

MSF Netherlands Artsen zonder Grenzen Strategic Plan 2026-2029



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← January 2025, Renk County, South Sudan – Aisha accompanies her mother to our mobile clinic for people displaced from Sudan in Atam. After thousands of people fled the conflict in Sudan and crossed into Renk County, we started running mobile clinics in Girbanat and Atam. ©MSF

Preface

The document before you outlines the vision, positioning and core objectives of MSF Netherlands for the period 2026-2029. It aims to provide staff, management, our board, and association with a clear and common understanding of our organisational direction – and includes a board vision for our place in the wider MSF movement (chapter 6). MSF NL has not had a dedicated Strategic Plan since the expiry of the 2015-2019 document. MSF NL was then largely driven by departmental strategies, annual plans, as well as by ambitions expressed in strategies of the Operational Centre Amsterdam (OCA). This new Strategic Plan for MSF NL aims to avoid duplicating OCA's document, though of course the interdependencies are many, so the two should be read in conjunction.

MSF NL remains the legal entity under which OCA operates, and the two entities share most enabling functions, office infrastructure, and certain staff positions. The absence of detail in this document on the key contributions made by OCA support departments to the work of MSF NL is therefore only to avoid duplication. For detailed ambitions on our people and culture, organisational integrity, safeguarding or data and technology, please refer to the [MSF OCA Strategic Plan 2026-2031](#).

Since 2025, the MSF movement has agreed on a formal definition of a section, which focuses on **enabling** (fundraising, recruitment, representation), **implementing** (témoignage), **supporting**, and **governing** (co-leading OCA) our social mission. MSF NL's purpose, as set out below, derives from this general definition of a section. Only the element of offering direct support to the social mission is not further elaborated in this plan, as MSF NL is already closely involved in the running of an operational center and currently does not have the ambition to offer support services to the wider movement.

Most of this Strategic Plan for MSF NL has a deliberately shorter timeframe than OCA's, to more readily allow for practical objective-setting and a measurable evaluation framework ('Objectives & Key Results'). It takes as a starting point the various existing – and generally well-functioning – strategies that currently guide fundraising, communications, brand awareness, advocacy and recruitment. Bringing these together and re-examining our priorities will hopefully bring both clarity among teams working towards a common purpose and enable clear internal accountability on MSF NL objectives and results.

Context

The scale of the humanitarian crises that frame this strategic plan is not abstract. At the end of 2025, 117 million people worldwide have been forced from their homes by persecution, conflict, and violence – nearly double the number of a decade ago. Disease outbreaks spread through communities where routine healthcare has collapsed. Climate change intensifies the frequency and severity of disasters, compounding crises that were already beyond the capacity of many health systems to respond to. And in conflict after conflict, the basic rules designed to protect civilians are flouted with near-total impunity.

Humanitarian action itself is also under pressure. Access to people in need is more restricted, bureaucratically or physically, while international funding for aid is dwindling or heavily politicized. Sexual and reproductive health and rights face coordinated global pushback, while declining trust in institutions¹ means that credibility can no longer be assumed, but must be continuously earned through transparency, safeguarding, and accountable practice. In this environment, MSF's model – independent, needs-driven and grounded in medical ethics – remains highly relevant, but support for humanitarianism cannot be taken for granted. To continue delivering lifesaving assistance and speaking out against injustice, MSF must navigate polarized debates to consistently defend respect for human life and dignity.

This is apparent in the Netherlands too, where changing social trends are reshaping the environment in which MSF NL operates. Exclusionary views, xenophobic narratives, and far-right politics are narrowing public solidarity with people in crisis. Conflict in Europe, geopolitical fragmentation, and the erosion of international legal norms further increase the likelihood of sudden and radical shifts in public policy. This in turn may impact our funding, access to decisionmakers and acceptance among the Dutch population. Donor behaviour is changing too, with new research highlighting that a smaller proportion of the population gives to charity, but the average size of each donor's contribution is growing. This is especially true for older and well-educated segments of society – for whose support competition is fierce.² In short, making a lasting connection is key.

MSF NL's ability to navigate this changing landscape determines our resilience – and ultimately our ability to remain impactful for patients and communities. Thankfully, **Artsen zonder Grenzen** is well-positioned to do so, assisted by more than half a million supporters who seek to demonstrate solidarity and translate their indignation into action – and see MSF as a vehicle for their engagement. It is through their support that we ensure MSF's operations remain adaptive and well-funded, while speaking clearly about the injustices endured by the people we assist. This relationship with our supporters is based wholly on their trust that we act where the need is greatest and that we remain true to our core values: solidarity and proximity; respect and dignity; accountability and integrity.

¹ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap (18 July 2025), "[Publiek vertrouwen in de wetenschap](#)".

² Rene Bekkers (2026), "[Geven in Nederland](#)".

Vision



↑ Bangladesh, 2025. ©MSF

Purpose³

MSF Netherlands exists to enable lifesaving medical-humanitarian action - by ensuring it is funded, heard, staffed, and supported. We do this by building and sustaining a broad base of supporters in the Netherlands; by amplifying efforts to bear witness and advocate for change; by recruiting skilled, diverse people for our operations and headquarters; and by generating income across a broad mix of supporters and channels, keeping MSF independent and responsive.

Our position in Dutch society

Artsen zonder Grenzen is a household name in Dutch society, with name recognition of >90% and a strong reputation as a credible medical emergency response organisation. The Netherlands offers a uniquely advantageous environment for MSF Netherlands to pursue its humanitarian mission. The country's strong economy, culture of philanthropy, and favorable tax framework create exceptional fundraising conditions, while its historically prominent role in the EU, UN, and key international legal institutions – combined with MSF's high public credibility – create myriad opportunities for effective advocacy.

