



VOICE

European humanitarian NGOs.
Standing together.

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial.....	5
1. A Strong Call for Principled Humanitarian Action	6
2. Strengthening Humanitarian Partnerships and Risk Sharing	10
3. Climate Resilience and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: Strengthening Cross-Cutting Actions.....	13
4. Bridging the Humanitarian Funding Gap	16
5. Addressing Humanitarian Challenges: Sanctions, Access, and International Humanitarian Law	18
6. Strengthening the VOICE Network	20

VOICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2027

VISION

Our vision is a world in which every crisis-affected community receives principled, timely, and comprehensive support tailored to their needs.

MISSION

We use our collective voice towards the European Union and its Member States to promote effective and principled humanitarian responses. We advocate for the continued recognition of the key role of NGOs in humanitarian action, and for adequate resources to meet the needs of those living in the most vulnerable contexts and conditions.

VOICE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 Principled humanitarian response

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 EU and Member States humanitarian funding and humanitarian aid policies

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 The role of humanitarian NGOs



As we look back on 2024, we are reminded of both the immense challenges facing the humanitarian sector and crisis-affected communities and the collective strength of our network, together with national and local NGOs, in responding to them. This year, humanitarian needs soared to unprecedented levels, with crises unfolding and deepening across the globe. The war in Gaza left millions in desperate need of humanitarian responses, while conflicts

in Sudan, Ukraine, and the Sahel continued to drive massive displacement and suffering. Climate-related disasters further exacerbated vulnerabilities, from catastrophic flooding in South Asia to prolonged droughts across the Horn of Africa.

In this context, VOICE remained steadfast in advocating for a principled and effective humanitarian action. The adoption of our new 5-year Strategic Plan, developed under the leadership of our former President, Dominic Crowley, set the foundation for strengthening our collective impact. We witnessed a key moment with the election of Pauline Chetcuti as the first woman President of VOICE, marking a new chapter in our commitment to inclusive and transformative humanitarian action.

With the EU entering a new political cycle, we worked to ensure that humanitarian crises remain high on the European agenda. Engaging with newly elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) was a key priority, reinforcing the importance of principled humanitarian action in an increasingly challenging political and financial landscape. Our 2024 Policy Resolution, ["Take a Stand: Pledge for Humanitarian Action!"](#) provided a clear roadmap for EU and national level messages, urging policymakers to uphold commitments to humanitarian principles, adequate funding, and International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

As funding shortfalls persisted and the humanitarian system faced growing politicisation, our network came together to defend the space for independent, needs-based humanitarian action. We continued to highlight the essential role of international NGOs and their local partners in responding to crises, pushing back against narratives that undermine the credibility and effectiveness of humanitarian actors.

The year was not without its struggles, but through collaboration, and collective action, we reaffirmed our mission: to stand up for humanity, amplify the voices of crisis-affected populations, and push for a humanitarian system that is both principled and responsive. As we move forward, we remain deeply grateful for the engagement and dedication of our members in their daily work to improve the lives of people affected by crisis. Together, we will continue to speak up, and act—because humanitarian needs cannot wait.

Maria Groenewald
VOICE Director

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1

A strong call
for principled
humanitarian
action



VOICE President Pauline Chetcuti with Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič. July 2024

2024 was a year of transition, when elections took place around the world, including in several European countries and at the European Parliament (EP). VOICE activities sought to contribute to the future of EU humanitarian action, calling on existing and new stakeholders to support principled humanitarian efforts.

In line with this, VOICE actively engaged with the European Commission, the Council of the EU, and newly elected Members of the European Parliament to ensure humanitarian response remained a priority. To reinforce these efforts, the network published the VOICE Policy Resolution “[Take a Stand: Pledge for Humanitarian Action!](#)” in June 2024. Approved by the VOICE General Assembly which brought together our members from across Europe for a day full of insightful discussions, this document urges the EU and its Member States to reaffirm their commitments to humanitarian action and address the growing challenges threatening life-saving support for affected communities worldwide.

In particular, it calls on all EU political actors to focus on three key priority areas:

- Increasing the space for principled humanitarian action
- Closing the funding gap
- Addressing the growing number of conflicts and climate-related disasters

The recommendations outlined in the Resolution have served as a key reference for VOICE

work throughout the year, strengthening our collective push for a principled and stronger humanitarian response.

STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND THE COMMISSIONER FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT

As a transitional year for the Cabinet for Crisis Management, VOICE met twice with the now former Commissioner Janez Lenarčič. During the second meeting, VOICE took the opportunity to thank him for his work throughout his mandate.

