

# Musicians without Borders

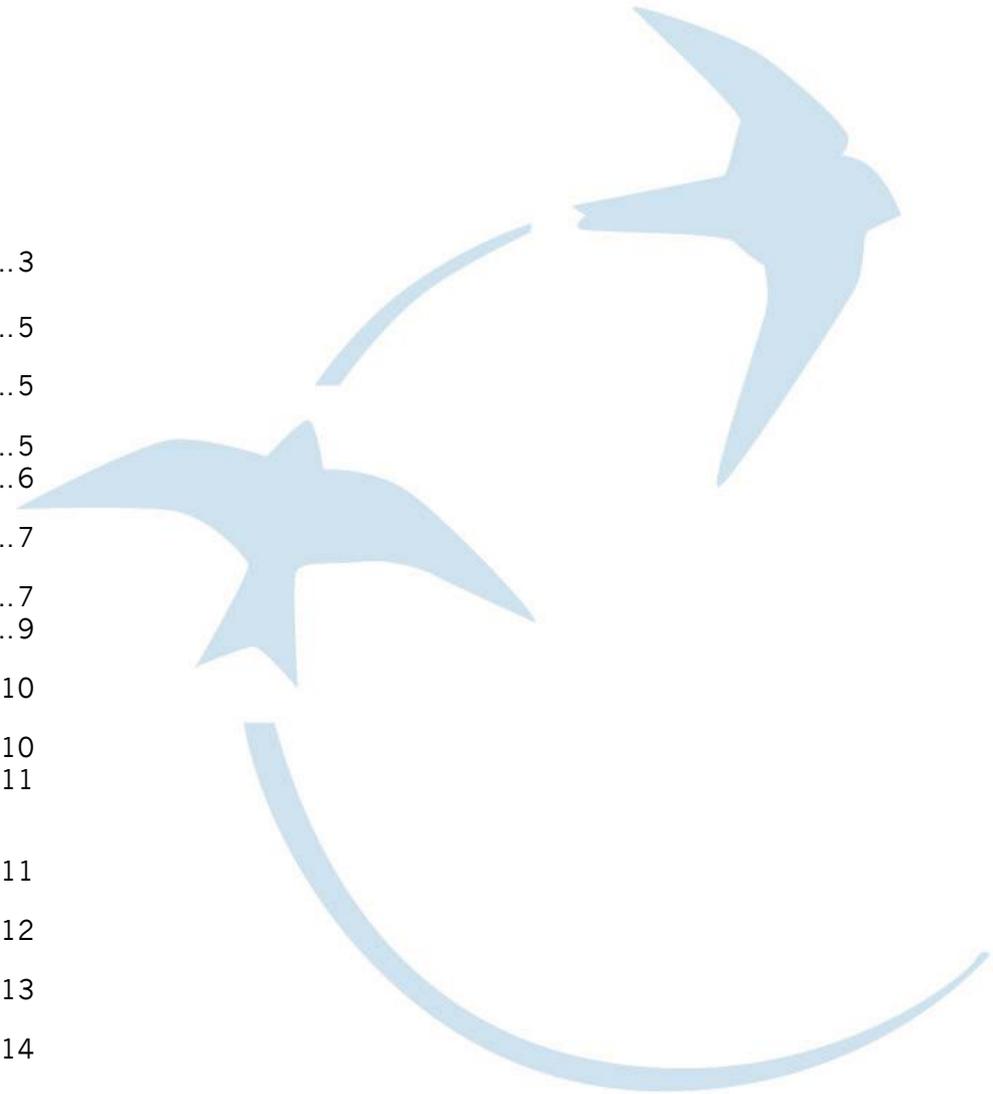
*Annual Report 2012*



*Building capacity, Creating sustainability*

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## Introduction: Focus on the Core

*Musicians without Borders began the new year with a strong consensus from our working community. At the end of 2011, a gathering of key people from all levels of the organization-- project managers, board members, trainers, advisors, staff and director—came together to discuss the challenges for a small organization with a big mission in a time of scarce financial means. Our unanimous conclusion was that our efforts should focus on Musicians without Borders' long-term project work, the core business of the organization. All other activities, such as advocacy, training, event organization, merchandising and communications, must serve, promote and expand the project work.*

*The clarity of the shared vision had tangible consequences throughout 2012. With limited organizational capacity, 'triage' was sometimes unavoidable: doing the most urgent and most necessary, postponing the necessary but less urgent, and shelving some compelling but more tangential opportunities. We chose for the projects.*

