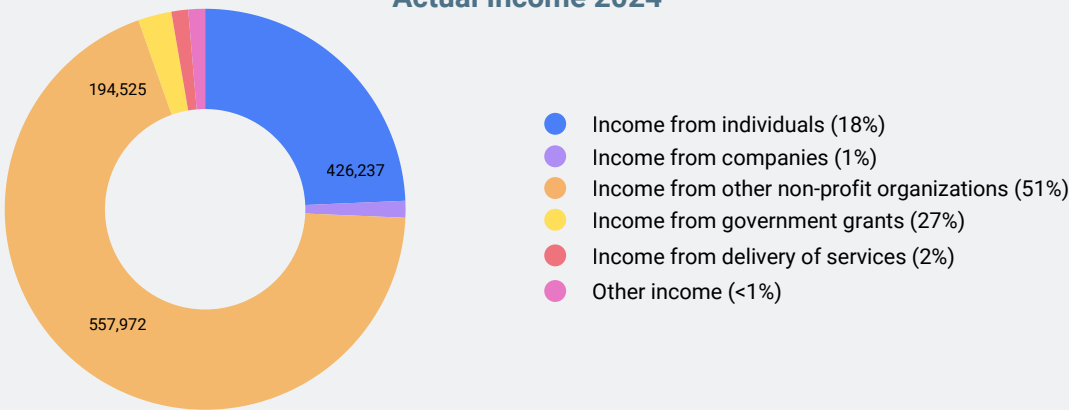
Besides individual donations, MWB receives **donations from companies**. The largest donation in 2025 was received from Stek Advocaten (EUR 1,111).

Income from sale of products and delivery of services is generated from the delivery of training courses and activities related to advocacy and dissemination. In 2025, MWB organized and implemented Music Leadership training in collaboration with Landesmusikakademie NRW (Germany) and the Leeds Beckett University (UK).

Actual Income 2025



Actual Income 2024



Expenses (6)

	Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
Peacebuilding through music programs	775,694	854,622	836,299
Advocacy, Dissemination & Education	67,242	136,424	156,208
Expenses on objectives	842,936	991,046	992,507
Fundraising	68,390	66,815	87,527
Management and administration	60,795	61,139	62,896
Total expenses	972,121	1,119,000	1,142,930

Actual Expenses 2025



Notes to the allocation of expenses (6)

Appendix 3 - Model explanation of expenditure	Expenses on objectives		Expenses on Fundraising	Management and Administration	Total expenses 2025	Budget 2025	Total expenses 2024
	Peacebuilding through music programs	Advocacy, Dissemination & Education					
Contributions to implementing partners	258,157	0	0	0	258,157	242,600	324,266
Purchases and acquisitions	46,705	849	310	754	48,618	80,012	115,768
Outsourced work/Contracted services	236,858	16,726	13,631	11,597	278,812	424,223	281,099
Communication costs	4,839	4,942	5,940	291	16,012	33,265	22,160
Staff costs (6.1)	186,306	33,643	38,125	35,192	293,266	287,500	346,499
Housing costs	26,848	2,980	2,980	4,768	37,576	17,000	17,281
Office and general costs	15,981	8,102	7,404	8,194	39,681	34,400	35,857
Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	775,694	67,242	68,390	60,796	972,122	1,119,000	1,142,930

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.

Communication 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 were made at project locations by 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 team members' time dedicated to fundraising, costs for event, promotion and visibility.

In 2025, MWB spent approximately 87% of the total budget. This lower level of expenditure reflects prudent financial management in response to the liquidity risks identified during the year and the increasingly competitive fundraising environment. MWB carefully phased expenditure in line with confirmed income, while protecting core program delivery, safeguarding, financial management, and governance.

Expenses on objectives amounted to EUR 842,936, representing 86.7% of total expenditure. These costs relate directly to MWB's mission and include costs for peacebuilding through music programs, advocacy, dissemination, and education. Expenditure on objectives remained the largest category of spending, in line with MWB's annual plan and financial policy.

Fundraising expenses amounted to EUR 68,390. These costs supported donor acquisition and retention, campaign management, donor communications, events, and relationship building with individual and institutional donors. The actual level of fundraising costs was below budget and resulted in a direct fundraising cost ratio of 5.8% of total fundraising income.

Management and administration costs amounted to EUR 60,796 representing 5.1% of total income. These costs include financial administration, audit, governance, office, ICT, and other general organizational costs necessary to ensure responsible, transparent, and compliant operations.

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

Staff costs (6.1)

In euros

Salaries and wages Management	
Below is a breakdown of salary and wage of the management 2025:	
Name:	L. J. Hassler
Function:	Executive Board/Director
Employment contract	
Hours:	40
Part-Time rate:	100%
Period:	1/1-31/12/2025
Annual Income	
Gross salary	53,152
Holiday allowance	4,252
Other remuneration	-
Total annual Income	57,404
Pension premium (employer part)	10,000
Payments termination of employment	-
Taxable allowances	-
TOTAL REMUNERATION and BENEFIT 2025	67,404
Maximum annual remuneration and benefits (determined by Goede Doelen Nederland)	150,699
Ratio	44.70%
TOTAL REMUNERATION and BENEFIT 2025	67,404

The Executive Board of MWB consists of one person, the Director, who is appointed by the Supervisory Board.

