



# Musicians without Borders Strategic Plan 2017-2019

December, 2016/ Laura Hassler

## Musicians without Borders: WAR DIVIDES, MUSIC CONNECTS

**Mission:** *We use the power of music to bridge divides, connect communities and heal the wounds of war.*

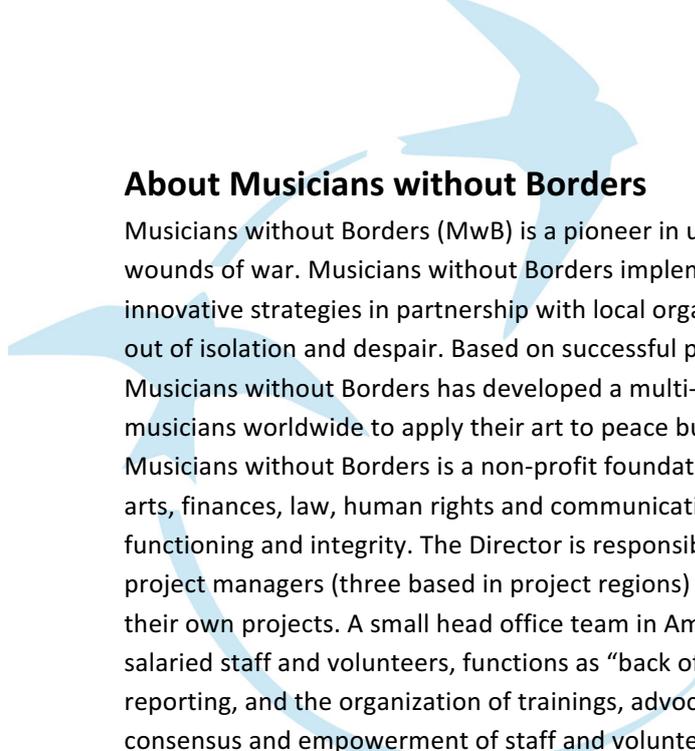
**Vision:** *We envision a world in which musicians worldwide are inspired, empowered and equipped to engage as peacemakers.*

## Executive Summary

*Musicians without Borders (MwB) is a non-profit Netherlands-based foundation that uses the power of music for social change and peacebuilding. MwB works to achieve its goals through three core areas of operation, which intersect and reinforce each other: music projects with people affected by war and armed conflict; training and expertise sharing; and advocacy and network building.*

*MwB was founded in 1999 by director Laura Hassler, who engaged her network of socially conscious musicians to invest their energies and talents in a new idea: to use the power of music to re-connect divided communities and help to heal the wounds of war. Relying on that ever-growing network, MwB has grown steadily and organically and is currently recognized as a global pioneer in innovative approaches to peace building through the arts. MwB now has a credible track record of establishing viable, long-term music programs in conflict regions; a body of community music expertise; and a solid core staff and community of trainers, volunteers and supporters. MwB is ready for its next phase of growth.*

*MwB's overall strategic objective for 2017-2019 is to upscale the organization as a whole: increase the scope and impact of project work; develop tools to enhance MwB's outreach; and enable the organization to become self-sustainable. This will be achieved by stabilizing current programs while expanding project work to new regions through 'community partnerships'; developing and improving training processes for scalability; exploring synergies and creating partnerships with other initiatives world-wide; and growing the base of private and institutional donors. Key to achieving these essential steps is increasing human resource capacity, both in the project regions and in the organizational formation supporting every aspect of MwB's work.*