*We launched two new projects despite limited capacity, raising funds as we went. Our first long-term initiative in Africa, Rwanda Youth Music, began with only enough funds for a pilot training week in*

*February but then grew steadily throughout the year to become a stable new partnership program.*

*In Palestine, where ongoing conflict and social exclusion divides communities, we added a new element: music training for deaf youth, using visual and tactile experiences of musical rhythms, vibrations and words to help empower a group that is neglected and socially excluded. In the Balkans, we organized the biggest Summer School ever, bringing more than 80 young musicians from Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia for a week of non-stop rock music and the launch of the new Mostar Rock School. And in Kosovo, the year ended with a major milestone when the Mitrovica Rock School became an independent, locally owned music school!*

*Prioritizing project work had other consequences. We were less active in advocacy (publications, conferences). We downsized and outsourced MwB's Instrument Fund, which no longer primarily served our projects. Our communications and fundraising focused on project news. Keeping the projects going and growing was central—sometimes that meant asking the patience of donors or our own board when reporting was delayed.*



*The mandate steered us well. By the end of the year, the projects themselves had yielded exciting developments and invitations to work in new regions. And the clearer focus in our communications helped lead to a stronger base of supporters around the world.*

*I hope you enjoy reading this Annual Report. For information about organizational development, financial operations, communications and names and titles of all involved, please go to the last few pages. The body of this report tells about our projects in the Balkans, the Middle East and Central Africa—the work of Musicians without Borders.*

*Laura J. Hassler*

Laura Hassler, Director



# Projects

## 1. Rock School Program

### 1.1 Mitrovica Rock School (Kosovo)

The Mitrovica Rock School's fifth year was turbulent and dynamic. As the project approached its official conclusion under the long-term funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MATRA program), Musicians without Borders' project manager and staff worked on anchoring the rock school firmly in the local community: training two young local project managers for future leadership, preparing for the school's legal registration, and seeking new donors for the needed financial support into the next period.

Although some funding had been secured, it was a challenge to continue at the same level of activity. Shifting donor priorities and long evaluation processes meant a dip in regular income, forcing the rock school to cut back drastically for several months, laying off about half of its teaching staff and reducing project spending to a minimum. Student assistant teachers stepped up to fill the gap, helping to save their school. Thankfully, a generous grant from the Norwegian Embassy, received in late October, meant that a full program of activities could be reinstated.

### **The Skopje Summer School**

The Skopje Summer School in August became a regional rock music event, as 20 students and rock musicians from Mostar joined the youth from Mitrovica and an ethnically mixed youth band from Struga, Macedonia. Teachers and senior students from the Fontys Rock Academy and staff from Musicians without Borders and Macedonian partner CIVIL brought the total number of participants to more than 80! The event formed the kick-off of the Mostar Rock School, and led to contacts and friendships among rock-loving youth across the region.

### **Talent Development**

Talent Development was a main theme in 2012, with much attention going to the Rock School's first 'A-Team' band, the Artchitects. The band members are among the most talented students from north and south Mitrovica and receive special coaching in song-writing, performance and recording, as well as opportunities to represent the Mitrovica Rock School in tours and concerts. In 2012 a donation from the Netherlands Embassy in Pristina made it possible for the Artchitects to return to the Netherlands for a week of writing, rehearsals and recording, culminating in a performance at the May 5 Liberation Day Festival in Tilburg. In June, the group toured northern Italy with several other bands in an Italian project connecting youth from different backgrounds through music. During the Summer School, the Artchitects worked in a studio, recording two new original songs

on a CD which was then distributed to guests at the closing rock concert on September 1.

During the second half of the year, Musicians without Borders and local partner CBM worked together to prepare for the registration of the Mitrovica Rock School as an independent NGO (non-governmental organization). This was an essential step in achieving one of the project's main goals: to create a sustainable, locally-owned rock music school in Mitrovica. By the end of the year, the school was registered, with former management trainee Dafina Kosova appointed as its director. Musicians without Borders maintains a strong role, convening and sitting on the school's Assembly (Governing Board), continuing its role as capacity builder with the school's young staff, and functioning as fundraiser and partner.

## 1.2 Mostar Rock School (Bosnia-Herzegovina)

In April, Musicians without Borders received a grant from the Robert Bosch Foundation to start the development of a second rock school in another divided Balkan city, Mostar, in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Earlier contacts with the Pavarotti Music Center, the famous Bosnian rock band Dubioza Kolektiv and local musicians had led us to believe that, with Mitrovica as a model, Musicians without Borders could establish a second rock school in Mostar. The project development funding provided us with the means to do an assessment, build partnerships in Mostar, start reaching out to

local musicians and youth, and raise the needed funding for a long-term project.