Additionally, Maria Groenewald, VOICE Director, and Francesca Giubilo, Senior Advocacy Officer, had the pleasure of meeting with the Head of the Transition Team for the then-Designate Commissioner for Preparedness, Crisis Management, and Equality, Mrs. Hadja Lahbib. This introductory meeting provided an opportunity to discuss humanitarian priorities outlined in the VOICE Policy Resolution and to lay the groundwork for fruitful and constructive collaboration.

Throughout the year, the Secretariat remained actively engaged with key leadership and operational colleagues at DG ECHO, ensuring continued collaboration on humanitarian priorities. This included high-level meetings with Director-General Mr. Maciej Popowski and Deputy Director-General and Chief Operations

Officer Mr. Hans Das as well as regular exchanges with key colleagues across various areas of work.

Furthermore, VOICE worked to create space for inclusive dialogue between its members and DG ECHO's leadership. VOICE supported the organisation of a "Question and Answer" session with Commissioner Lenarčič during DG ECHO's Partners' Segment. Additionally, during the VOICE General Assembly, a one-hour exchange was held with Mr. Hans Das.

THE 2024 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS MARKED THE START OF A NEW EU POLITICAL CYCLE

To welcome new MEPs and highlight the essential role of civil society in upholding democracy, in September, VOICE, CONCORD, and EPLO co-organised an event at the European Parliament. Hosted by MEP Udo Bullmann (S&D, DEVE), the event gathered 13 MEPs from Committees like DEVE, AFET, DROI, and BUDG, along with over 30 institutional stakeholders, including Parliamentary Assistants and Administrators. More than 100 members from the three NGO networks attended, sharing key messages and engaging with participants. MEP Bullmann expressed support for civil society organizations, and MEP Barry Andrews (DEVE Chair) emphasized the importance of civic space and adequate funding. The Directors of the three networks highlighted the critical role of civil society, growing humanitarian needs, and the importance of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus in addressing protracted crises.

Concurrently, VOICE began engaging with DEVE MEPs, particularly MEP Andrews, who supported an exchange of views on 26 September, involving DEVE Committee members, VOICE, ICRC, MSF, and the Red Cross EU Office. Each organisation presented a key humanitarian priority: International Humanitarian Law, humanitarian access and workers' protection, the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and climate disaster impacts, and humanitarian funding gaps (presented by the VOICE Director Maria Groenewald). The exchange that followed touched on topics including collaboration with development actors, the Global Gateway,

and humanitarian work in sanctions regimes. This meeting marked a valuable opportunity for diverse actors to share perspectives and for VOICE to begin constructive engagement with the new DEVE Committee. VOICE warmly thanks the DEVE Committee and its Secretariat for the invitation and for spotlighting humanitarian funding during this important exchange. Beyond these events, VOICE engaged bilaterally with MEPs and their teams on the Commissioner's hearing, annual budget negotiations, and the European Parliament's role in ensuring principled humanitarian action.



VOICE Director Maria Groenewald at the Exchange of Views at DEVE. September 2024

ENGAGING WITH THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

In 2024, VOICE maintained strong engagement with the Belgian and Hungarian Presidencies of the Council of the EU to ensure that key humanitarian topics remained high on COHAF's political agenda.

Thanks to its good collaboration with Belgium, VOICE participated in COHAF meetings twice in the first semester. In April, VOICE Director Maria Groenewald shared [VOICE Key Highlights on the European Humanitarian Forum 2024](#) with Member States. She highlighted three key recommendations based on feedback from VOICE members:

- Enhance the Forum as a platform for accountability and progress review.
- Better foster debates that embrace diverse perspectives.
- Make greater use of the Forum to break down silos.



President Dominic Crowley at the European Humanitarian Forum. March 2024. © European Commission

In June, VOICE Senior Advocacy Officer Francesca Giubilo spoke at the joint [COHAFA/CODEV meeting](#) to share insights on the implementation of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus through NDICI – Global Europe.

Towards the end of the year, VOICE, together with its Polish member [PAH](#), established contact with Poland, which held the Presidency from January 2025, marking the start of a new TRIO with Denmark and Cyprus.

EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN FORUM (EHF) 2024

In addition to taking part in the DG ECHO-led EHF Partners' Task Force, VOICE actively engaged before, during, and after the third

edition of the European Humanitarian Forum co-organised in March 2024 by the European Commission (DG ECHO) and the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU. During the event, then-VOICE President Dominic Crowley participated in the high-level panel *"Building Stronger Community Resilience in Fragile Countries through Better Access to Climate Finance"*. He stressed the challenges NGOs face in accessing climate finance, especially in conflict settings and pointed out the need to enhance finance for resilience, locally-led adaptation measures prioritising women and girls, and collaboration among different actors to support climate-vulnerable countries. As mentioned in the above chapter, the network gathered its reflections on the Forum and shared them with key stakeholders, including during the COHAFA meeting in April.

Humanitarian Leadership Group on Supply Chain

In 2024, VOICE deepened its engagement on the humanitarian supply chain agenda. As part of DG ECHO's newly launched [Humanitarian Supply Chain Leadership Group](#), the VOICE Director Maria Groenewald represented the network during its first high-level meeting in December.

Drawing on its members' inputs, VOICE called for greater investment in digitalisation, long-term and flexible funding for supply chain systems, and support for small and medium-sized NGOs and local actors. We also raised cross-cutting concerns, including cost classification and donors' harmonisation. Looking ahead, VOICE is committed to ensuring that upcoming thematic workshops on supply chain priorities in 2025 are inclusive and reflect the realities of our diverse membership.



2

Strengthening Humanitarian Partnerships and Risk Sharing

Since 1999, the VOICE Secretariat has been facilitating, with the financial support of DG ECHO and in a collaborative partnership spirit, the Humanitarian Partnership (HP) Watch Group, previously called the FPA Watch Group. Bringing together a substantial number of DG ECHO NGO partners, this working group is a unique dialogue platform between DG ECHO and its certified NGO partners. Thanks to the HP Watch Group, including its Task Force, led by Marion Granger, VOICE Partnership & Advocacy Officer, VOICE worked throughout the year to provide meaningful dialogue spaces and improve the partnership between DG ECHO and its NGO partners.

EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS & RISK SHARING

In 2024, the HP Watch Group continued its engagement on the operationalisation of DG ECHO's Guidance on Equitable Partnerships. Based on the results of an HP Watch Group survey, the Group provided DG ECHO with its feedback on the implementation of the Guidance in the HIPs 2024 and discussed with DG ECHO representatives key recommendations for its improvement.

In addition, the HP Watch Group further engaged on the topic of risk sharing. During the Partners' Segment 2024, VOICE co-organised together with Charter4Change and Red Cross EU the workshop 'Equitable Partnerships: towards a fairer sharing of Compliance-related Risks'. The session brought together a variety of actors from LNNGOs, INGOs, the Red Cross and DG ECHO representatives to discuss barriers, good practices, and ways forward for better compliance-related risk-sharing in DG ECHO-funded programmes. Following the event, the co-organisers published an [outcome paper](#), including key recommendations.

Later in the year, exchanges on the topic between DG ECHO and its partners continued during the in-person Watch Group meeting of the year, where DG ECHO representatives from various units and members of the HP Watch Group discussed together the practical implications of risk sharing throughout the project cycle.

NAVIGATING THE EU HUMANITARIAN PARTNERSHIP COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK

In 2024, audits were among the key engagement topics of the HP Watch Group. Continuing long-standing discussion, the HP Watch Group worked with DG ECHO on ways to improve the audit process, based on the results of an HP Watch Group survey. These joint efforts successfully led to the adaptation of the process.

The HP Watch Group was also involved, throughout 2024, in collectively bringing to DG ECHO partners' difficulties and concerns relating to rules and requirements surrounding the EU Humanitarian Partnership, such as the staff costs calculations and the introduction of the Certificate on the Financial Statements. Through regular information sharing, explanatory notes and meetings with key DG ECHO interlocutors, the role of the HP WG was key in providing further clarity to partners in understanding requirements, but also to raise DG ECHO's awareness on the challenges they may pose in practice, in humanitarian settings.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE SHAPING OF EU HUMANITARIAN PARTNERSHIP POLICIES

Since its inception, VOICE has been deeply committed to maintaining a successful, efficient, and high-quality partnership between DG ECHO and its NGO partners. One initiative VOICE has undertaken in this direction is the regular publication of briefings that take stock of the state of this partnership and analyse its evolution. While the last briefing was published in 2019, VOICE published in 2024 its latest version [Partners in Humanitarian Action: Halfway through the EU Humanitarian Partnership 2021-2027](#). While providing a state of play of the DG ECHO-NGOs partnership, the briefing focuses on its evolution since the transition from the FPA to the HP. The document aims at formalising and emphasising the key elements of the DG ECHO-NGO partnership that are essential and should be safeguarded to ensure quality humanitarian action under DG ECHO's funded programmes and provide a comprehensive overview of the concerns of NGO partners.