## About Musicians without Borders

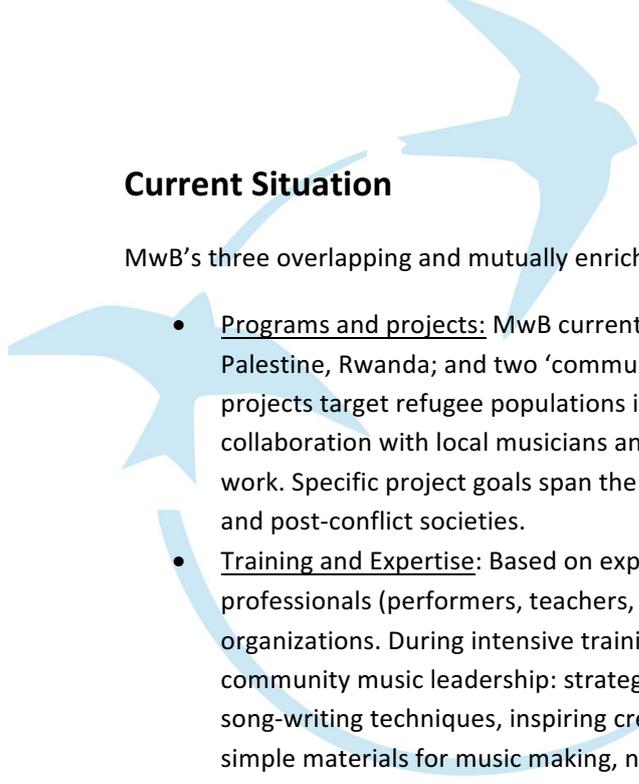
Musicians without Borders (MwB) is a pioneer in using the power of music for reconciliation and healing the wounds of war. Musicians without Borders implements projects in conflict and post-conflict regions, develops innovative strategies in partnership with local organizations and musicians, and trains local leaders, offering paths out of isolation and despair. Based on successful projects in the Balkans, the Middle East and Central Africa, Musicians without Borders has developed a multi-level music leadership training program, and offers training to musicians worldwide to apply their art to peace building and social justice.

Musicians without Borders is a non-profit foundation. Its Supervisory Board, composed of professionals in the arts, finances, law, human rights and communications, is responsible for oversight of the organization's functioning and integrity. The Director is responsible for strategic development and general management. Four project managers (three based in project regions) report to this director and supervise local staff and oversee their own projects. A small head office team in Amsterdam (and via internet in Jerusalem), including part-time salaried staff and volunteers, functions as “back office” for all projects, communications, fundraising and reporting, and the organization of trainings, advocacy and representation. The organizational culture is one of consensus and empowerment of staff and volunteers to develop and exercise their own leadership potential based on talent, knowledge and ability. MwB is characterized, at all levels, by high dedication to service, peace-building and mutual support.

### Core Principles

Our core principles include:

- Respect for human rights, as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- Inclusion of all, empowerment of girls and women, youth, minorities and the disenfranchised;
- Impartiality in political or other conflicts and divides;
- The belief in a culture of nonviolence, including the rights of oppressed peoples to strive for equality and human rights through nonviolent means;
- The belief in the power of music to connect, reconcile and heal.



## Current Situation

MwB's three overlapping and mutually enriching core areas of operation:

- Programs and projects: MwB currently runs three long-term programs in (post) conflict regions: Kosovo, Palestine, Rwanda; and two 'community partnership' projects in Northern Ireland and Uganda. New projects target refugee populations in western Europe. Capacity building, local ownership and collaboration with local musicians and local organizations are key elements of all project and program work. Specific project goals span the range of reconciliation, healing and community building in present and post-conflict societies.
- Training and Expertise: Based on experience in the projects, MwB offers Trainings of Trainers for music professionals (performers, teachers, therapists), under its own auspices or at the request of other organizations. During intensive training weeks, participants learn to understand and teach skills in community music leadership: strategies for inclusive music making, non-verbal teaching skills, collective song-writing techniques, inspiring creativity, singing, movement, body percussion, drum circles, use of simple materials for music making, nonviolence skills, basic trauma understanding,
- Advocacy: To promote the vision of music as a tool for peace, MwB gives keynote speeches and presentations at international conferences and expert meetings, collaborates with academic institutions, promotes its work and vision through publications and social networks, and connects with musicians worldwide through public and private on-line platforms. Our social media presence has grown exponentially in the last 3 years, and we moderate a private social media forum (Musicians Connect) that currently includes almost 700 socially-engaged musicians.

### Projects and Programs

#### 1. Multi-year MwB programs (MwB as lead partner in design, development planning, funding, reporting)

Mitrovica Rock School- reconciliation among youth through rock music in divided city of Mitrovica (Kosovo)

Palestine Community Music- training youth leaders and child workers in community music, working with special needs and marginalized children and youth, collaboration with Sounds of Palestine project in Musical Playground in West Bank refugee schools

Rwanda Youth Music- training HIV+ youth as cultural leaders, to work with HIV+ children; training in refugee camps for refugees from Burundi and Congo; music therapy; outreach programs

Welcome Notes (Refugees, Netherlands)- training musicians in the Netherlands to deliver music activities in (emergency) refugee shelters and asylum seekers centers