A globally minded civil society, a free press, and highly approachable lawmakers and policymakers, also make the Netherlands fertile ground for public engagement and awareness campaigns, while the Dutch well-educated population continues to supply the skilled medical and technical professionals our operations depend on.

However, this favourable environment is not static. In recent years, positions that have long been self-evident – that humanitarians should have access to conflict zones, that refugees fleeing persecution or armed conflict deserve protection – are increasingly framed as political stances rather than basic humanitarian principles. While we oppose the politicization of our medical-humanitarian work, we cannot shy away from the debate, as our silence might be taken as indifference or even acquiescence. As stated in the movement-wide 2006 La Mancha Agreement, “taking public position in reaction to [grave and ignored crimes] and confronting others with their responsibilities remains an essential role of MSF.” We will continue to live and breathe this idea.

³ This purpose links the revised definition of a section (under the movement-wide Structures Project) with MSF NL's original Articles of Association (art. 2.1): “The objective of the association is to organise the provision of actual medical help to people in disaster areas and crises anywhere in the world, in accordance with the principles expressed in the Charter. On the basis of its medical work, the association also endeavours to be an effective advocate for the population group it is assisting.”

Global funding cuts to all forms of international assistance (also affecting NL-based organisations) cause increased competition in the private fundraising market, requiring us to sharpen our profile. The active hollowing out of essential norms and rights-based frameworks elevate the importance of advocacy and solidarity. Starkly polarized societal debates penalize sitting on the fence and make clear positioning more important than ever. In this strategic plan period, MSF NL will continue to be an outspoken advocate for basic notions of humanity that should be a given: people's unalienable right to life (including healthcare) and dignity. As was reaffirmed in the MSF OCA Strategic Plan 2026 - 2031, "témoignage is not only a tool for change: it is an act of solidarity, an assertion of humanity, and a refusal to be silent in the face of violence and injustice". As such, our public positions will be guided by the following considerations:

- We hold firm that humanitarianism is not a partisan issue. We engage with the full spectrum of Dutch politics, as we believe that support for people in crisis is not necessarily limited by party-political convictions. Put simply, MSF NL is not becoming more political; our successive governments have become less humanitarian.⁴
- On matters directly linked to medical humanitarian work, we are proactive, visible, and outspoken. We do not shy away from stances that spark opposition, as long as they are in line with our operational observations and patient experiences. We engage (prospective) donors, media and policy makers on both acute crises and chronic medical emergencies.
- We test our assumptions regarding public perception: a fear of losing support can lead to self-censorship.⁵ A data-driven approach and constant dialogue with our supporter base should help us feel confident in speaking out and assist in making conscious choices.
- At the same time, we are not an opinion factory. Instead, we are selectively vocal. We assess carefully whether any issue has direct links to our social mission and whether we can speak to the matter based on actual witnessing, medical data or patient testimonies. We prefer to be loud and clear on a select set of medical-humanitarian issues than attempt to comment on a wide range of social ills.

- We engage and mobilize our community of supporters to assist in amplifying our messages. With hundreds of association members and over half a million donors supporting our work, MSF NL has great potential to be an agent for change. We go beyond **Telling It As It Is**⁶ by being prescriptive in calling (and campaigning) for the changes our patients need.
- Where it amplifies the message, we aim for partnerships and coalition building. Our independence does not require us to act in isolation, and we have experienced repeatedly that acting in concert with like-minded groups and organisations can strengthen our impact.
- With some 530.000 active financial donors at the time of writing, MSF NL provides its supporters the opportunity to **act** in this complex world full of conflict and disaster. We have earned their valuable trust and keeping that trust is of the highest importance. We offer opportunities for their engagement; we are transparent about our failures; and we offer hope by highlighting the impact of our direct action.
- We position MSF NL consistently as an organisation of **doers**. Acting in support of our principles and patients may require activism at times, and careful engagement behind the scenes at others. We may be driven by outrage and express this based on our témoignage, but the tone of voice we choose is not angry, but factual, hopeful and determined. Saving lives and alleviating suffering are acts of solidarity: that positive spirit determines our expressions.

When deciding on our position within society on an issue or during a polarized debate, it is helpful to ask how we want to be seen. When people in the Netherlands hear our name, we hope they will think: "MSF provides medical assistance in the most difficult places, where the need is greatest. I believe, just like them, that **every person** deserves help during a crisis".⁷ That conviction cannot be diluted, especially at a time when violation of people's rights and dignity too often receives a veneer of legality or morality.

⁴ To paraphrase Sana Beg, Executive Director of MSF Canada.

⁵ As explained in **Telling it as it is** (2020, p. 4): "Paradoxically, being overly concerned by public perception makes us hermetic to the public; our pre-emptive self-censorship shuts down any opportunity for discussion or engagement."

⁶ Ibid. The framework describes 'telling it as it is' as "staff describing in their own words the crises they witness" (p. 4) - not as MSF calling for a specific change.

⁷ MSF NL (2023), Brand Strategy 2024-2027.

Objectives

1 We support our social mission by mobilizing sustainable, diversified, and flexible income

MSF NL plays a central role in funding the delivery of independent, needs-driven medical humanitarian assistance where it is needed most. Looking ahead to 2026-2029, we will consolidate recent growth while adapting to an even more volatile humanitarian, political, and funding landscape. Humanitarian needs are increasing in scale and duration, while public attention, media dynamics, and donor behaviour are shifting. This Strategic Plan must therefore provide focus, prioritisation, and coherence – ensuring that ambition is matched with organisational capacity and long-term sustainability.