VOICE Briefing: Partners in Humanitarian Action.

In addition, in 2024, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Comprehensive Evaluation (2017 – 2022) was undertaken with the primary aim of providing an independent and comprehensive analysis of DG ECHO's humanitarian aid. VOICE mobilised intensely to provide NGOs' perspectives through its participation in the consultation process, including in the thematic workshops and key stakeholder interviews. In addition, VOICE mobilised both the Resilience-Nexus Working Group and the Humanitarian Partnership Watch Group to provide the network collective feedback in the evaluation's online Public Consultation.



3

Climate Resilience and the Humanitarian- Development- Peace Nexus: Strengthening Cross-Cutting Actions

The Resilience-Nexus Working Group, led by Francesca Giubilo, VOICE Senior Advocacy Officer, is a longstanding VOICE group focused on climate resilience and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus. In 2024, the group met three times and had the opportunity to engage with high-level stakeholders, including representatives from the OECD, ECHO, and the Grand Bargain. During one of these meetings, the group approved an updated Work Plan and Terms of Reference for June 2023 - June 2025, ensuring alignment with the new VOICE Strategic Plan adopted by the General Assembly in June. More frequent exchanges took place within the sub-working groups - two specialised groups dedicated to advancing the network's activities on the HDP nexus and climate resilience.

ADVANCING RECOMMENDATIONS ON CLIMATE FINANCE AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION

In 2024, the group was particularly active in providing input for the European Humanitarian Forum discussions on climate finance and in significantly advancing the network's work on anticipatory action.

Following an exchange between DG ECHO colleagues and VOICE members of the Resilience-Nexus Working Group in July, the group consolidated an internal document over the summer, highlighting key challenges related to climate finance and anticipatory action. This document was presented by VOICE and a small delegation from the working group to DG ECHO's Climate Change and Disaster Preparedness team in September, laying the groundwork for further discussions on climate resilience. Notably, the paper contributed to the development of the first draft of the VOICE position paper on anticipatory action, set to be published in early 2025.

Members were also invited to share their experiences and concrete case studies on anticipatory action for the June edition of the VOICE Out Loud on anticipatory action.

Beyond these activities, VOICE continued amplifying NGO voices at COP by showcasing

the work of its members. At the beginning of the year, VOICE produced an internal briefing on COP28, compiling information on the most pressing humanitarian topics discussed during the forum, along with VOICE members' perspectives and statements. Towards the end of the year, VOICE created a dedicated [webpage](#) to highlight its members' activities before, during, and after COP29.

ENSURING FRAGILE CONTEXTS AND HDP NEXUS REMAIN HIGH ON THE POLITICAL AGENDA

In February, [VOICE reacted](#) to the leaked draft briefing book from DG INTPA for the new European Commission by calling on development donors to remain engaged in fragile contexts. This call remained central to VOICE's activities throughout the year, with working group members actively contributing to the production of several documents and internal reflections to gather evidence and provide concrete recommendations in support of this effort.

As part of this initiative, VOICE invited OECD colleagues in March to exchange views with members on the OECD's multidimensional fragility model and the implementation of the OECD-DAC Recommendation on the HDP Nexus. Additionally, in June, the Secretariat conducted an internal survey to analyse donor engagement and disengagement in selected fragile contexts.

To stay informed on broader discussions around this issue, VOICE participated in high-level events such as the OECD DAC-UN Dialogue on the HDP Nexus in April and the roundtable "Staying Engaged as Team Europe in Fragile Contexts – Challenges, Opportunities, and Way Forward," convened by Enabel and GIZ, the Belgian and German development agencies, in cooperation with the Practitioners' Network for European Development Cooperation and the European Think Tank Group.

Collaboration with peer networks CONCORD and EPLO was also strengthened throughout the year to push for a greater political focus on fragility.

To reinforce the importance of the HDP nexus approach, Maria Groenewald, the VOICE Director, participated in the Ambrela Development Forum in Bratislava in October, where she highlighted the relevance of a nexus approach in East Africa. Additionally, in June, Francesca Giubilo, Senior Advocacy Officer, presented [VOICE's recommendations](#) on implementing the HDP nexus through NDICI-Global Europe at the COHAFA-CODEV joint meeting. This presentation played a key role in providing guidance on how to operationalise the nexus from both political and programmatic perspectives. In particular, it emphasised the importance of the Rapid Response Pillar of NDICI, especially its resilience component.