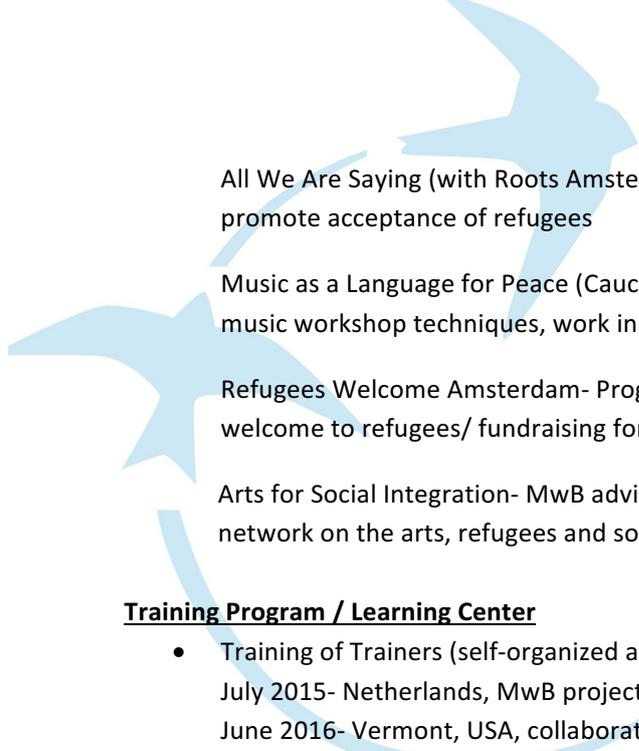
#### 2. Service projects/ Community partnerships (MwB provides project or training at request of other (lead) partner)

Music Bridge (Northern Ireland)- training musicians to deliver cross-community music workshops and activities in ethnically divided Northern Ireland

Tanzania Youth Music- training teachers and musicians to work with marginalized youth

Community Music for Community Health (Uganda)- training HIV+ youth in clinic settings to make music with young children affected by HIV/AIDS

#### 3. Short-term collaborations



All We Are Saying (with Roots Amsterdam Festival)- musical flash-mob action to oppose climate of fear, promote acceptance of refugees

Music as a Language for Peace (Caucasus-2014)- training of music students from Caucasus and EU in music workshop techniques, work in Georgian refugee settlements

Refugees Welcome Amsterdam- Programming musicians and ensembles for actions in support of welcome to refugees/ fundraising for refugee work in Middle East

Arts for Social Integration- MwB advises Dutch and German music institutions in creating European network on the arts, refugees and social integration (2016-2017)

### **Training Program / Learning Center**

- Training of Trainers (self-organized and/or on request)
  - July 2015- Netherlands, MwB project with 27 international musicians
  - June 2016- Vermont, USA, collaboration with CONTACT summer MA course in conflict transformation; elective with 14 professional musicians
  - July 2016- London, UK, collaboration with SOAS, U. of London Summer School, with 29 professional musicians/ music students
  - October 2016: Netherlands, MwB project with 47 international musicians
  - June 2017- Vermont, USA, collaboration with CONTACT
  - June 2017- Heek, Germany, collaboration with Landesmusikakademie NRW
  - July 2017- London, UK, collaboration with SOAS University of London
  - October 2017- Ede, NL- self-organized
- On-line documentation library: relevant academic research, books and articles (under development)

### **Advocacy**

- Articles, book chapters- academic and promotional: in 2016, two chapters contributed to academic books on music and social change (Oxford University Press, Palgrave-Mac Millian)
- Speeches and Presentations- conferences, events: in 2016, keynote speeches and presentations:
  - May 6: Keynote speech at Canadian Music Week, Toronto (Laura Hassler)
  - May 7: Presentation on Mitrovica Rock School for Pop2Life, New York (Wendy Hassler-Forest)
  - May 19: Lecture on Music and Human Rights at Padua University, Italy (Laura Hassler)
  - May 21: TEDx Talk on Music and Empathy, Nancy, France (Laura Hassler)
  - June 2: Presentation for Spotify conference, Stockholm (Danny Felsteiner Mekori)
  - June 8: Presentation at CONTACT summer course on conflict transformation (Laura Hassler)
  - June 25: Speech at benefit concert, Bath UK (Laura Hassler)
  - October 6: Presentation at Fondacion Batuta/ British Council's international conference on music and social transformation, Bogotá (Laura Hassler)
  - November 16: Keynote speech at Mundial Montreal (world music) festival, Montreal (Laura Hassler)
  - November 17: Presentation at Mindshare UK Huddle conference, invitation by Spotify, London (Danny Felsteiner Mekori)
  - November 17: Presentation and workshop at Mennonite Church, Netherlands (Sherwin Kirindongo)
  - November 18: Presentation at Croydon College, London (Danny Felsteiner Mekori)
  - November 24: Speech at Landesmusikakademie, Heek, Germany (Laura Hassler), + workshop (Marion Haak Schulenburg)