Emergencies are often an accelerator of our fundraising, and we must maintain a strong ‘engine’ focused on long-term engagement with donors if we are to capitalize on this. The Dutch market is a mature fundraising environment, with high levels of competition. Today, MSF NL is the second-largest private fundraiser in the country.⁸ Maintaining this position is by no means a given and requires considerable effort and investment – even more so as we aim for a 4-5% annual growth rate: an ambitious target in the Dutch context.

A central objective for the coming period is to grow and protect unrestricted income, while selectively expanding restricted funding where this aligns with existing operational strategies. Growth targets across income streams (regular giving, one-off donations, major donors, corporations, foundations, and legacy giving) provide direction while quality, sustainability, and diversification remain the consistent frame.

Strengthening donor retention and lifetime value is a priority. We are not solely focusing on transactional relationships, but we seek meaningful and loyal relations with our donors. This is guided by our revised loyalty strategy that deepens engagement, reinforces trust, and connects supporters more directly to MSF NL’s mission and advocacy. Loyal, engaged donors – across individual, major donor, and other segments – will be prioritised over volume-driven growth. Similarly, in line with international guidance, MSF NL prioritises a steady growth of its net-contribution to the movement over annual Return on Investment (ROI).

Projected income trends

Income (in €)	2026	2027	2028	2029	Growth
One-off gifts	21,000,000	21,735,000	22,495,725	23,283,075	3.5%
Regular gifts	36,100,000	37,183,000	38,298,490	39,447,445	3.0%
Major donors	3,100,000	3,472,000	3,888,640	4,355,277	12.0%
Corporations	4,800,000	5,376,000	6,021,120	6,743,654	12.0%
Legacies	24,000,000	25,440,000	26,966,400	28,584,384	6.0%
Foundations	7,000,000	7,840,000	8,780,800	9,834,496	12.0%
Subtotal	96,000,000	101,046,000	106,451,175	112,248,331	
Postcode Lottery	13,000,000	12,500,000	12,000,000	12,000,000	
Total	109,000,000	113,546,000	118,451,175	124,248,331	
Y-o-Y growth (2026 against AP 2025)	117.87%	104.17%	104.32%	104.89%	

These numbers reflect the MSF NL income ambition without including high-level ‘CNN’ emergency fundraising campaigns.

⁸ The Dutch Cancer Society has for many years occupied the top spot.

Income diversification is essential to resilience. MSF NL will continue to invest in digital growth and expand peer-to-peer fundraising, which enables fundraising initiatives by individuals, schools, companies, or professional groups. Furthermore, we may connect to existing events like the *Dam tot Damloop* or *Mudmasters*, or set up our own event. We remain committed to testing new models such as direct-response television (DRTV), while maintaining our face-to-face fundraising within defined strategic limits to avoid overdependence. Innovation streams, including Islamic philanthropy, engagement of older donor segments, and network-based fundraising, will be further developed and assessed for scalability.

Growth in major donor, corporate, and foundation income will be accelerated through solid pipeline management, proactive prospecting, strong engagement strategies, and sufficient internal capacity for proposal development and partnership management. We work with OCA and other partnership members around the strategic enabler **Mobilising Support**, to foster a sense of collective responsibility and a shared philanthropic culture. OCA has set a Key Results to provide its partner sections with a clear framework for targeted giving and improved access to high-quality project information and activity information. This will create possibilities for MSF NL to seek out new donors who favour targeted donations.

As the post-war generation ages, the coming years should also see the start of a very large wealth transfer, further growing the volume of legacy giving to charity. As a result of the early start and strong development of our Legacy programme, MSF NL is well-positioned to tap into this development. We are significantly increasing our investments in legacy marketing over the coming years to ensure we continue to be top-of-mind, noting that numerous other charities will be attempting the same. Core to scaling this programme is growing digital marketing and lead generation of younger (50+) target audiences.

MSF NL will continue to professionalise and deepen its data-driven approach. A foundational step is to improve our internal data hygiene: data retention, data protection, reducing storage costs, simplifying procedures, all in close cooperation with the ITD and control (DPA) department. The introduction of AI has already significantly changed the way we work as a department, but mostly on an individual basis by incorporating AI tools into our daily work. We expect to deliver our first specific fundraising AI agent in 2026-2027 and are looking at follow up projects.

1 Support MSF's social mission by mobilizing sustainable, diversified, and flexible income

	Key Result	Strategy	Strategy Lead	Timeframe
1	Achieved year-on-year growth of unrestricted income from pledge donors (3%), one-off donors (3.5%), major donors (12%) and legacies (6%).	Build on existing multi-year growth acceleration strategy with multiyear targets across pledge, oneoff, legacy, and highvalue giving.	Head of C&F	2026–2029
2	Increased number of restricted/ targeted funding proposals.	Define a baseline and target; capitalise on the OCA Strategic Plan enabler Mobilising Support and its specific Key Results; invest in building a philanthropic culture across OCA; conduct active prospect mapping for targeted giving.	Head of C&F	2026–2029
3	Strengthened donor retention and lifetime value across donor segments.	Develop a new loyalty strategy; develop propositions for engagement beyond financial giving and connect these to campaigning for change.	Head of C&F and Head of PRA	2026–2029
4	Diversified income streams within private and one-to-one fundraising, maintaining a high-level ratio of roughly 50/50.	Limit face-to-face fundraising to a maximum of 75% of new pledge donors by 2029; accelerate growth in one-to-one fundraising by strengthening (cold) acquisition; sustain and develop the legacy-marketing position; sustain the innovation strategy.	Head of C&F	2026–2029

2 We strengthen the visibility and credibility of AzG through public communications and by engaging with our donor and support base

Fundraising and communications are not separate functions; they are mutually reinforcing levers that translate the realities of our country programmes into public engagement and long-term support. We seek to maintain MSF NL's position as a trusted source for media as well as highquality, field-driven and fundraising-oriented content across channels. It also requires careful consideration of how we represent people in images and stories. Across all communication workflows, MSF NL will uphold its ethical imagery guidelines, ensuring that public-facing materials preserve the dignity of the people we assist and reflect the honesty our supporters expect.