Wendy Hassler-Forest, MwB's Rock School Program Manager, worked with Director Laura Hassler and local Project Manager Orhan Maslo. By July, we had a project outline, a Memorandum of Understanding with Pavarotti Music Center, a provisional team of teachers, contacts with youth and parents from both sides of Mostar, and funding for a Summer School and the Rock School's first year, from the Norwegian and US Embassies in Sarajevo.

Bringing a core group of youth from east and west Mostar, along with a local team of professional rock musicians/ teachers, to join the annual Skopje Summer School proved a brilliant move: kids and teachers had a wonderful time, made new friends and worked hard in an intensive MwB music week, an unforgettable experience for all. They returned to Mostar inspired, and their enthusiastic stories inspired others to join.

MwB Director Laura Hassler and Project Coordinator, Koen Braak, visited Mostar in September, setting up working relationships with Pavarotti Music Center, hiring an administrator and a team of teachers, and establishing a basis for a working cooperation.

### **The Opening**

The Mostar Rock School opened on October 12 and 13 with two festive concerts in Mostar and in Stolac, another divided Herzegovina town. All the mixed bands from the Skopje Summer School performed. More than 90 youth from east and west Mostar applied for the 50 available places at the new Rock School.

The School opened its doors on October 21, full to capacity, with a huge waiting list.

In the remaining months of the year, teachers and staff worked tirelessly to become ‘a real rock school.’ Unlike Mitrovica, in Mostar it is possible for youth from different backgrounds to meet within their own city and for Rock School classes and activities to be held in a single venue. Despite our worries, the fact that the Pavarotti Center was located deep in the east (Bosniak/ Muslim) part of town did not deter youth from the west (Croat/ Catholic) side from attending. When transportation was an issue, teachers helped by driving students who lived farther from the school.

Most of the youth from east or west Mostar had never met any peers from the other side of the city. However, the Mostar Rock School provides a platform in which musicianship is the basis for meeting. The school’s program is built around ‘session bands’, bringing youth together around rock music genres and themes, leading (sometimes) to the spontaneous formation of new, ethnically mixed bands.

### **Evaluation**

In December, MwB organized an evaluation of the school’s first phase. Director Laura Hassler, Program Manager Wendy Hassler-Forest and Bertus Borgers, retired Director of the Fontys Rock Academy, visited Mostar to meet with managers and teachers, learn about the progress of the school and help plan its future. Out of the discussions came new approaches to rock education issues and plans for a training visit of the new rock school’s teaching team to the Netherlands in 2013.

## **2. Community Music Programs**

### **2.1 Music Bus Goes Middle East (Palestine)**

In 2012 MwB and project partner Holy Land Trust expanded the music program to include new, creative strands. Thanks to financial support from SKN (Dutch Children’s Stamps Foundation) and other generous donors, Project Manager Fabienne van Eck and Field Coordinator Ahmad al Azzeh organized activities for huge numbers of children and youth, while the music and nonviolence training program led to new initiatives. By the end of 2012, sixty Palestinian workshop leaders had been trained; they now bring regular music activities to more than 5000 West Bank children in refugee camps, isolated villages, cancer hospitals, schools, orphanages and centers for children with special needs.



MwB's workshop leader training program (Music and Nonviolence) partnered with a school program provided by Sounds of Palestine. Sounds of Palestine places two new music workshop leaders every year in refugee camp kindergartens, and will now only employ workshop leaders who have been trained by Musicians without Borders. The partnership offers a small but steady stream of paid employment for talented graduates of MwB's training program.

### **Rap for Social Change**

The rap project has become embedded in the work with children in West Bank refugee camps. Six young rappers from the camps, all of them trained as MwB music workshop leaders, received extra training in nonviolence leadership and didactics to enable them to

teach children to express themselves by writing their own rap songs. Forty to sixty children participate every year. At the end of each project, children record their own raps in the studio in the Dheisheh refugee camp, built and equipped in early 2012 with support from the Netherlands Representative Office. Dutch rap producer Rik Ronner visited the project in April, giving workshops to MwB's young rap artists in beat-making and recording.