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4

Bridging the Humanitarian Funding Gap

In 2024, VOICE remained steadfast in advocating for increased EU funding for humanitarian action. This commitment was reflected in our coordinated efforts around the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the mid-term review of the current one, including a statement to EU Member States urging them to prioritize humanitarian funding.

At the same time, we actively pushed for a stronger 2025 annual budget, calling on both the European Parliament and Member States to ensure it reflects the scale of global humanitarian needs.

The MFF constitutes the European Union's long-term budget, establishing financial ceilings and broad spending priorities for a defined period, currently spanning 2021 to 2027. It outlines the maximum amounts the EU can allocate to various policy domains such as regional development, agriculture, research and innovation, and external action over these years. The MFF undergoes a mid-term review half-way through the seven year. In 2024, VOICE worked on this mid-term review in order to increase the budget for the heading 6, humanitarian action budget, and the emergency aid reserve. A statement was published after reacting to the outcome of the revision, which came to an end in February 2024, "[Revision of the EU's long-term budget: a step backwards for EU humanitarian funding](#)".

The EU annual budget represents the yearly operational spending plan enacted within the parameters set by the MFF. Each year, the budgetary authority, comprising the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, approves a detailed budget that allocates specific funds to diverse programs, projects, and operational needs, ensuring adherence to the overall limits and priorities established within the MFF. The European Commission proposes the draft annual budget, which is subsequently subject to negotiation and agreement by the aforementioned budgetary authority.

During the annual procedure, VOICE received strong support from the European Parliament, particularly from the DEVE Committee. This Committee submitted proposals aligned with VOICE's messages, in particular the increase of the humanitarian budget line. The Committee on Budgets demonstrated support as well, proposing increases directly for humanitarian funding. Drawing on the collaboration of member organisations spanning various Member States, the VOICE Secretariat engaged in efforts at the national level, recognising the Council's significant influence on both procedures. VOICE would like to acknowledge the support of national NGO networks, many of which helped to disseminate joint messages to different national stakeholders.

Beyond direct engagement with EU institutions, VOICE worked to shape public debate on humanitarian funding. Alongside 12 NGOs, we signed the opinion paper "[MEPs must fight back – and vote – to protect EU aid budget this month](#)" in the EUobserver, where we called to increase the humanitarian and development aid budget and warned about the danger of cutting it by pointing out the consequences on affected communities. An [article](#) from Caroline Correia, VOICE Advocacy Assistant, in charge of the advocacy on the budget, was featured in [Défis humanitaires on the financing of humanitarian action in the EU](#) reinforcing the urgent need for increased and predictable funding.



5

Addressing
Humanitarian
Challenges:
Sanctions, Access,
and International
Humanitarian Law

PROMOTING HUMANITARIAN EXEMPTIONS TO SAFEGUARD PRINCIPLED HUMANITARIAN ACTION

In line with the historical catalyst from the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2664 providing a standing humanitarian exemption across all UN sanctions regimes, 2024 saw continued progress at the EU level to improve the protection of humanitarian action from the impacts of EU sanctions and counterterrorism measures, including the adoption by the Council of a [humanitarian exemption in its restrictive measures to combat terrorism](#).

Despite these progresses, humanitarian action continues to face significant challenges due to the lack of permanent and harmonised humanitarian exemption throughout all sanctions and counter-terrorism measures worldwide, but also within the EU framework. Throughout the year, VOICE continued to advocate for the protection of humanitarian action through the adoption and effective implementation of humanitarian exemptions, in line with UNSCR 2664. Beyond raising EU decision-makers' awareness, VOICE ensures information-sharing among its members to increase NGOs' knowledge and understanding of the latest developments on sanctions regimes. It also facilitates an informal group of VOICE members to further support information sharing and joint messages on the topic.

On another note, VOICE provided humanitarian NGOs' perspective on the next European Commission's [Supranational risk assessment](#) (SNRA). This document, regularly published by the Commission, analyses money laundering and terrorist financing risks in the EU. VOICE stressed the importance of maintaining references to International Humanitarian Law and of including references to humanitarian exemptions recently adopted. VOICE highlighted that counterterrorism measures and bank de-risking continue to significantly disrupt the vital work of legitimate humanitarian actors, and stressed the sound internal controls, due diligence, and risk management processes developed by humanitarian organisations to ensure humanitarian action reaches those it is intended to.

