

2024 Annual Report

Deepening Practice + Action to Do Good Better

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Message from the Executive Director

The strength of civil society is the cornerstone to shaping a more just and accountable world. In the midst of crises, civil society steps up, providing care, supporting communities, nurturing solidarity, crafting solutions, and so much more. Yet, 2024 exposed the sector's vulnerabilities. Our Members noted increased risks of irresponsible, unethical, and unresponsive actions and programings of civil society amid ongoing polycrises, including rising polarization, authoritarianism, conflict, and natural disasters. As civil society organizations have become increasingly under attack, the mission of Accountable Now has remained as essential as ever to our Members and partners.

Eager to see our platform adapt and expand to meet the needs faced by civil society organizations today, we came into 2024 on the back of crucial Member-led reforms and adaptations of our work in 2023, including expanding Membership criteria and options, the introduction of a new reporting framework, and expanded services and support to our partners and non-Members.

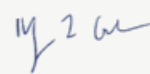
We formalized many of these decisions and crystalized our expanded approaches in our new Strategic Framework launched in 2024. With support from more than a dozen IRP, Board, and Organizational Members and independent experts from around the world, this strategic framework should enable AN to operate using our strengths, focus on key services and support, and continue our operations as a trusted guide and support system to civil society actors around the world. Thanks to our strong partnerships with our sister accountability networks (the Global Standard Partners), we began working on opportunities to better integrate and interoperate with other accountability platforms, especially at the national and regional level. We also had our first full year under our new strategic collaboration and partnership with Accountability Lab. Via these essential partnerships, we have managed to expand our reach beyond existing Members, build tools and services to support a wider range of civil society actors, and streamline and reduce spending on operations. In 2025, we plan to continue doubling down on an interconnected networks approach to our work to better integrate our services and support with our core partners in the broader ecosystem of civil society resilience and accountability efforts.

These strategic and operational shifts started to pay off early in 2024 in a range of ways. Our Membership grew by nearly 33% in 2024. We were joined by more regional and national CSOs and networks, especially our Global Standard Partners who we've been working alongside for almost a decade now! This community growth expands our community to new actors with deeper local roots and new insights for the civil society accountability agenda. We also began new multi-year partnerships with several funders, including Packard Foundation, Humanity United, and Fondation Botnar. These partnerships focus on enabling participatory leadership and agency of the foundations' grantees and partners, testing new approaches and forms of support for civil society, and supporting learning of funders on how to better (and best) support civil society today.

We delivered [custom trainings](#), [workshops](#), [reports](#), and [insights](#) to dozens of Members and partners over the course of the year on everything from [climate and environmental practices](#) to the [12 Commitments](#) to [feminist, youth, and participatory leadership](#). Two that really stood out for me were: our Feminist and Youth-Led Practice and Research event and a coaching session on networking with a group of young leaders from around the world before they attended the World Urban Forum in Cairo, a first international trip for most. Alongside these tailwinds, we focused on reigniting our collective community and integrating new voices, perspectives, and lessons to guide implementation of the 12 Commitments. We did this by forging and renewing connections with Members and partners (past and present), both virtually and in person. In 2024 we visited Members and partners in Indonesia, Germany, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, and the US. We also gathered with Members on the sidelines of major events like the UN General Assembly (in New York City), World Movement for Democracy (in Johannesburg), and the World Urban Forum (in Cairo).

Together, we're shaping sector standards, raising awareness and ambition on civil society accountability, and reigniting our community's call in a very different era— I can't wait for you to read more about it in this report. And since we already know that 2025 will mark an even darker, more difficult year for civil society, I hope you take inspiration from the ways our incredible network remains committed to *doing good better*.

In solidarity and partnership,
Megan Colnar



Welcome from the 2024 Staff

2024 was a transitional year for the AN Secretariat, after several roles turned over in 2023, we had the opportunity to better reflect on our staffing needs for AN's evolving work and directions. As we prepared to wind down our activities in Germany and abandon a "headquarters-based" model, we were excited by the new possibility of hiring permanent and part-time support in a range of locations around the world.