### **Four Samba Groups**

Four samba groups now practice in West Bank villages and refugee camps. MwB trainer Sherwin Kirindongo began the initiative, introducing drumming and Latin American rhythms as tools for social change. Percussionist Chris Saris helped them further, spending a week in November training all groups. By the end of 2012, plans had emerged to bring a volunteer samba trainer to work with the groups over a longer period of time. The samba bands are part of Holy Land Trust's project, Youth for a Change, and participate in nonviolent vigils and demonstrations, building community spirit through the contagious, joyful rhythms of the samba. At least 60 youth participate in the samba bands.

### **Deaf-and Musical!**

By the end of 2012, a new project element had been added, inspired by the participation of a deaf trainee in the music workshop leader training. Despite her disability, she became an able music workshop leader; through the training, she also felt

empowered to overcome the problems she encounters in society due to discrimination against those with hearing disabilities. Together with the project managers, she helped to design a music component especially for deaf participants.

In addition to the continuation of all project components, next year's plans include a training of assistant trainers to help meet the high demand for music workshop leader training throughout the West Bank.



## 2.2 Rwanda Youth Music (Rwanda)

The project design for Rwanda Youth Music was created in the summer of 2011 by MwB trainer and project manager, Danny Felsteiner, and a group of young 'peer parents' in the program of WE-ACTx, a medical rights organization for HIV/AIDS sufferers in Kigali, Rwanda.

The WE-ACTx peer parents are youth between the ages of 15-25, themselves HIV+. They are trained by WE-ACTx to support young HIV+ children as mentors and big brothers and sisters. The peer parents help children to understand their medical status, support them in school and at home, helping them to learn how to live full and happy lives despite their illness. Having led music workshops with children and peer parents in Kigali in 2010 and 2011, Danny worked with the peer parents to assess their needs and skills and together to develop a training program for music workshop leaders, to enhance their work with the younger children.

### **Financed on a rolling basis**

Unlike most Musicians without Borders projects, Rwanda Youth Music was financed on a rolling basis: enough funds were raised through a crowd-sourcing campaign to finance an initial pilot training week in February. Trainers Otto de Jong and Joey Blake worked with the peer parents on community music training, singing and musical leadership techniques. The Surinam-Dutch jazz singer Denise Jannah joined the MwB team for a Family Day, making music with hundreds of children and youth.



### *Rwanda Youth Music –*

#### *Local musician James gives drumming class*

By May, sufficient funds had been raised for a second training week, with the Dutch Embassy in Kigali as one of the strong supporters of the project. Project manager Danny Felsteiner and trainer Joey Blake worked with the peer parents on song-writing, vocal skills, didactics, musical games and leadership. MwB director Laura Hassler accompanied the trainers to meet with WE-ACTx leadership and to visit local donor and partner organizations.

New partnerships were forged with the Kigali Music School, which offered the project the use of classrooms and the cooperation of its teaching staff, and with the French Cultural Center, which offered the use of its recording studio.

In July, Danny returned to Kigali to work with the WE-ACTx trainees and children for three weeks during the annual Summer Camp. He was joined for 2 weeks by MwB percussion trainer Sherwin Kirindongo, who worked with the young trainees on percussion skills, and also involved the Rwandan women's percussion ensemble Ngoma N'shya as a project partner.

### **Music workshops and activities to the more than 400 children**

By this time, the peer parents were offering weekly music workshops and activities to the more than 400 children in their care on a weekly basis.

In December, Danny returned to Kigali, together with Noam Shuster, a friend and colleague who had lived in Kigali, worked with WE-ACTx and supported the idea of a music project by MwB. Noam helped with networking and contacts for fundraising and collaboration, while Danny continued to work with the peer parents on music leadership skills.

A final training week and a family day for more than 800 children is planned for February 2013. Meanwhile, MwB's donor and partner, the FEMI Foundation, has expressed interest in a

collaboration with Rwanda Youth Music in developing a music workshop leadership training for FEMI's own project in Tanzania.

## **3. New Projects in Development**

### **3.1 From Woman to Woman**

Since running successful pilot projects in October 2009 and March 2010, Musicians without Borders has been searching for funding to support 'From Woman to Woman', a project designed to introduce music as a therapeutic tool into the healing work of Bosnian partner Snaga Zene (Woman Power). Although previous attempts at fundraising for a large-scale three-year project failed, Musicians without Borders maintained contact with Snaga Zene and continued conversations with potential donors. By the end of 2012, two donors that had previously supported Snaga Zene, the Transpetrol Foundation and the Netherlands Embassy in Sarajevo, had invited and received project proposals.



These proposals have been submitted and, pending positive responses, the project will begin as soon as possible in 2013.