Lastly, in April, the EU [Directive of the European Parliament \(EP\) and of the Council on the definition of criminal offences and penalties for the violation of Union restrictive measures](#) was adopted. After intense engagement from VOICE, its members and like-minded organisations, advocating for the inclusion of humanitarian exemptions throughout the legislative process, the final adopted Directive includes provisions protecting humanitarian action from criminalisation. These provisions are yet another step to better protect humanitarian action from the impacts of EU sanctions and counterterrorism measures, aligned with the spirit of UNSCR 2664.

PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW: VOICE'S KEY ACTIONS

Over the past year, VOICE has actively worked to keep International Humanitarian Law (IHL) at the forefront of EU discussions. In response to the crisis in Gaza, we [issued a statement](#) calling for respect for IHL and the protection of civilians. To further highlight the importance of IHL, we dedicated a special issue of VOICE Out Loud to the topic, featuring expert insights and supported by DG ECHO. Additionally, we convened a thematic exchange with our members, providing a space to discuss challenges and strengthen our collective work. Upholding IHL remains essential to safeguarding humanitarian space, and VOICE continues to push this agenda forward.

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6

Strengthening the VOICE Network

VOICE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

In June 2024 the General assembly approved [VOICE New Strategic Plan 2024-2029](#), which will chart the path of the VOICE network for the next five years. This Strategy embodies our unwavering commitment to supporting crisis-affected populations by enhancing principled humanitarian action and addressing the ever-evolving challenges they face. Over the next five years, this new Strategic Plan will guide our collective efforts to advocate for a principled, efficient, and effective EU humanitarian system.

The new Strategic Plan focuses on three strategic goals to ensure an efficient and effective EU humanitarian system:

1. Advocate for principled humanitarian response: Ensure that humanitarian action is needs-based and in line with International Humanitarian Law (IHL), safeguarding humanitarian actors from the impacts of sanctions regimes and counterterrorism legislation.
2. Secure adequate funding and coherent policies: Mobilise collective efforts to contribute to EU and Member State policies discussions, addressing protracted crises and building climate resilience, while ensuring better coordination and harmonisation among European donors.
3. Strengthen the role of humanitarian NGOs: Enhance partnerships between NGOs and the EU, focusing on localised responses and including local responders in decision-making processes to improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of humanitarian action.

PAULINE CHETCUTI ELECTED AS VOICE PRESIDENT

On June 20, 2024, the VOICE General Assembly elected Pauline Chetcuti as the first-ever woman President. With extensive experience in humanitarian work, she brings expertise from national and international NGOs, the UN, and networks like Coordination Sud, Bond, ICVA, and IASC.

As Head of Humanitarian Campaigns and Advocacy at Oxfam International, Pauline engages with decision-makers in the EU and beyond, advocating for principled humanitarian

action and stronger protection- for civilians. Throughout her presidency, she aims to bring a feminist approach to humanitarian response, fighting against the politicisation of aid and amplifying the voices of marginalised communities.

Pauline is committed to supporting VOICE's role in enabling quality and effective humanitarian response worldwide.

REFLECTING ON SIX YEARS OF LEADERSHIP: DOMINIC CROWLEY'S TENURE AS VOICE PRESIDENT

After six years as VOICE President, Dominic Crowley stepped down in June 2024, leaving behind a strong legacy of leadership and commitment to principled humanitarian action. Throughout his tenure, he worked to amplify the collective voice of NGOs, ensuring that humanitarian action remained effective, principled, and responsive to the needs of disaster-affected populations.

Under his leadership, VOICE played a key role in shaping EU humanitarian policy. Through position papers, studies, and advocacy efforts, the network consistently engaged with decision-makers, pushing for stronger EU support for principled humanitarian aid. Dominic also championed the importance of broadening donor support, highlighting the need for EU Member States to contribute proportionally to humanitarian funding and reduce reliance on a handful of donors.

His time as President was also marked by collaboration—within the Board, the Secretariat, and across the VOICE network. The collective efforts of VOICE members, strengthened engagement with EU institutions and helped shape the humanitarian agenda.

We thank Dominic for his dedication, leadership, and unwavering commitment to the humanitarian sector. His contributions have strengthened VOICE as a network, and his legacy will continue to inspire our work in the years to come.