MSF NL enters this plan period with renewed strength of recognition and reputation. Following a sustained decline in spontaneous brand awareness – from 24% in 2018 to 16% in 2023–2024 – a strategic repositioning initiated in 2024 has produced clear results. Awareness has recovered to 20% in Q1 2026, meeting the 2027 target two years early, and MSF NL has risen from tenth to third on the charity ranking by Hendrik Beerda, establishing itself as the strongest brand in the international emergency aid segment — ahead of the Dutch Red Cross and UNICEF.

This recovery was driven by three deliberate choices: a shift from niche to broad mass media investment across television, radio, print, and digital channels, an increase from two to five structured campaign moments per year, and the full integration of brand storytelling with direct fundraising asks. Advocacy-led campaigns have proven to be a powerful differentiator in the Dutch charitable landscape. This approach will be sustained in the 2026–2029 period.

The recovery is real but incomplete, requiring additional effort in certain areas. Substantive brand knowledge – the share of the Dutch public who not only recognise MSF NL but understand what we do – has barely moved, from 27% in 2023 to 29% in Q1 2026, short of the 34% target. This matters because surface-level name recognition does not translate into giving decisions: people need to understand our work before they choose to support it. To achieve this, we must more strongly emphasize MSF's impact as part of our public campaigns. We have leaned heavily on urgent, emergency-style fundraising-led communication in recent years. What we can do better is show the public what their donation has achieved and offer some hope in the process.



Another key strategic shift for the coming period is the further development of MSF NL as a community. Supporters increasingly seek meaningful ways to engage beyond donating. By strengthening the link between communications, fundraising, advocacy and our association, MSF NL can offer clearer pathways for engagement, enabling supporters to mobilise for change, amplify MSF's voice, and deepen their connection to the organisation. Mobilising for change thus becomes both an advocacy tool and a strategic asset for loyalty, lead generation, and long-term support.

A large share of our engagement, fundraising, and public communication takes place through social and online platforms, where legislation, algorithms, emerging technologies such as AI, and public trust are evolving rapidly. At the same time, as growth in audience reach stabilises in our market, our focus must shift from expanding reach to deepening engagement. We will therefore monitor these developments closely and remain ready to adapt our strategy.

MSF grew its overall media reach between 2015 and 2025 by a factor fifteen. The compound annual growth rate in this decade was +30.7% per year on average. As such, we maintain the strategic choice to focus on emergencies and current news, as this delivers the most attention in national media outlets that have the highest reach. An important requirement, in addition to retaining our high-performing press team, is the presence of Dutch-speaking spokespersons in our country programmes and at senior management level in HQ. We will invest extra effort into the identification and training of future spokespersons in the coming years.

2 Strengthen the visibility and credibility of MSF NL by public communications and by engaging with our donor and support base

	Key Result	Strategy	Strategy Lead	Timeframe
1	Spontaneous brand awareness reaches ≥22% by 2029 (from 20% in Q1 2026); substantive brand knowledge reaches ≥34% by 2029 (from 29% in Q1 2026); MSF NL maintains its position as the #1 brand in the international emergency aid segment (Hendrik Beerda).	Continue the existing brand strategy, balancing urgency and impact; focus on the depth of supporter engagement, not only reach.	Head of C&F	2026–2029
2	Maintained MSF NL's position as a trusted, authoritative media source, with high-quality, field-driven coverage reaching two billion impressions in the Netherlands.	Focus on training and building relationships with Dutch-speaking internationally mobile staff and operational leaders; strengthen collaboration between OpsComms and the press team; sustain a strong social-media presence and reach; maintain high-quality content production.	Head of C&F	2026–2029
3	Engagement propositions developed and tested to connect supporters to campaigning, advocacy, and AzG's mission beyond financial giving.	Relaunch the peer-to-peer action platform with sustained above-the-line support in 2027; Integrate community engagement with advocacy campaigning to create multiple, meaningful points of action for supporters at different levels of commitment.	Head of C&F and Head of PRA	2026–2029

3 We ignite change in support of the rights, access to care, and dignity of the people MSF serves

Medical care alone cannot stop suffering. Many of the crises our teams respond to are fueled by political choices, deliberate violence, and systemic exclusion: from migration policies that expose people to harm, to attacks on medical facilities in active conflict, to the erosion of the rights-based frameworks that protect the most vulnerable. MSF NL is determined to use its position in Dutch society to push back. Advocacy and campaigning are not supplementary activities: they are a core pillar of what we do.

Our ambition is to create international impact by making better use of the potential leverage of the Netherlands, a country with:

- historic legacy in international humanitarian law, hosting the ICC and ICJ in the Hague;
- a strong tradition of solidarity as a humanitarian donor;
- a recognizable international profile in the fields of sexual and reproductive health rights and water management;
- a restricting but highly influential role in the EU on migration and asylum, especially 'migration partnerships'.

Our ambition is to be an agenda-setting, mobilising, and change-igniting voice in the Netherlands. This builds on significant investment in advocacy capacity in recent years, and on the recognition that public mobilisation, demonstrated by the red line demonstrations on Gaza and the 230,000 signatories to our #NotATarget petition, can generate real political impact. We will continue to deepen this capacity, combining sustained engagement with decisionmakers with strategic public communications and increasingly sophisticated campaigning.