Meet Our 2024 Team



Megan Colnar
Executive Director

📍 NYC *she/her*



Bao Han Tran Le
Head of Accountability and
Reporting

📍 Berlin *she/her*



Mary Sprague
Head of Communications and
Operations

📍 Berlin *she/her*



Onesimus "**John**" Waino
Events and Operations
Coordinator

📍 Abuja *he/him*



Collectively this incredible group fluently speaks **13 languages** — English, French, German, Hausa, Jenjo, Korean, Mandarin, Pidgin, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Swahili, and Vietnamese — which enabled our team to engage with our community and expand publications of our resources in new languages!



Zipporah Ongwenyi

📍 Nairobi *she/her*



Katie McCarthy

📍 Vienna *she/her*



Min Ji "**Joci**" Cho

📍 Seoul *she/her*



Michaela "**Mika**" Brzezinka

📍 Berlin *she/her*

Spotlight on Our Part-Time Power

In 2024, we worked with **34** Members and partners!



Our Flagship Offer: Membership Program

This year, we grew our Membership by almost **33%**. This is an incredible reflection of the value people see in being part of our community. The bulk of our Membership growth came from our Global Standard Partners — their support and partnership continues to strengthen the ways we work together and participate in each other's networks. While many of these new Members joined at the Friend Tier, they've helped shift our community significantly to include more representation from the Majority World. Many of them also are national networks, helping AN's work be informed and strengthened by application in a variety of frontline contexts and sectors.

Recap of Our 2024 AGM

On July 7, **65%** of our Members attended our 2024 AGM. We presented the work of the Strategic Refresh Committee and solicited participant input through participatory presentations and breakout rooms. You can find our detailed report-out from the 2024 AGM [here](#). Our team reflected on the AGM and gathered insights in the After Action Review, to inform the way we will approach our 2025 AGM and other Member events.

Member Support and Peer Learning

Helpdesk Support

Our Helpdesk was used by a wider range of Members than ever before. Drawing on our extensive internal Policy and Practice Database, primarily made up of Member learnings, we provided sector scans on different topics submitted by Members. Themes included strategic and impact teams, community and network driven feedback, and integrating children and youth into governance mechanisms. Just **over 25%** of our Members submitted Helpdesk requests over the year, and we hope to see that number increase in the future.

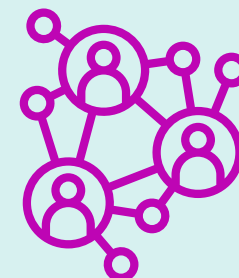
Organizational Support

We support Members through tailored workshops and services. As an example, we facilitated a workshop for World Scouting on Data Analysis and a session for the MIO-ECSDE Network on the Global Standard for CSO Accountability.

Peer Learning

We convened an Accountability and Operations Peer Advice Group, for Members to exchange on accountability issues incurred in budgets, risk management, building internal capacity, quality assurance, and beyond.

We also co-hosted a peer learning session on Internal Standards, alongside our Member Amnesty International. The session focused on how organizations set up and also examine different internal processes in accountable ways.



Our Flagship Offer: Membership Program

Accountability Scrubs

We conducted “Accountability Scrubs” on our Members’ websites, to gauge their level of public accountability and informational transparency. To do this, we used 18 metrics that were identified as relevant for access to key information and accountability practices. These criteria include areas such as “availability of the latest financial information,” “information regarding Board and Senior Leadership,” and “geographies that the organization works in.”

On the whole, our Members scored fairly well, averaging 13.5 out of the 18 metrics. Most or all of AN’s Members included information on organizational vision, projects, and programs, as well as a feedback and contact form. Many Members could improve by adding project or impact evaluations and a list of funders and partners.

World Scout Committee Induction

Our Member World Scouting made use of AN’s discounted extended support services to collaborate in the induction for the new World Scout Committee. The induction supported new Committee leaders, including young people in their first terms, to step into their roles comfortably and collectively. The workshop included a heavy focus on preparing the Committee to take on their strategic oversight role, and avoid the common pitfall of many non-profit boards in wading too far into operational matters. Bao Han and Zipporah (in the photo) went to Jakarta, Indonesia to support the new Committee Induction, including facilitating sessions on Good Governance in Shifting Tides and Powershift Training.

Member Rewinds

To wrap up 2024, we provided each Member with an individualized Rewind, highlighting trends in our community as well as their organizational involvement. Each Rewind also included top lines from Accountable Now’s work in 2024, highlighting our biggest achievements while reflecting on our community’s progress and challenges. Each Rewind also features custom content for each Member to showcase key actions, contributions, and participation in our network by their team over the year.