### 3.2 Derry/ Londonderry, Northern Ireland

Musicians without Borders has been approached by Culturlann, a Derry-Londonderry based cultural organization for Irish language and arts. Culturlann wishes to engage MwB in providing consultancy and training for using music in cross-community reconciliation work in divided cities. MwB and Culturlann have initiated conversations about a long-term collaborative project, starting with a festival, now planned for May 2013.

## 4. Musicians without Borders UK Projects and Development

Musicians without Borders UK is the British national affiliate of Musicians without Borders International and has been a registered charity in the United Kingdom for just under three years. Based in Manchester, Musicians without Borders UK has developed a number of ground-breaking projects using music and song to help refugees, asylum-seekers and torture survivors living in the North-West of England.

The main project delivered by Musicians without Borders UK in 2012 was

*Stone Flowers* - a song-writing and performance project for torture survivors run in partnership with Freedom from Torture, the human rights charity formerly known as the Medical Foundation for the Care of the Victims of Torture. Stone Flowers uses collaborative creative music workshops to restore the mental health and well-being of torture survivors experiencing severe emotional trauma and gives voice and expression to an otherwise disenfranchised group of people. A three-year project set to run through to the end of 2013, the 2012 phase of delivery culminated in two high-profile public performances which received significant media coverage on the BBC and other national media outlets.

## **A week of musical performances focusing on peace and human rights**

Other milestones for Musicians without Borders UK in 2012 included *Peace without Borders*, a week of musical performances focusing on peace and human rights that took place across Manchester in September, and the successful development of funding for a large-scale education project called *Singing without Borders* set to take place in early 2013. Musicians without Borders UK also went through a period of planned organizational growth in 2012, employing its Artistic Director and a Business Development Manager on an on-going basis for the first time.





## Organization

While still working with a reduced office staff, we have succeeded in providing the support and services necessary to keep all projects functioning well, including two new projects in 2012 (Rwanda Youth Music, Mostar Rock School) and two others in development (From Woman to Woman; Derry-Londonderry collaboration). This was possible thanks to the extraordinary efforts of office staff, project managers, local staff and volunteers.

### **More individual donors**

With growing optimism, we engaged an idealistic communications consultant from October through December 2012. He advised Musicians without Borders in creating a new strategy to expand its base of individual donors, with enhanced use of on-line tools: Facebook, electronic newsletters, digital fundraising mailings, while also improving IT support features such as website and data base. We have established a communications working group to implement the strategy; first results include a significantly expanded e-mail mailing list, a monthly bilingual on-line newsletter and a plan for an on-line fundraising campaign in May-June 2013.

Printed communications were also improved, with new MwB brochures in English and Dutch, a new letterhead design, posters, business cards, press packets, printed project summaries and post cards.

### **Evaluation**

At the end of December, we concluded the year with MwB's now standard organization-wide year review and strategy meeting. While this gathering has no official or legal status, it has proved a helpful tool in evaluation and policy and strategic planning, as it brings people from all layers of the organization together for a day of exchange and brainstorming. This year's thirteen participants included five members of the Supervisory Board, the director, three project managers, one office staff member, two trainers and one advisor. The focus of the day-long discussion were reports, analysis and evaluation of the most active projects in the Balkans, the Middle East and Central Africa. The meeting also reflected on last year's strategic conclusion to anchor the organization's identity more firmly around its project work, concluding that this had been successful.