Our advocacy is rooted in MSF's operational practice and medical data: evidence and testimony generated by our own **witnessing** in 75+ countries. Based on operational relevance, MSF's evidential authority, Dutch political leverage, and added value relative to other actors, we have identified four advocacy priorities for this plan period:

1 People on the Move

Migration policies in Europe, including the criminalisation of search and rescue, migration deals that enable refoulement, and the systematic denial of healthcare to people on the move – have devastating medical consequences. MSF NL will work to reframe migration as a health and human dignity issue, and to hold the Netherlands accountable for its role in EU policies and bilateral agreements that expose people to harm.

2 Protection of the Medical Mission and IHL

Attacks on healthcare in conflict are increasing in frequency and severity. Building on the **Not A Target campaign**, MSF NL will advocate for the Netherlands to take an active international leadership role in restoring the norm that the medical mission must be protected — through UN Security Council Resolution 2286, through diplomatic engagement, and in the longer term through strengthening domestic jurisdiction for prosecution of such crimes.

3 Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

In humanitarian settings, access to safe abortion care, maternal healthcare, and contraception is lifesaving and increasingly under threat. MSF NL will advocate for the Netherlands to renew and deepen its commitment to SRHR as an essential component of humanitarian response and will push for accountability and meaningful support for survivors of gender-based violence, including sexual violence.

4 Outbreak Response

From cholera to Ebola disease, people in low- and middle-income countries are consistently the last to gain access to lifesaving medicines and vaccines, a problem which is even worse in hard-to-reach areas and by global aid cuts. Collaborating with our medical teams and MSF Access, MSF NL will advocate for the Netherlands to champion vaccine solidarity, equitable research and development; fast-track humanitarian access during outbreaks and to counter the framing of pandemic preparedness as primarily a security issue.

Across all four priorities, we will invest in campaigning capacity that allows supporters to engage at different levels of commitment: from signing a petition to sustained community involvement. Where it amplifies our impact, we actively seek coalitions with medical professionals, civil society actors, and like-minded organisations. In addition to these priorities, we retain capacity to speak out and develop advocacy on unforeseen emergencies and in practical support of our operations, as well as on policy or legislative initiatives in the Netherlands that may harm our fundraising potential or humanitarian space.



↑ Mediterranean Sea, 2025. ©MSF

3 Ignite change in support of the rights, access to care, and dignity of the people MSF serves by developing agenda-setting advocacy, mobilising our supporters to build our leverage, and creating strong theories of change to underpin our approach

	Key Result	Strategy	Strategy Lead	Timeframe
1	The Netherlands adopts concrete, publicly stated positions or policy actions aligned with MSF NL's advocacy asks on migration policy, medical mission protection, SRHR, or outbreak response.	Sustained, theory-of-change-based bilateral engagement with government and parliament; regular evidence-based briefings grounded in MSF medical and operational data.	Head of C&F	2026–2029
2	Active support communities around at least three priority issues are built and sustained, with measurable growth in engaged supporters and the capacity to generate rapid public mobilisation when political windows open.	Design advocacy campaigns with entry points ranging from light engagement to sustained involvement; build strategic partnerships where appropriate; learn more about what motivates and moves our 530k supporters; integrate with C&F community-building to create durable supporter relationships that outlast individual campaigns.	Head of C&F and Head of PRA	2026–2029
3	Clear theories of change guide advocacy across all priority areas and are reviewed periodically to inform strategic learning and adaptation.	Use a light but structured monitoring and evaluation approach; design metrics to measure advocacy progress and supporter engagement; hold regular reflection sessions informed by operational developments and the political context; engage consistently beyond MSF NL (OSCAR, HRT, MSF Access and other OCs).	Head of PRA	2026–2029

4 We support our social mission by recruiting and retaining qualified, diverse and gender-balanced staff with profiles that match operational and enabler needs

Historically, MSF NL has made an important contribution to recruiting staff for both our country programmes and headquarter functions. However, in recent years, departures of Dutch nationals notably declined, from 73 in 2022 to 30 in 2025.⁹ Although operational staffing requirements and our commitments to a diverse, global workforce remain paramount, this trend risks weakening the future (leadership) pipeline for positions that require Dutch language skills or cultural familiarity, limits our ability to put forward spokespeople to the media, could hinder active associative engagement in the Netherlands, and may generally affect the perception of MSF NL as a viable career option.

The multi-year strategy to remedy this trend is focused on both recruitment and retention, balancing the organisational operational demand for specific staff profiles with the institutional needs of MSF NL. We will recruit at least 15 Dutch-speaking internationally mobile staff for country programmes each year, with women representing at least 80% of recruits. Outreach will focus on four priority groups: midwives and medical doctors with sexual and reproductive health experience, water and sanitation specialists, technical logisticians, and selected operational coordination profiles.

Our approach will combine targeted information sessions (e.g. campus recruitment) and outreach to professional associations with our usual in-house recruitment events, including sessions specifically for women. Internship opportunities across HQ also help build the future talent pipeline. For multilingual staff, reducing the minimum first-assignment length to six months for French-speakers will help lower barriers to join MSF. We also aim to leverage the Dutch labour market for ad hoc emergency needs. We will do more on-post recruitments, where we see the Dutch system has an advantage given the relative flexibility towards long-term leaves in our health care system. By engaging in strategic partnerships, for example with Dutch hospitals, we aim to increase our surge capacity.

MSF NL will continue to invest in its employer brand, both by increasing our visibility in the labour market and by positioning MSF as a professionally meaningful workplace across all departments. We also strengthen safeguarding in recruitment, by conducting proper reference and background checks (e.g. medical license, diplomas, criminal antecedents, hits in the do-not-hire database), ensuring safe and gender-balanced hiring panels, and including safeguarding-related questions in all candidate interviews.