Reporting

Overview of 2024 Reports

In 2024, we received Accountability Reports and/or Action Plans from a range of Members, including Accountability Lab, CIVICUS, World Scouting, Taiwan Fund for Children and Families, and Educo.

In response to key internal and external pressures, Reports grappled with strategies, tactics, governance models, and partnership models to shift power and advance locally-led action. At times, Reports detailed successes with these practices, like Educo's new Impact Measurement System, that centers stakeholders' needs and feedback. At other times, Members struggled to balance local ownership and perspective with long-held views. For instance, Amnesty International's condemnation of Ukrainian military use of civilian infrastructure.

Reporting Tools and Options

Members now have more choices than ever when it comes to Reporting. In 2024, we formally transitioned to a new reflection-driven 3-year Reporting and Action Planning Framework. In addition to a shortened and more complementary Reporting template, the Action Plan enables members to track progress against key accountability areas, including with the public. In addition to the expanded mandate of our Independent Review Panel (see next page!), we continue to provide the option to use our in-depth Reporting Framework.

Good Practices

In 2024, the Independent Review Panel identified four practices from Member Reports that earned the title of "good". This means, the IRP sees that these actions not only demonstrated Dynamic Accountability, but also can likely be replicated for success in other organizations.

Social Impact Measurement System by Educo

Educo's system collects feedback, insights, and recommendations from a range of its stakeholders and project participants, enabling the organization to make decisions and pivot according to stakeholders' needs with a helpful dashboard of evidence and insights.



Direct Dialogue with Frontline Staff by the Taiwan Fund for Children and Families

TFCF's careful handling of a complaint and the psycho-social support provided after the incident showcased how the organization prioritizes its staff's well-being and safety in the workplace.

Strategy Development Practice by Accountability Lab

Accountability Lab spent a year developing a new strategy that incorporates feedback from all levels within and external to the organization. The strategy is a living document, that is worked against and reviewed regularly.

Response and Learning from Internal Complaints by the Taiwan Fund for Children and Families

TFCF takes staff's well-being very seriously by directly asking staff members for their top-five recommendations for the organization annually, identifying areas where staff's concerns and ideas are most frequent and come up with plans to address them.

Reporting

The Independent Review Panel

Expanded Mandate

The mandate for our Independent Review Panel (IRP) expanded to encourage members to submit materials in the format most helpful for them. Members now can decide which Reporting Framework they use, and the IRP is able to review other material organizations have already created, like Annual Reports, draft policies, findings from evaluations, and more.

This change enables the IRP to closely partner with organizations, provide relevant and timely feedback and advice, and also add additional accountability considerations and expertise to existing or emerging organizational processes and decision-making.

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2024 IRP Members



Afërdita Pustina



Angela Crack



Brendan Halloran



Charlie Ngounou



Elodie Le Grand



Jeremy Sandbrook



Marina Kobzeva



Marlen Mondaca



Muhammad Taher



Simon Lawry-White

By the end of 2024, four of our Independent Review Panel Members' terms concluded six dedicated years of service. We said goodbye to our esteemed Panel Members Charlie Ngounou, Elodie Le Grand, Jeremy Sandbrook, and Simon Lawry-White.

Events + Influence



UNGA Happy Hour

During the 2024 UN General Assembly, Accountable Now teamed up with Accountability Lab to host a Happy Hour Meet Up at Megan's local pub in New York City. We had more than 50 people in attendance from all over the world, folks were excited to have the opportunity to connect, laugh, and be regular humans on the sidelines of dense sessions and heavy discussions.

Johannesburg Open House

On November 18, we hosted an Open House, where 20 individuals gathered to learn more about Accountable Now's approach to CSO accountability, and discuss key issues and priorities facing CSOs in Southern Africa and beyond. Seven representatives from our Members joined, including Accountability Lab, World YWCA, and CIVICUS, who so graciously provided the event space. Former Members, partners, and new friends also joined us from Partners Global, Save the Children, Southern Africa Trust, Afrikki, Acter and Democracy Hub.