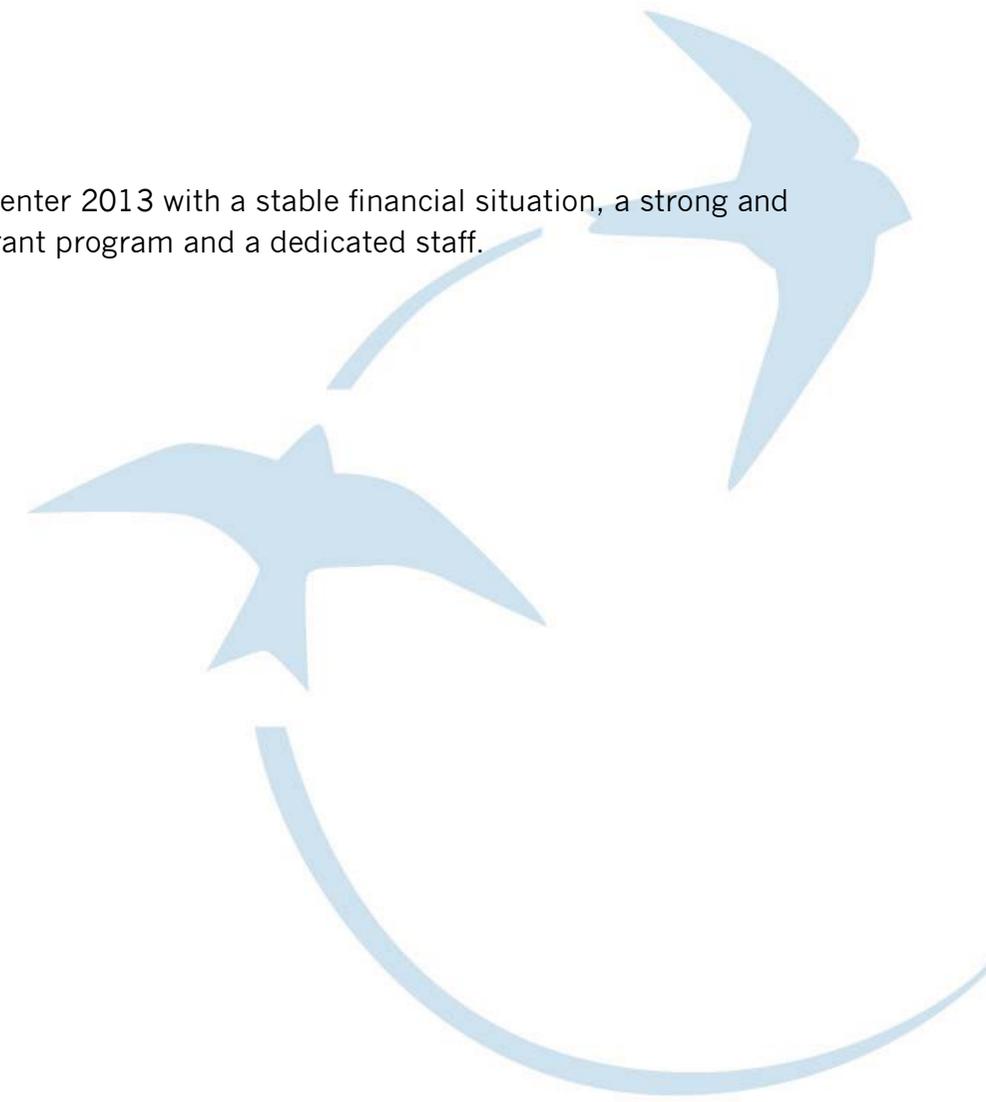
## Finances and Fundraising

We started the year with the challenge of having to turn around an operating loss of EUR 23,000. Increased fundraising success throughout 2011 told us that the strategy of cut-backs in regular costs while expanding our general donor base was working and should be continued.

At the close of 2012, we are delighted to be able to report that the operating loss has been completely recovered, while our (project) allocation reserves have grown from EUR 77,000 to EUR 129,000.

We have moved to a new financial administration/ accountancy service (HLB Schippers), because of its expertise regarding the Dutch tax authority's for not-for-profit financial administration and have changed our financial reporting system to conform to these guidelines (RJ650).

As of 2012, gifts to Musicians without Borders from Dutch donors may be deducted for 125% under the new Dutch regulation for cultural not-for-profits (Geefwet). In the US, a new fiscal partner—FOR USA—provides MwB donors in the US with the opportunity to contribute tax-deductible donations.



We enter 2013 with a stable financial situation, a strong and vibrant program and a dedicated staff.



# Musicians without Borders

## The People

### Supervisory Board

José van Hussen - *Chair*  
Johan Dorrestein - *Vice Chair*  
Jaap Wortel - *Treasurer*  
Ian Ritchie  
Fiona Campbell  
André Buitenhuis  
Michiel Scherpenhuisen Rom

### Executive Board

Laura Hassler

### Head Office, Netherlands

Laura Hassler - *Director (full time)*  
Koen Braak - *Project Coordinator, Financial Administration*  
*(4 days/ week; free lance/ volunteer)*  
Srdan Kekanovic - *Outreach Netherlands (1 day/ week)*  
Sytta Fokkema - *Grant writing, communications (October-December*  
*2 days/week)*  
Stephan Wehnes - *Data base (3 days/ week; government supported*  
*job)*



Michael Austin - *Communications (free-lance) Consultant,*  
*Communications*  
Laura Visser - *Graphic Design (free-lance)*  
Fred Abbingh - *Graphic Design (free-lance)*  
Ineke Braak - *Office Manager (volunteer)*  
Nanou Kurstjens - *Fundraising and Communications (volunteer)*  
Kick van der Mark - *Communications (volunteer)*  
Sophie Dorsman - *Correspondence (volunteer)*  
Paul Wehnes - *Bookkeeping (volunteer)*