Talent management and retention of well-performing staff are as critical as recruitment in building a sustainable talent pipeline of Dutch-speaking staff. Solid onboarding programmes and performance management support retaining staff. The team will also collaborate with the Association to re-engage former IMS who remain potential contributors to leadership roles or for surge capacity. Recruiters proactively engage with departments on finding hard-to-hire profiles, for instance IT talent, and develop more tailored recruitment and retention strategies. A detachment policy for HQ staff, enabling office-based colleagues to gain country programme experience, aims to strengthen retention, professional development, and the internal pipeline for senior positions in both office and operations.

⁹ This decline is in part due to a deliberate effort to diversify our staff pool and improve career chances for locally recruited colleagues, but also follows administrative and access restrictions and a choice to hire more staff who speak French and/or are willing to go on long-term assignments.

4 We support our social mission by recruiting and retaining qualified, diverse and gender-balanced staff with profiles that match operational and enabler needs

Key Result	Strategy	Strategy Lead	Timeframe
1 ≥15 Dutch-speaking IMS recruited annually for country programmes, with ≥80% female.	Focused outreach to four priority profiles; targeted information sessions including women-only cohorts; partnerships with Amsterdam UMC and Leiden UMC; reduction of minimum first-assignment length to 6 months for French speakers only to lower the commitment threshold for Dutch speaking IMS speaking French.	Coordinator RCM	Annual, continuous
2 Established footprint across WatSan, technical logistics, and Midwifery/SRH networks in the Netherlands, building a future talent pipeline.	Campus recruitment, internships, partnerships and networking.	Coordinator RCM	Dec 2027
3 Achieved a 50/50 gender balance in the IMS group managed by the MSF NL career managers by prioritizing women in recruitment processes.	Use affirmative action to ensure that women make up at least 30% of every shortlist.	Coordinator RCM	Dec 2029
4 100% of recruitments include safeguarding-related content with candidates receiving relevant background checks.	Implement recruitment guidelines across country programmes and offices; consistently apply safeguarding principles; develop a quality-control monitoring system; and develop specialised guidance for emergencies.	Coordinator RCM	Jul 2027
5 Retention baseline established for new and existing Dutch-speaking staff, enabling subsequent measurement of year-on-year improvement.	Configure Workday to measure retention; collaborate with the Association on homecoming events; actively support the development and coaching of Dutch-speaking internationally mobile staff.	Coordinator RCM Coordinator Systems & Reporting	Dec 2027



5 We provide a strong foundation for all other objectives by creating a community-oriented office, fostering an organisational culture aligned with our values, ensuring robust technical infrastructure, and maintaining high standards of integrity

The four preceding objectives: mobilising income, communicating on our mission, advocating for change, and recruiting and retaining talent, depend on an organisational foundation that is resilient, value-driven, and fit-for-future. This fifth objective concerns the effectiveness of MSF NL as an enabler in itself: the space we create for people to come together, the organisational culture we cultivate, the technical infrastructure we offer, and the governance we practice.

Our Amsterdam Office serves a dual function: both as a place of work and as a place where we build a sense of community and common purpose. It enables staff to connect to our social mission and organisational debates, to tap into informal exchanges, allows for chance encounters, and to experience the infectious motivation of humanitarian spirit. For this reason, all MSF NL staff are present in the office for a minimum of 60% of their working hours. At the same time, our sense of community and connection to MSF's social mission should extend beyond our Amsterdam office: we will explore ways of locating our (human) resources throughout the OCA partnership offices where it is strategically relevant to do so – and we will use these various bases to attract diverse talent.

In the coming period, upgraded facilities – including capacity to host international meetings for the wider movement, easier travel reimbursement and active event organisation – will further contribute to a feeling of community and togetherness. We will use the office deliberately to strengthen connections across departments and reduce silos through both informal encounters and more structured opportunities to exchange around organisational priorities, operational realities, shared challenges and our collective contribution to MSF's social mission.

MSF NL wants to foster a workplace culture that is informed by our values: a transparent and learning culture in which staff are safe to learn from each other, from what we do well and what we get wrong, committed to safe, effective and person-centred care and working collaboratively, seeing our roles within an interdependent system working towards a common goal.¹⁰ We aim for a work environment that is as effective as it is kind: a welcoming place where country programme staff and office staff, fundraising canvassers and guests from other sections are warmly received.

Performance and development discussions become a regular part of our broader learning culture in which 360-degree feedback, lessons from evaluations, incident and after-action reviews, and organisational debates are discussed and translated into clear follow-up actions. In line with our Code of Conduct and organisation-wide safeguarding priorities, we are committed to promoting and maintaining an environment where everyone feels respected, safe, and valued – identifying and addressing systemic barriers that hinder inclusion and belonging. We work to promote trust in our reporting channels and demonstrate zero-tolerance for misconduct (i.e. all complaints are investigated and proportionally addressed).

The effective delivery of our objectives increasingly depends on robust, modern, and integrated digital systems. The effectiveness of each is contingent on the quality of the underlying infrastructure, the integrity of our data, and the resilience of our systems to disruption. These systems should also enable effective collaboration and connectivity across locations and support more flexible and decentralized ways of working. In this plan period, MSF NL will invest in upgrading and future-proofing this technology backbone, with particular attention to the interoperability and quality of our data; the cyber resilience and continuity of critical platforms, and the thoughtful adoption of artificial intelligence and automation tools that can amplify our capacity across objectives. This investment will be pursued in close alignment with OCA's Data and Technology strategy.