Office Visits and In-Person Meetings

We were thrilled to visit many of our Members at their offices, including ChildFund Korea, CIVICUS, Accountability Lab, Open Government Partnership, and Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (TFCF). Mary visited TFCF's offices in April, providing a training on Dynamic Accountability and the 12 Commitments. These visits gave us a deeper insight into the incredible work that our Members are doing!

Strengthening Philanthropic Coordination in the Africa Region

As a sideline event to the World Movement for Democracy Assembly in Johannesburg, South Africa, nineteen leaders in philanthropy joined together at the Nelson Mandela Foundation. Working on funding in Africa at the nexus of human rights, social justice, movements, democracy, and peace building, participants came from sixteen philanthropic organizations. The meeting was co-hosted by Humanity United, Ford Foundation, and the RAITH Foundation grounded by a common premise – if donors thoughtfully organize together, they will be formidable in supporting their partners who are working to counter eroding freedoms.

Accountable Now was tasked with supporting the conceptualization and facilitation of the meeting. Zipporah and Megan travelled to Johannesburg to facilitate the convening, which included discussions on shared aspirations for healthy collaboration, perceived barriers to partnerships, creating stronger partnerships between global and local philanthropies, and identifying early possible opportunities for collaboration.

Our major takeaway was that institutions are complicated and often prevent committed and action-oriented individuals from collaborating effectively outside of their institutions. Given all of the changes happening in philanthropic institutions at the moment, more focus on strengthening interpersonal relationships across institutions may lead to more organic and easier forms of collaboration and co-learning.



Megan (left) and Zipporah (right) at the CIVICUS Headquarters with Alice (middle) from Southern Africa Trust.

UHC2030 Keynote Presentation

As a membership platform revolving around the universal healthcare movement, UHC2030 consists of members across civil society, the private sector, philanthropic foundations, and UN agencies. Megan, on behalf of Accountable Now, was invited to share about accountability frameworks and common pitfalls at their February Brainstorming Meeting at the WHO Headquarters.

Virtual Reach

Prioritizing LinkedIn in 2024, and leaving X and Facebook, we increased our followers by just **over 40%**! In addition to sharing our own resources and thought leadership, we promoted the work of our Members. Our work was also spotlighted by other organizations, including [quotes on youth engagement](#) from our Podcast Series, as well as an [overview of the series](#) highlighted by the World Bank Accountability Mechanism.

Research + Resources for Dynamic Accountability

Dynamic Accountability Dialogue: Feminist Youth-Led Research + Practice

In Gender Equality month, we hosted a DA Dialogue on Feminist Youth-Led Research and Practice. Joined by speakers from Restless Development, World YWCA, and Politics4Her, as well as a moderator from the Feminist Humanity Network, the participants shared barriers and facilitators they've faced in their work.

Read some key takeaways and find the recorded Dialogue [here](#)!



With over 115 registrants, we also created space for participatory reflections and engagement between participants – zoom into this screen grab for a peek into the Dialogue.

Climate Commitment Deep Dive

Through our Reporting mechanisms, Accountable Now has been gathering data and evidence on policies that support Accountability Commitment 3 – the commitment to support a Healthy Planet. On April 24, we held a Member-Only Event: the Climate Deep Dive. In the call, we reviewed the collected data and opened a space for discussion among our Members.

Folks from Accountability Lab, CIVICUS, ChildFund Australia, ChildFund International, Terres des Hommes, World Scouting, and World YWCA joined the event, exchanging roadblocks to environmental policies as well as practical ways that CSOs can truly meet the demands of our current context.



[AN Pocket Guide: Practical Ways CSOs Can Improve and Implement Environmental Policies](#) – released in 2025, this outcome from the Climate Deep Dive is available to the public.

Research + Resources for Dynamic Accountability

Youth Engagement + Leadership

Utilizing our network's strong expertise, we focused on driving youth power, engagement, and leadership in 2024. Ensuring that young voices are not just heard, but actively shape the decisions that impact their lives is a crucial pillar for a dynamically accountable civil society sector.

From podcasts and cheatsheets to advice and new projects, the AN team worked to gather and apply the latest insights on driving youth-led change. Partnering with Fondation Botnar, our Fellow Katie (and fellow young person), supported a budding youth cohort from 15 countries to attend UN-Habitat's World Urban Forum in Cairo. Support included prepping for networking events, building trust with one another, and exchanging strategic ideas. You can read more about that project [here](#).