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- Scheduled in 2017
    - February 10- Opening, Expert Meeting on Arts and Social Integration, Ede, NL
    - March 7- TEDx Amsterdam University
    - May (date to be confirmed)- opening Making Peace, Toronto, CA
    - June (date to be confirmed)- CONTACT summer training conflict resolution
    - September 21 (to be confirmed)- Conference Music and Peace, University of Melbourne, AUS
  - Social Media, visibility, network building, advocacy, promotion of the power of music
    - Facebook page- more than 22,000 followers
    - Musicians Connect (closed FB group)- 595 members
    - Twitter, Instagram, Youtube channel
    - Private Facebook pages (maintaining connections with training participants, rock school students, etc.)

## **Organizational Vision- Growth in the period 2017-2019**

Building on our three intersecting core areas of operation—projects, training and advocacy—MwB aims to break out of the vicious cycle of maintaining the current activity level, and upgrade its work to share its expertise and maximize its impact worldwide.

**Our goal is to become a hub for learning, action and expertise, that builds its knowledge from its own grass-roots programs in fragile regions, and works through training, collaboration and consultation with other organizations around the globe, while promoting the vision and mission of the organization through worldwide advocacy.**

Taking into account the strengths of the organization and the challenges it faces, we have set out strategic goals for the coming three-year period.

### **Strengths: vision, expertise, team quality**

1. Originality: innovative approach to peace building
2. Integrity/long-term commitment to projects and people
3. A learning organization
4. Vision, mission and values shared at all levels of organization
5. Multi-skilled, diverse and flexible team

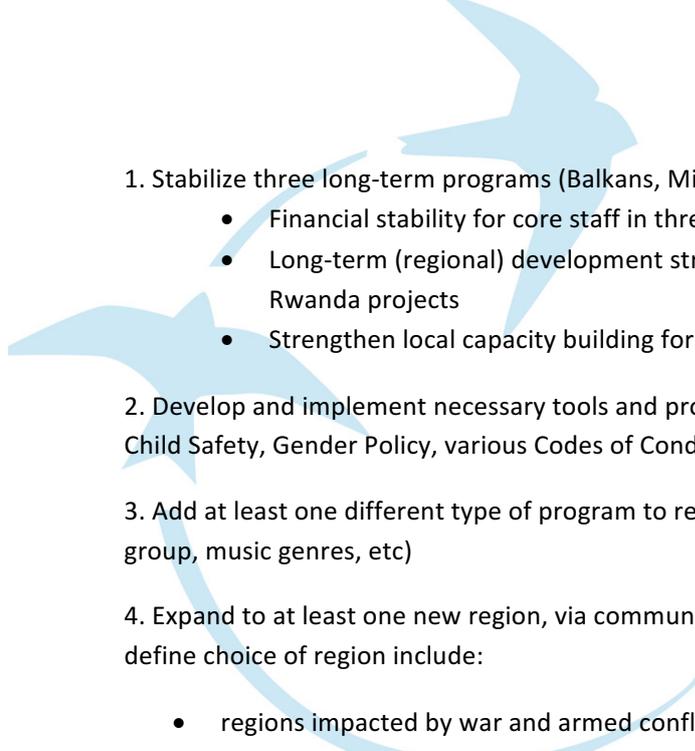
### **Challenges: capacity and capability building**

1. Insufficient fundraising and marketing capacity and capability
2. Under-staffed projects and office- organization fragile at every level
3. Insufficient funding networks for the scope of our organizational potential

### **Strategic Goals 2017-2019**

For our three areas of engagement, we identify the following strategic goals for the coming three-year period:

#### Projects and Programs

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1. Stabilize three long-term programs (Balkans, Middle East, Central Eastern Africa)
    - Financial stability for core staff in three project regions
    - Long-term (regional) development strategies including funding strategies for Kosovo, Palestine and Rwanda projects
    - Strengthen local capacity building for long-term sustainability.
  2. Develop and implement necessary tools and protocols, including Monitoring & Evaluation, Safety and Security, Child Safety, Gender Policy, various Codes of Conduct (some already implemented);
  3. Add at least one different type of program to reflect broader vision of the organization (e.g. different target group, music genres, etc)
  4. Expand to at least one new region, via community partnership/ service project(s). The parameters that will define choice of region include:
    - regions impacted by war and armed conflict;
    - reliable local partners identified;
    - accessible experts in relevant music culture;
    - alignment with MwB values and goals.

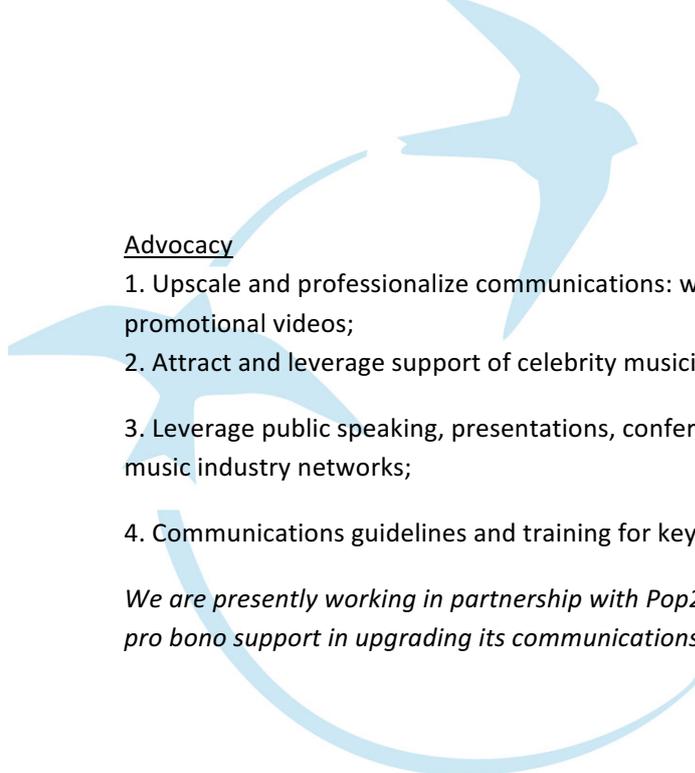
*We are presently exploring potential collaborations in Latin America based on requests from Colombia, Mexico and El Salvador.*

*We have been approached for collaboration in song-writing project in Darfur, Sudan, to help women 'Hakamat' singers convert songs of war to songs of peace.*

#### Training and Expertise

1. Professional development senior staff and program managers (conflict management, nonviolence, understanding trauma, safety and security, M&E) → improved curriculum and training competence (annual or semi-annual);
2. In addition to training collaborations, organize two Trainings for professional musicians per year; explore possibilities to increase gradually;
3. Development on-line resource library, academic collaborations;
4. Training of Trainers is self-supporting and source of income for MwB;
5. Identify and incorporate 10 (new) MwB trainers from ToT participants;
6. Develop 2<sup>nd</sup> Training of Trainers program for urban youth culture (based on rock school, rap projects).
  - Current ToT based on community music training projects, e.g. Palestine, Rwanda
  - ToT geared to urban youth culture to share expertise from MwB youth projects

*We are presently collaborating with University of London SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies) to develop monitoring and evaluation approaches and protocols. Expert meeting launched process in December 2016.*



## Advocacy

1. Upscale and professionalize communications: website, newsletters, house style, social media, printed material, promotional videos;
2. Attract and leverage support of celebrity musicians and music industry → fundraising, visibility;
3. Leverage public speaking, presentations, conference participation to build alliances with academic, NGO and music industry networks;
4. Communications guidelines and training for key staff.