MSF NL's credibility with supporters, the Dutch public, and regulatory bodies depends in large part on the rigour and transparency with which we manage the resources entrusted to us. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity – not as a compliance exercise, but as an expression of respect for the trust our supporters place in us. This extends to improved internal procurement and a commitment to efficient resource use, i.e. maximising the proportion of income that directly enables our social mission, while making investing in capacity and systems needed to generate sustainable future income. To that end, MSF NL aims to further develop a philanthropic culture, in which the whole office – and not only those in fundraising roles – value and contribute to our ability to generate support.

¹⁰ See the chapter on "Our Culture" in the OCA Strategic Plan 2026-2031.



↑ Amsterdam, 2024. ©AzG

5 We provide a strong foundation for all other objectives by creating a community-oriented office, fostering an organisational culture aligned with our values, ensuring robust technical infrastructure, and maintaining high standards of integrity

	Key Result	Strategy	Strategy Lead	Timeframe
1	Staff experience the Amsterdam office as an effective, welcoming, community-oriented place to work, as measured by our Staff Pulse survey.	Maintain the agreed office-presence model; Upgrade shared facilities, including a lounge and capacity for international meetings; Improve commuting reimbursement and organise regular events and cross-departmental exchanges.	DepGD DirFinBo StaffDir	2026–2029
2	Staff feel connected to MSF's social mission, organisational debates and colleagues across departments and locations, as measured by our Staff Pulse survey.	Make humanitarian communications more visible in daily office life through screens, newsletters, debates and events; Create informal and structured opportunities for exchange and social connection; Develop remote and decentralised ways of working that preserve belonging and access to the organisation.	DepGD DirFinBo StaffDir	2026–2029
3	MSF NL's critical digital systems are effective, integrated, and resilient.	Improve data quality and interoperability; Strengthen cyber resilience and continuity of critical platforms; Align with OCA's Data and Technology strategy while investing in MSF NL-specific systems as needed; Adopt AI and automation where they add clear value.	DepGD DirITD	2026–2029
4	Staff experience a safe, inclusive, and learning-oriented culture (>75%), supported by transparent governance and internal communications, as measured by the Staff Pulse survey.	Strengthen psychological safety, inclusion, constructive leadership and organisational dialogue; Use consistent performance evaluations (>90%) including 360-degree feedback and translate learning reviews into follow-up; Strengthen trusted reporting and grievance channels, investigate complaints and address misconduct proportionately.	StaffDir	2026–2029

6 We strengthen associative life as a foundation for MSF NL's identity, accountability and governance

The MSF NL Association holds the Board accountable and contributes to decision-making where relevant, supporting responsible and effective governance. At the same time, it serves as a guardian of MSF NL's identity and as a space where members can engage critically and constructively with the organisation's direction, dilemmas and ambitions. MSF NL's associative life is intrinsically connected to the overall health of the organisation and to the quality of its governance. The Association is not separate from MSF NL's social mission: it forms an active continuum between members, the Board, past and present staff, supporters and the wider MSF movement (including in support of newly emerging associations).

In this Strategic Plan period, MSF NL will continue to strengthen the role of the Association as a vital body for reflection, participation and accountability.

MSF NL will therefore invest in creating and maintaining an inclusive, diverse and safe associative environment that values a multitude of perspectives, encourages active participation, promotes accountability, focuses on good governance, and is guided by MSF's medical-humanitarian and associative identity. This includes ongoing efforts to meaningfully involve NL Asso members, wherever they may be based around the world, and making associative life more visible, accessible, and relevant to people at all stages of their MSF NL journey. As ideas for an OCA Associative Community develop, this only becomes more important. We will continue to find and create opportunities for members to meaningfully support MSF NL's work in the Netherlands, e.g. in support of our advocacy and mobilisation.



We will work to deepen member understanding of, and engagement with, governance, including on MSF NL's place in the wider moment and role in the OCA partnership. This means improving the visibility and accessibility of governance processes, including the role of the Board, the expectations placed on Board members, and the skills, experience and judgement required to fulfil those responsibilities. Associative life should enable and empower members to contribute to Board decision making, hold the Board to account, and to stand for election to the Board. We will widen and strengthen the pool of candidates to the Board, and identify pathways for Board members to support and strengthen associative life.

Sustainable, strategic, and responsible governance and associative life also depends on strong institutional memory and effective administration. During this plan period, building on the existing work to document and codify processes and ways of working, MSF NL will explore whether the tools and platforms presently used to support associative and governance work are fit for purpose and adjust as needed.

6 We strengthen associative life as a foundation for MSF NL's identity, accountability and governance

	Key Result	Strategy	Strategy Lead	Timeframe
1	10% improvement of total Association membership participation in voting at the General Assembly of 2029 (baseline: GA2026).	Methodologies for individualised voting calls to Association members are identified and implemented. Clear communication materials on the importance of voting is developed and circulated.	Association Officer	2026–2029
2	During General Assembly, at least 1,5 candidates are validated for election to the Board for each open seat.	Conduct at least 2 targeted candidate engagement or information activities before each election cycle. Before voting, comparison shared on composition of the current Board, and the validated candidates relative to the general Association. Proactive approach of senior staff who leave the organisation to encourage standing for election.	Executive Assistant to the Board	2026–2029
3	All NL contracted staff receive some form of introduction to the Association beyond the Welcome Days. Association information is further included in at least 3 staff touchpoints beyond onboarding (for example: recruitment, annual review, all staff meetings, and exit).	Collaborate with People and Culture, and Internal Comms to identify and prioritise staff touch points, as well as metrics and methodology for assessment. Create tailored formats for different moments, e.g. in-person briefings; concise text in recruitment, onboarding, and offboarding materials; short explanatory video; Questions or prompt in exit interviews; TEMBO training.	Association and Board Team Lead	2026–2028
4	100% of core governance processes are documented and accessible.	Review of the platforms and tools used for associative and governance work is conducted, assessing usability, accessibility, security, support for institutional memory, and transparency needs, and produce a prioritised improvement plan.	Association and Board Team Lead	2026–2028



Resource implications

This Strategic Plan distinguishes between the efforts that MSF NL seeks to sustain or maintain, and those that we aim to grow or accelerate. Sustaining a result does not necessarily mean maintaining expenditure at its current level: in a competitive or changing environment, additional investment may be needed to protect an established position. Conversely, growth or acceleration do not always require additional investment, as we have closed important staffing and investment gaps in recent years which may already allow for such expansion. However, increased income and a larger supporter base have come with pressures that stretch teams and management capacity. A review of the optimal Comms & Fundraising structure will be necessary.