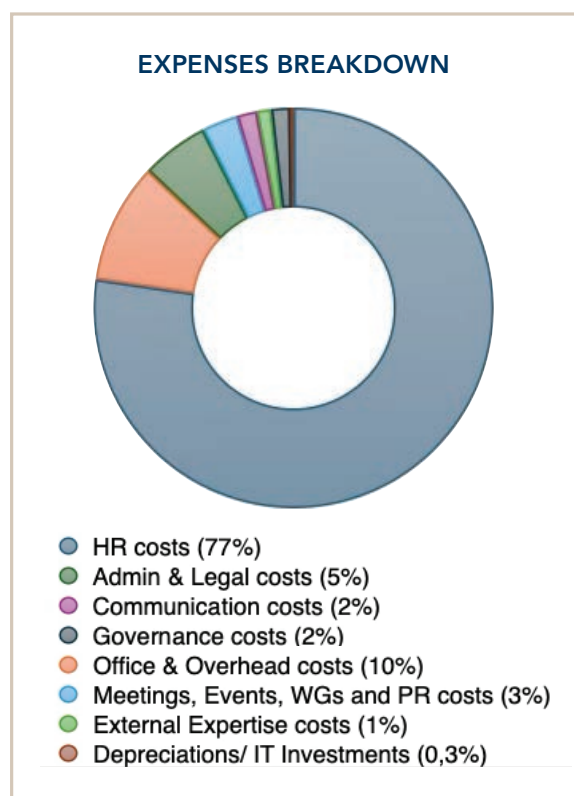
VOICE MEMBERSHIP

In 2024, VOICE welcomed two new individual members enriching the diversity of the network: Christian Aid Ireland and Islamic Relief Sweden. For the second consecutive year, this brought the total number of members to its highest-ever level – with 90 members from 19 European countries.

VOICE is in contact with other organisations throughout Europe to further extend the network, including in Eastern and Central Europe. All VOICE members are welcome to support the enlarging of our network and can make use of the [Join VOICE – VOICE webpage](#).

VOICE FINANCES

VOICE finances are overlooked by Cécile Muller, VOICE Membership & Finances Coordinator. Thanks to DG ECHO's operating grant of €250,000 for the second year in a row, VOICE total expenses in 2024 amounted to €792,622, a 15% increase compared to 2023 which mostly covered the increasing inflation.



The share of costs for Human Resources (HR) is similar to the years before, remaining the main chapter of VOICE's budget (77%), followed by overhead costs totalling 15%.

On the income side, membership fees remain the primary source of VOICE's income (68%) thanks to VOICE's large and diverse membership.

The VOICE Board of Directors pursued its risk management oversight and realigned the provisions for ineligible costs and foreseen office-related taxes along with the regular review of the valuation rules. This led, along with the yearly audit adjustments, to a small positive year-end result of €6,419. Together with the previous year's results carried forward, VOICE carries forward a total of €68,458 which will be used for balancing raising running costs in 2025.

During her induction about VOICE's finances, the new VOICE President has been fully alerted about the budget trends. As a first risk management measure, the President commissioned to the Social Secretariat an evaluation of the HR costs in case of a sudden closure to check whether the current level of the VOICE Reserve is appropriate. For the time being, the Reserve should cover the costs. However, these costs are constantly growing, increasing regularly with the seniority of VOICE staff. The VOICE Reserve amounted to €232,097 at the closure of the Annual Detailed Accounts 2024.

VOICE COMMUNICATION

VOICE's internal and external communication led by Roberta Fadda, VOICE Senior Communication Officer, played a key role in amplifying critical humanitarian discussions and crises throughout the year.

VOICE aims to raise awareness of the DG ECHO-funded humanitarian action among the broader European public and to highlight the vital work of its member organisations and their local partners, who deliver principled, needs-based assistance to communities affected by crises around the world.



VOICE event: The Mediterranean Sea: A neglected Humanitarian Crisis?

Thanks to the annual DG ECHO operating grant, VOICE organised – again – two public events in 2024 to raise awareness for humanitarian work and stimulate debate about important topics for the sector.

In [Decolonising Humanitarian Action: Shifting Power, Voices, and Resources](#), in November, we explored the colonial legacies in humanitarian action and the need for systemic change. Speakers emphasised shifting power to local responders, reforming funding structures, and transforming narratives to amplify community-led solutions.

In [The Mediterranean Sea: A Neglected Humanitarian Crisis?](#), the event hosted in June, we highlighted the escalating Mediterranean migration crisis. Experts discussed the alarming death toll, the criminalisation of SAR NGOs, and the urgent need for international recognition and funding to prevent further loss of life.

With the first VOICE video series: [From Neglect to Awareness](#), we launched our first video focusing on El Salvador, shedding light on displacement, gender-based violence, and food insecurity. The series reinforces the need for greater awareness and support for underreported crises.