### Project Management/ Regional Representation

Wendy Hassler-Forest - *Rock School Program Manager and*  
*Regional Representative Southeast Europe (Belgrade/ Mitrovica)*  
Fabienne van Eck - *Music Bus Goes Middle East Project Manager*  
*and Regional Representative Middle East (Jerusalem/ Bethlehem)*  
Danny Felsteiner - *Rwanda Youth Music Project Manager and*  
*Regional Representative Central East Africa (Jerusalem/ Kigali)*

### Local Management

Dafina Kosova - *Trainee Project Manager, Mitrovica Rock School*  
Nikola Radicevic - *Trainee Project Manager, Mitrovica Rock School*  
Orhan Maslo - *Project Manager, Mostar Rock School*  
Jasmina Kazazic - *Project Assistant, Mostar Rock School*  
Ahmad al Azzeh - *Music Bus Goes Middle East, Field Coordinator/*  
*Nonviolence Trainer (Holy Land Trust)*

**Musicians without Borders UK Office, Manchester**

Lis Murphy - *Artistic Director*

Ralph Kennedy - *Business Director*

**Trainers**

Marijke Smedema - *Music Bus Goes Middle East*

Otto de Jong - *Music Bus Goes Middle East, Rwanda Youth Music*

Sherwin Kirindongo - *Music Bus Goes Middle East, Rwanda Youth Music*

Fabienne van Eck - *Music Bus Goes Middle East*

Danny Felsteiner - *Rwanda Youth Music*

Hanno Thomassen - *Music Bus Goes Middle East*

Vincenta Besteman - *From Woman to Woman*

Joey Blake - *Rwanda Youth Music*

Chris Saris - *Music Bus Goes Middle East*

Eric Wels - *Mitrovica Rock School*

Ruud Borgers - *Mitrovica Rock School*





**Mitrovica Rock School**

CBM (Community Building Mitrovica)  
Fontys Rock Academy  
IKV-Pax Christi NL

**Mostar Rock School**

Pavarotti Music Center  
Fontys Rock Academy

**Music Bus Goes Middle East**

Holy Land Trust

**Rwanda Youth Music**

WE-ACTx  
Kigali Music School  
French Cultural Center, Kigali

**From Woman to Woman**

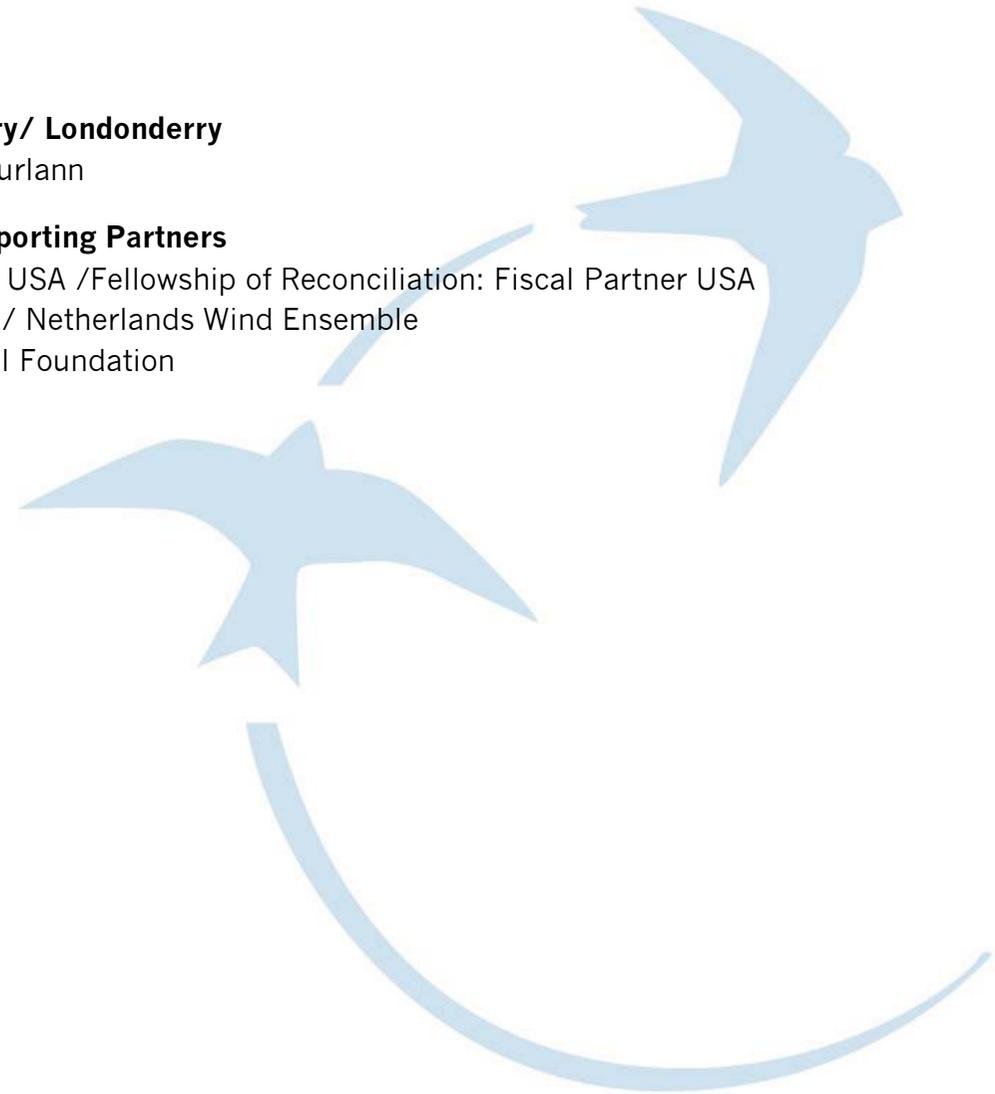
Snaga Zene

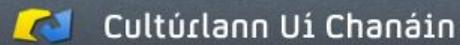
**Derry/ Londonderry**

Culturlann

**Supporting Partners**

FOR USA /Fellowship of Reconciliation: Fiscal Partner USA  
NBE/ Netherlands Wind Ensemble  
FEMI Foundation







### **Mitrovica Rock School**

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MATRA program)  