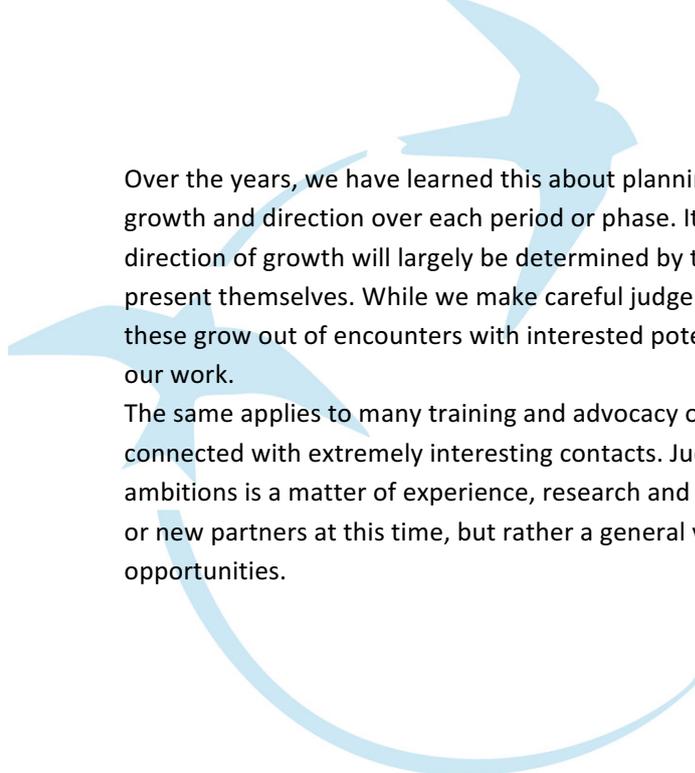
*We are presently working in partnership with Pop2Life, New York music marketing company that has offered MWB pro bono support in upgrading its communications and marketing.*

## **Needs to achieve goals (year 1 of 3):**

1. Fundraising/ Development
  - Professional (institutional) fundraising capacity- add 1 FTE
  - Implement strategies for long-term funding MWB programs: Kosovo, Palestine, Rwanda
  - Implement strategies for increased general fundraising
2. Communications/ marketing strategy- add 1 FTE
  - Add Professional communications capacity
  - Upgrade communications materials
3. Differentiation of Additional Staff Roles
  - Program/ Project Facilitator- increase from 0.8 to 1 FTE
  - Learning Center/ Training Program- increase from 0.5 to 1 FTE
  - Coordinator Netherlands Activities, Outreach, Development- increase from 0.4 to 1FTE
  - Head of Office/ Financial Manager- increase from 0.8 to 1 FTE
4. Professionalization of practice (some adopted and implemented, others in development)
  - Safety and Security protocols
  - Child Safety policy
  - Financial protocol
  - Codes of Conduct
  - Gender policy
  - Standardized project outline and budget formats
  - TORs for all project functions
  - Monitoring and Evaluation procedures
  - Differentiation of Staff Functions
  - Standardized Salary Scale

**NB: MWB's institutional and private fundraising strategy and on-line communications strategy are separate documents, available upon request.**

**A note on planning:**



Over the years, we have learned this about planning: it is crucial to have a shared vision of the organization's growth and direction over each period or phase. It is also important to understand that the specific speed and direction of growth will largely be determined by two factors: the funding available and the opportunities that present themselves. While we make careful judgements about new collaborations and engagements, many of these grow out of encounters with interested potential partners, or approaches by those who have heard about our work.

The same applies to many training and advocacy opportunities. In a digital world, we are often suddenly connected with extremely interesting contacts. Judging which of these is potentially helpful to Mwb's own growth ambitions is a matter of experience, research and intuition. For these reasons, we do not propose specific regions or new partners at this time, but rather a general vision of growth, which is flexible enough to respond to new opportunities.