New Releases

We released our [Youth Engagement Cheatsheet](#), covering seven ways organizations can ensure that young people have the access and get the power and recognition they deserve. This resource was built on insights from conversations with Members, especially youth powerhouse organizations like Restless Development and CIVICUS.



We released four episodes of our Accountability Pill Podcast as part of our [Youth Engagement Series](#), sharing insights on lived experience and work of young people all around the world. Our most streamed episode was all about [Youth Advisory Positions](#), with Prekkshya from Accountability Lab Nepal and Mori from World Scouting.



Dynamic Accountability Guidebook

Our Dynamic Accountability Guidebook offers examples and insights to support organizations in breaking down what it means to understand, apply, and demonstrate Dynamic Accountability. In 2024, we collaborated with three Member Organizations to create case studies based on their practices and policies.

[Accountability Lab's Civic Action Teams](#)

outlining a way to create an environment conducive to collaboration by building mutual trust

[Educo's Suggestions, Complaints, and Commendations Policy](#)

offering a framework that enables quick responses to feedback and course correction

[World YWCA's Feminist Consultation Methodology](#)

framing research as the spark for transformative justice, anchored in a diverse, democratic, and decolonial approach

Projects + Partnerships

Beyond our flagship Membership program, resource creation, and dynamic events, 2024 ushered in a new era for Accountable Now: working on strategic projects with funders and civil society actors to advance our mission and the Dynamic Accountability agenda.

Using our signature focus on practical and tangible offerings, our projects are helping us to deepen connections with our sister accountability networks at the regional and national levels. This expands further commitment and support to civil society, and manifests authentic partnerships and leadership from young people, activists, organizers, and locally-rooted civil society. After some great early successes, most of these projects will continue on into 2025.

Strategic Framework and Governance

In April, we wrapped up our work with supporting a global coalition in producing an updated Strategic Framework, with more thoughtful, clear, and actionable governance and decision-making.

We ran a survey and discussion groups of Coalition members to capture key recommendations for the coalition. Coalition members' insights were used to guide the Steering Committee introduce a more democratic and practical governance approach to the Coalition. Via these consultations, we also supported the Coalition to embrace a simpler, clearer Strategic Framework to better support their work and communicate it to external stakeholders.

Global Standard for CSO Accountability

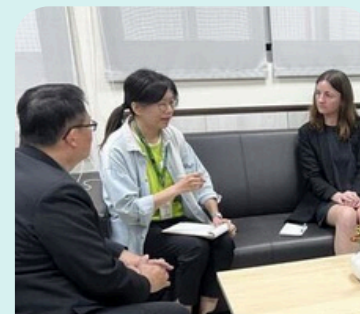
Accountable Now co-hosts the [Global Standard for CSO Accountability](#) with 13 other leading civil society networks around the world. The Global Standard Partners met in May for a virtual Annual General Assembly. Transitioning from full hosting of the secretariat by Accountable Now, we embraced a newly decentralized secretariat where different partners host distributed core functions. For instance: Accountable Now with the Dynamic Accountability Community of Practice, Rendir Cuentas with Communications and Advocacy, and ACFID with knowledge and resource management. Due to a lack of network-wide funding, the Partnership's focus was primarily on advocacy and fundraising, but several Partners identified bilateral opportunities to coordinate and collaborate on key activities and publications.

The Global Standard for CSO Accountability continues to be an important reference framework for civil society's activities and practices around the world. It remains the backbone of Accountable Now. The Standard is recognized by a range of external institutions and actors, including the OECD, European Union, and Open Government Partnership, for its focus on shifting power to affected stakeholders, provision of universal reference points for CSOs, and articulation of common values.

With a focus on strengthening interpersonal relationships with our Members and network, we've seen more organic collaboration, co-learning, and accountability support!



Megan (left) with Ke from Transparency International during UNGA.



Mary (right) meeting with our Member TFCF at their offices.



Board Member Alex (left) and Megan at our UNGA Happy Hour.

Projects + Partnerships

The Collective Action Assistance Fund

For the second year, Accountable Now was asked to continue supporting an ambitious group of private philanthropies to figure out better ways to holistically support social movements and people-powered change via applied experience in a new Fund. Our work in 2024 included finalizing the Fund's strategic interests and learning priorities as well as setting it up operationally.