The table below aims to give a simplified overview of activities that are expected to be delivered through the existing resource base or reprioritisation and those that are likely to need targeted investment. Pilots will be scaled only where evidence demonstrates sufficient strategic value and effectiveness. The classifications below are indicative. Specific investments, staffing requirements, and budgets will be assessed and approved through MSF NL's regular annual planning and budgeting cycle. Where targeted investment is not approved, the corresponding targets will need to be adjusted.

Objective	Existing resources or reprioritisation	Targeted investment
1 Income & Diversification	Core face-to-face and direct-mail programmes; proactive major donor outreach; high-value and targeted giving capacity and processes; fundraising campaigns.	Digital acquisition and conversion; opening new in-house face-to-face branch; peer-to-peer growth; DRTV and innovation pilots; selected legacy marketing growth; fundraising data and automation; management capacity
2 Visibility & Brand	Core brand strategy and substantive brand-knowledge initiatives; press function and spox capacity; media relationships; social-media presence; content production	
3 Advocacy & Campaigns	Policy engagement and work on agreed advocacy priorities through existing PRA capacity	Scaled public mobilisation and campaigning, if this requires capacity beyond current PRA and C&F resources
4 Recruitment & Career Management	Core recruitment, safeguarding and employer-brand activities; retention data and selected talent-pipeline initiatives; surge recruitment	Targeted professional and campus outreach; strategic partnerships
5 Office & Culture	Core workplace, safeguarding and office culture; integrity and governance functions; alignment with OCA systems	Office upgrades; cyber-resilience and selected AI or automation projects
6 Association & Governance	Statutory governance, core associative engagement and accountability; Expanded member-engagement; governance candidate development.	Investment in digital management platforms; potential capacity investment in support of the OCA Associative Community

MSF NL's place in the wider movement

MSF Netherlands / **Artsen zonder Grenzen** has a long and meaningful history within the MSF movement. As one of the longstanding European MSF sections, we stood at the roots and foundation of Operational Centre Amsterdam (OCA). Over time, MSF NL has evolved into a more diverse and internationally oriented section while maintaining strong institutional, financial, and cultural ties to the Netherlands. With this history in mind, this chapter outlines the contours of MSF NL's long-term place in the wider movement.

MSF NL recognizes and supports the need for MSF to evolve towards a more globally representative and geographically balanced movement. We support redistributing decision-making power, influence and ownership across a more globally representative MSF movement to create a fairer and more just MSF. Creating a more global, diversified and inclusive organisation, ultimately makes us more resilient and potentially better placed to withstand future shocks to our ability to deliver medical humanitarian operations. In the meantime, the associative (Board and Council) ensures careful monitoring and mitigation of any negative impact that also comes with a transition of this magnitude. MSF NL supports honest reflection or review of previous decentralisation/delocalisation¹¹ initiatives and the lessons they offer.

A central question is: how can MSF NL and OCA strengthen accountability of its governance, inclusiveness, and shared ownership while remaining mission-focused and operationally effective?

During this strategic plan period, MSF NL aims to redefine its place in the MSF movement at large, and vis-a-vis OCA in particular. MSF NL and OCA will re-examine their mutual relationship within the OCA partnership, including through the revision process of the OCA Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The aim is to pursue a sense of shared ownership, equity among partners, the autonomy to explore partnerships beyond OCA, and a partnership that is less Euro-centric. This includes meaningfully exploring alternative legal setups and assessing whether current arrangements remain the best suited for OCA's future. As MSF NL is the legal basis of OCA, it remains the Board's duty to constructively safeguard and guide on key governance, risk and legal issues (i.e. regarding the OCA MoU revision, and Paired OD(s) discussions), while making sure the delivery of our social mission continues to be the main driver in our discussions and decision making.

Furthermore, MSF NL could evolve beyond a primarily NL–OCA relationship by partnering with a new emerging Operational Directorate (OD). Such a partnership could strengthen our operational identity and diversify our position within the movement, while bringing reciprocal value as a section that has extensive experience with the implications of being the legal entity of an OD and the delivery of operations. Throughout this process, MSF NL will advocate for clarity in governance structures and accountability lines for both executive and associative. In addition, we find it important to minimize additional complexity within MSF's already complex governance and to carefully consider any trade-offs, ensuring that they contribute demonstrably to MSF's social mission. We recognise that, as new governance partnerships are established, responsibilities should remain manageable. Within this SP cycle, MSF NL will explore collaboration with another European section.

Finally, MSF NL remains committed to a vibrant and inclusive Netherlands-based Association with links to Dutch society, strengthened and enriched by the global nature of our membership base. We see the Association as a key vehicle for democratic engagement and accountability: the guardrails of our governance. In this spirit, MSF NL will actively pursue the vision of an "OCA Associative Community", through which its members can directly and collectively hold the OCA Council accountable and that works towards more collective ownership among OCA partners, in line with the 2023 NL motion on OCA accountability.

¹¹ With the notion that decentralization can mean many things to different people. Decentralization in itself is not the aim, but moving beyond Europe is.