## **Organization**

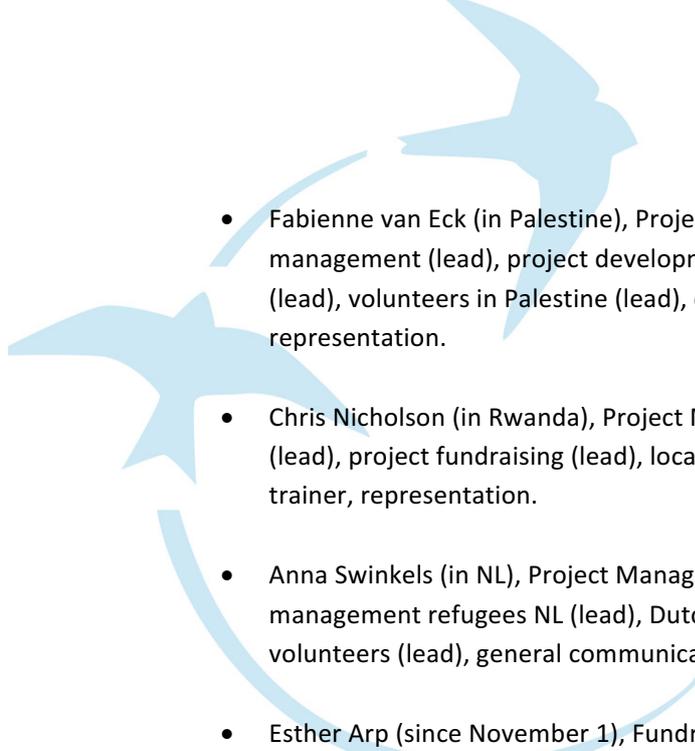
Mwb's work is currently sustained by the following people, performing the following tasks:

### Salaried

- Laura Hassler, Director (1 FTE): overall leadership: office team coordination (lead), strategic development (lead), representation (lead), new partnerships (lead), human relations (lead), donor relations (lead), project development, grant writing, communications, financial management, narrative and financial reporting, training of trainers planning and implementation, events.
- Ilaria Modugno, Financial Manager (0.8 FTE): financial management (lead), financial administration (lead), project and general budgeting (lead), project and general accounting (lead), office management and administration (lead), training planning (lead), contracts (lead), human relations, communications, events.
- Meagan Hughes, Projects, Trainings, Communications (0.8 FTE): project management Northern Ireland (lead), project support NL refugee project, training and ToT organization (lead), logistics (lead), volunteers and interns (lead), annual campaigns (lead), communications, grant writing, reporting, donor relations, contracts.
- Wendy Hassler-Forest (in Serbia), Project Management, Strategic Development (0.8 FTE): Program manager Mitrovica Rock School (lead), Regional Representative SEE (lead), project fundraising (lead), local capacity building (lead), project administration and reporting (lead), representation, general fundraising, strategic development, communications, HR support (contracts, codes of conduct)

### **Free-lance**

- Danny Felsteiner Mekori (in Jerusalem), Communications, Trainings (0.6 FTE, free-lance): On-line communications (lead), IT (lead), Training of Trainers curriculum and planning (co-lead), Community music training development (lead), strategic development, project trainer, representation.

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- Fabienne van Eck (in Palestine), Project Management Palestine (0.5 FTE, free-lance): Project management (lead), project development (lead), project implementation (lead), project fundraising (lead), volunteers in Palestine (lead), coordination with partner Sounds of Palestine (lead), representation.
  - Chris Nicholson (in Rwanda), Project Management Rwanda (1 FTE, free-lance): Project management (lead), project fundraising (lead), local capacity building (lead), Mwb M&E development (co-lead), trainer, representation.
  - Anna Swinkels (in NL), Project Management, Communications (0.4 FTE, free-lance): project management refugees NL (lead), Dutch-language communications (lead), events NL (lead), Dutch volunteers (lead), general communications.
  - Esther Arp (since November 1), Fundraising – support for project fundraising Rwanda and Palestine, developing fundraising strategy for 2017
  - Irma Kort, Instrument Fund (volunteer)

**Trainers** (free-lance, week-long trainings or for ToTs, paid through project budgets):

- Otto de Jong (M): Conducting, non-verbal music teaching, singing, body percussion, song- writing
- Hanno Thomassen (M): rhythm, pedagogy
- Danny Felsteiner Mekori (M): Song-writing, creativity, community events, body percussion, drumming circles
- Marijke Smedema (F): Music and motion, nonviolent communication and teamwork, working with special needs children
- Fabienne van Eck (F): Non-verbal music leadership, creativity, singing, body percussion, community events
- Sherwin Kirindongo (M): percussion, body percussion, drumming circles, non-verbal communication
- Chris Colleye (M): percussion, body percussion, drumming circles
- Keren Rosenbaum (F): composing communities, creativity
- Yaara Barbash (F): percussion, body percussion, drumming circles, recycable percussion ensemble, beat-box
- Amanda Koser-Gillespie (F): community music, pedagogy
- Emma Smith (F): assistant trainer community music
- Marion Haak-Schulenburg: assistant trainer community music
- Ruud Borgers (M): (rock) band coaching