The remuneration of the Director is determined by the Supervisory Board in accordance with the Regulation for the Remuneration of Directors of Charity Organizations [Regeling Beloning Directeuren van Goede Doelen Organisaties] issued by Goede Doelen Nederland. Based on the BSD score for MWB of 365 points, the maximum annual salary under this scheme amounts to EUR 115,922. The maximum annual remuneration and benefits, including taxable allowances, employer pension contributions and other long-term remuneration, amounts to EUR 150,699.

The annual remuneration together with all taxable allowances, employer pension contributions and other long-term remuneration amounted to EUR 67,404, which is well under the maximum set by the Goede Doelen Nederland scheme of EUR 150,699 and also below the general WNT maximum for 2025 of EUR 246,000.

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)

MWB received EUR 1,974 in interest income on its bank accounts in 2025.

Adoption of Annual Accounts

On June 26, 2026, MWB's Supervisory Board approved the annual accounts, result appropriation, and management report prepared by the Executive Board.

The members of the Supervisory Board as per June 26, 2026, are:

Marit van Lenthe (chair)

Kick van der Mark

Yigit Aksakoglu

Subsequent events

After the balance sheet date, EUR 5,000 of the loans received under the "Invest in MWB" initiative was waived by the lender and converted into a donation. This is a non-adjusting subsequent event and has not been reflected in the 2025 balance sheet. The amount will be recognized as donation income in 2026.

No other subsequent events occurred between December 31, 2025, and the date of approval of these annual accounts that require adjustment of, or disclosure in, the annual accounts.



Looking forward: Plans for 2026

In 2026, we will focus on the following four strategic objectives:

Under **Objective 1** - Contribute to just, inclusive, peaceful societies: We will strengthen our long-term programs, building alternatives to war and exclusion with musicians and partner organizations;

Under **Objective 2** - Build networks of changemakers: We will expand our network, creating new alliances within both the arts and the peacebuilding and social-change sectors;

Under **Objective 3** - Change the narrative: We will promote empathy and build support for human rights by sharing music and stories from people with lived experience of war and forced migration; and

Under **Objective 4** - Build a movement of solidarity: We will expand our base of supporters, including new musicians, activists, and community members, from an understanding that many people around the world are looking for reasons to hope and places to act.

Please see our [2026 Annual Plan](#).

2026 Budget

	2026
Income	€
Income from individuals	257,000
Income from companies	50,000
Income from government grants	228,910
Income from other non-profit organizations	589,000
Total fundraising income	1,124,910
Income from sale of products and delivery services	14,000
Other Income	5,000
Total Income	1,143,910

Expenses	
Peacebuilding through music programs	738,341
Advocacy, dissemination, and education	253,603
Expenses on objectives	991,943
Fundraising	81,453
Management and administration	61,514
Total Expenses	1,134,910
Result before allocation of financial income and expenses	9,000
Financial income and expenses	0
SUM OF INCOME AND EXPENSES	9,000

The 2026 budget has been prepared on a prudent basis and reflects MWB's ambition to continue its core programs while maintaining careful financial control. The budget projects a total income of approximately EUR 1,144,000 and total expenses of nearly EUR 1,135,000, resulting in a modest positive result of EUR 9,000 before allocation of financial income and expenses.

The fundraising budget for 2026 reflects the need to continue investing in income diversification, donor retention, recurring giving, institutional fundraising, and corporate relationships. Expenditure will be phased in line with confirmed income and cash-flow forecasts. The Continuity Reserve may be used if necessary to safeguard program continuity, in accordance with the reserve policy and the annual financial and operational risk assessment.

Program and funding partners

MWB is proud of its long-term relationships with trusted program and funding partners, who are integral to the impact of our projects around the world. We are especially grateful to collaborate with program and funding partners 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-Musiqa Tajm'ana funding partners



Bara'em Ghirass program partners



Music Connects program partners



Music Connects funding partners



Rwanda Youth Music program partners



Kivu Youth Music program partners



Global
Vision for
Africa



National Committee
of The Netherlands

Kivu Youth Music funding partners

**RATIONAL
GAMES**

Welcome Notes program partners



LANDES
MUSIK
AKADEMIE
NRW



Caritas
Bozne i Hercegovine

Welcome Notes funding partners

**AMVJ
FONDS**



HAELLA
STICHTING



Fundatie
Van den Sartheuvel-Sobbe



Iona stichting



ELJA
Foundation

JANIVO
STICHTING

VSBfonds,
iedereen doet mee



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