The two VOICE out loud on [Anticipatory action](#) and [International Humanitarian Law](#) contributed to increase the visibility of the extraordinary work members do in this area and include interesting interviews with the former Deputy DG ECHO Dr Michael Köhler and the Former

Commissioner Lenarčič. The financial support of DG ECHO is crucial to enable VOICE to produce and publish these magazines, showcasing the work of its members, and the importance of principled humanitarian action.

The VOICE at Work newsletter was launched in 2022 as VOICE's external newsletter. In 2024, the Secretariat published two issues to highlight the work of VOICE and its members in delivering principled humanitarian action to communities in need across the globe.

Internally, VOICE maintains regular communication with its members through the monthly Flash Newsletter, which provides key insights into EU policies related to humanitarian action. Members also benefit from exclusive access to a members-only website.

In addition, VOICE offers a platform for members to exchange on specific crises and humanitarian policy issues. In 2024, VOICE organised several country exchanges focused on Somalia, Ukraine, Myanmar, Colombia, Syria, and Gaza. The network also hosted policy exchanges on topics such as the protection of aid workers, conflict-induced hunger, migration in the Mediterranean, and violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

Through these initiatives, VOICE continues to use its communication platforms to drive change, amplify neglected crises, and advocate for meaningful humanitarian action for all affected communities worldwide.

VOICE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Composition of the Board of Directors following the General Assembly 2024:

Pauline Chetcuti

VOICE President, Head of Humanitarian Campaigns and Advocacy for Oxfam International

Gonzalo Codina

Strategic Partnerships Director for Europe, UK, Middle East and Asia

Jean-Pierre Delomier

Operations Deputy Director, Handicap International - Humanity & Inclusion

Ruth Faber

CEO, EU-CORD

Michael Kühn

Senior Policy Advisor, Welthungerhilfe, Germany

Fie Lauritzen

Senior Humanitarian Policy Lead, DanChurchAid

Edouard Rodier

Director International Programmes, Norwegian Refugee Council Europe

Silvia Sinibaldi

Humanitarian Director, Caritas Italy

Ruth Watson

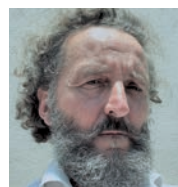
Humanitarian Policy and Practice Advisor, Act Alliance EU



Pauline Chetcuti
VOICE President



Gonzalo Codina
Strategic Partnerships
Director



Jean-Pierre Delomier
Operations Deputy
Director



Ruth Faber
CEO



Michael Kühn
Senior Policy
Advisor



Fie Lauritzen
Senior Humanitarian
Policy Lead



Edouard Rodier
Director International
Programmes



Silvia Sinibaldi
Humanitarian
Director



Ruth Watson
Humanitarian Policy
and Practice Advisor

VOICE SECRETARIAT

Composition of the VOICE Secretariat as of December 2024:

Maria Groenewald
Director

Francesca Giubilo
Senior Advocacy Officer

Cécile Muller
Membership and Finances Coordinator

Roberta Fadda
Senior Communication Officer

Marion Granger
Partnership and Advocacy Officer

Caroline Correia
Advocacy Assistant



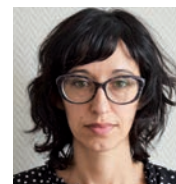
Maria Groenewald
Director



Francesca Giubilo
Senior Advocacy Officer



Cécile Muller
Membership and Finances
Coordinator



Roberta Fadda
Senior Communication
Officer



Marion Granger
Partnership and Advocacy
Officer



Caroline Correia
Junior Advocacy Officer

VOICE MEMBERS 2024

AUSTRIA



BELGIUM



CROATIA



CZECH REPUBLIC



DENMARK



FINLAND



FRANCE



GERMANY



ITALY



IRELAND



THE NETHERLANDS



NORWAY



POLAND



SLOVAKIA



SPAIN



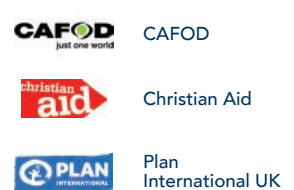
SWEDEN



SWITZERLAND



UNITED KINGDOM



89 members
18 countries



VOICE is the network of 89 European NGOs promoting principled and people-centred humanitarian aid. Collectively, VOICE aims to improve the quality and effectiveness of the European Union and its Member States' humanitarian aid. The network promotes the added value of NGOs as key humanitarian actors.

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