- through July 2012  
US Embassy Pristina  
US Embassy Skopje  
French Embassy Skopje  
German Embassy Skopje  
Norwegian Embassy Pristina  
Swiss Development Cooperation Fund  
Caritas Luxembourg

### **Mostar Rock School**

Robert Bosch Foundation, Berlin  
Norwegian Embassy Sarajevo  
US Embassy Sarajevo

### **Music Bus Goes Middle East**

SKN (Dutch Children's Stamps Foundation)  
Wild Geese Foundation Netherlands  
Solidarity Fund (NL)  
IIC Foundation  
Talliq Foundation  
Prelude Foundation

### **Rwanda Youth Music**

Netherlands Embassy Kigali  
Nolte Foundation  
FEMI Foundation  
Triodos Foundation  
Edward Starr Trust (UK)  
Rotary Bergen (NL)  
Indiegogo donors (crowd funding)

### **General**

88 Keys  
FEMI Foundation  
Klaske Fund  
NIKE Benefit Sample Sale  
Friends of Musicians without Borders  
Jan Kortie, Stembelijder  
Individual contributors



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands



*Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité*  
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE



Robert Bosch Stiftung



NORWEGIAN EMBASSY



Kingdom of the Netherlands



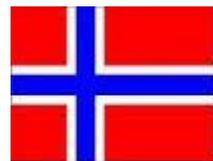
Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Cooperation Office Kosovo



EMBASSY OF FINLAND  
PRISTINA

**caritas**  
LUXEMBOURG

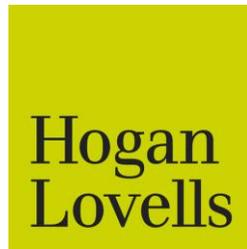


Royal  
Norwegian  
Embassy



Triodos  Foundation

prelude





## Contact Information

### Head Office

Alkmaar, Netherlands

[info@musicianswithoutborders.org](mailto:info@musicianswithoutborders.org)

[l.hassler@musicianswithoutborders.org](mailto:l.hassler@musicianswithoutborders.org)

### Regional Representative Southeast Europe

[w.hasslerforest@musicianswithoutborders.org](mailto:w.hasslerforest@musicianswithoutborders.org)

### Regional Representative Middle East

[f.vaneck@musicianswithoutborders.org](mailto:f.vaneck@musicianswithoutborders.org)

### Regional Representative Central Africa

[d.felsteiner@musicianswithoutborders.org](mailto:d.felsteiner@musicianswithoutborders.org)

### UK Office

Manchester

[lis@musicianswithoutborders.org.uk](mailto:lis@musicianswithoutborders.org.uk)