Partnering closely with like-minded funders, we were able to secure key victories in the set of the fund like deferring grantmaking decisions and strategic directions to a convened group of social movement leaders and experts via the Fund's participatory grantmaking infrastructure and cutting reporting for grantees of the fund. We supported in the selection and onboarding of the first grantmaking decision panel.

Civil Society + Leadership Initiative Global Learning Partnership

Accountable Now was selected to support an philanthropy's learning and impact reporting. Initial work involved reviewing key documents, mapping data inputs, and co-creating an approach to leverage Accountable Now's expertise and support. Early interest in our recommended approach to complex outcome assessment and evidence gathering revealed the opportunity to accompany the philanthropy on more holistic impact and learning practices, including with their grantees and advisors.

Building off of this foundation, the work will carry into 2025 and focus on building up a data synthesis report across two geographies of interest, Chile and Eastern Indonesia. These reports will support the team to finalize their outcomes, indicators, and measurement approach, and to support their cross-geography learning.

City Shapers Youth Cohort at World Urban Forum 12

Accountable Now supported a philanthropy as they formed connections across their programs in a virtual global youth cohort. Our work centered around supporting the City Shapers, 42 young people across 15 countries, as they prepare for and navigate UN-Habitat's 12th World Urban Forum. As nearly all of the City Shapers had never travelled outside their home country or attended an international conference, our young Fellow Katie, coordinated support in a variety of ways. Steered by the City Shaper's preferences, we hosted workshops and office hours and developed materials on topics ranging from travel advice to networking and conference tips. Spanning a 12-hour time difference and three language preferences, our team tailored support to meet the varying needs of the community.

In November, Katie travelled alongside the City Shapers to Cairo, Egypt and led daily interactive sessions focused on meaningful youth participation, community growth, and future thinking.



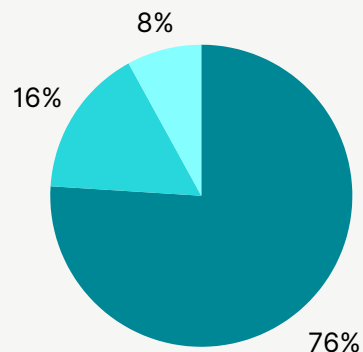
Our young Fellow Katie with the City Shapers at World Urban Forum 12.

Operations + Governance

In addition to our team that welcome you at the start of this Annual Report, we had a great crew that helped us pull off a very successful year on a tight budget. We were lucky to partner with Accountability Lab's operational and finance team, including Alejandra Ona and Rahmat Zedran, to support in bookkeeping and financial management. A handful of short-term support on Fundraising strengthened our work as well. We were also supported by wonderful Fellow and Interns: Yanti from Columbia University (USA), Katie from the University of Applied Arts Vienna (Austria), Joci, Oroh, and Jay from the University of Portsmouth (UK), Maya from Rhodes College (USA), and Mo from Uppsala University (Sweden).

This dynamic approach to our staffing model allowed us to establish new partnerships, open up offers and support in new languages and time zones, and add important capacity and bandwidth on everything from fundraising to communications to data analytics. We anticipate additional learning on how to make this dynamic staffing model feasible and successful, including moving to full-time contracts in 2025 with employees based in 5+ countries.

Financial Overview



Expenditures

Personnel	€309,285
Other Programming and Projects	€62,749
Direct Office Costs	€33,471
Total	€405,505

2024 Board of Trustees



Alex Sardar
Independent



Babacar Ndong
Educo



Jean Scrimgeour
Accountability Lab



Mary Brezovich
SOS Children's Villages



Rachel Smith
AN Board Chair



Tamryn-Lee Fourie
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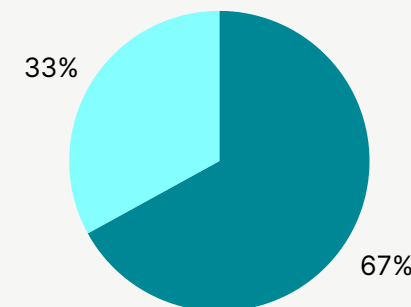
Vanessa Goas
Acting Board Treasurer




Veronica Zambrano
Plan International

Revenue

Projects	€236,028
Membership Fees + Services	€115,962
Total	€351,990





Deepening Practice + Action to **Do Good Better.**

Accountable Now



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