

ANNUAL REPORT **2023**











From left to right and from top to bottom:

▶ A journalist in exile from Doh Athan, a podcast on human rights in Myanmar, conducts independent reporting from Thailand following the coup d'état. © Lam Duc Hien / Fondation Hirondelle. ▶ Two journalists conduct an interview in the streets of Kef, Tunisia. © Lotif Rahmouni / Fondation Hirondelle. ▶ A listener in the southeast of the Central African Republic stays informed by following the news on Radio Ndeke Luka © Gwenn Dubourthoumieu / Fondation Hirondelle. ▶ A journalist from Studio Sifaka, Fondation Hirondelle's media partner in Madagascar, conducts several interviews on the effects of climate change in the Atsinanana region © lako Randrianarivelo / Fondation Hirondelle. ▶ In Lviv, during a bomb alert, residents hide in the catacombs of a church. @ Lâm Duc Hiên / Agence VU' for Fondation Hirondelle.



Cover: from left to right and from top to bottom:

▶ A journalist from Studio Yafa conducts an interview in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. © Olympia de maismont / Fondation Hirondelle. ▶ A Radio Ndeke Luka listener answers an interview during a report from Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic. © Gwenn Dubourthoumieu / Fondation Hirondelle. ▶ Journalists from Nadiya TV interview a beneficiary of a food aid in Pervomaïskyi, Ukraine. © Florent Vergnes / Fondation Hirondelle. ▶ A journalist from Studio Tamani in Mali films a spice stand during the Segou Festival. © Florent Vergnes / Fondation Hirondelle. ▶ A journalist reporting from Kasai, a province in the Democratic Republic of Congo, for Studio Hirondelle RDC. © Gwenn Dubourthoumieu / Fondation Hirondelle. ▶ A journalist from Studio Sifaka, Fondation Hirondelle's media partner in Madagascar, interviews a young man during a training course. © lako Randrianarivelo / Fondation Hirondelle.



PROTECTING PRESS FREEDOM AND RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW

Many analysts today speak of a turning point in history. This change of era is also evident in the various fields and actions undertaken by Fondation Hirondelle. Humanitarian space, freedom of expression and the space for free and independent media are shrinking. "Fake news" and "deep fakes" make it more difficult to inform people objectively. All our projects can be weakened by this, and must withstand ever-increasing pressure. Thanks to our committed and courageous colleagues, we are able to face up to the obstructive attempts that threaten us from all sides. The changing times also affect international law. Transparent, comprehensible information is essential if international justice is to be intelligible. Thanks to our online media Justice Info, specialists, journalists and the general public can follow the most emblematic trials and better understand the issues involved in international and transitional justice. Freedom of the press and respect for the law remain two pillars to which Fondation Hirondelle is committed, thanks in particular to the support of our donors

Tony Burgener

Chairman of the Fondation Hirondelle Board

PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

In 2023, Fondation Hirondelle teams worked on the organization's next strategy for the period 2025-2028. Looking ahead and developing responses to situations as they are now emerging – linked to shrinking public spaces and independent, free voices, the rise of misinformation and disinformation, and the meteoric arrival of artificial intelligence in organizations and newsrooms – has led us to reaffirm our fundamentals and imagine new models for action.

The fundamentals remain of public service journalism by trained, professional men and women working in locally-rooted media that provide them with the working environment they need to fulfil their mission. These fundamentals remain just as valid, as does our indepth, adaptive knowledge of the audiences we serve, of their needs, aspirations and means of accessing useful content that enables them to take action.

Local media players are at the heart of our approach, as they are in the best position to act, both in moments of informational urgency and over the longer term to help build fairer, more inclusive societies. Fondation Hirondelle will bring agility, skills and solidity to its media and partners. To support us in our mission, we have rooted even more firmly in our action advocacy on the social role of the media, and research into the media's various impacts.

Caroline Vuillemin

CEO, Fondation Hirondelle



MEETING A GROWING NEED FOR RELIABLE INFORMATION

This third year of our 2021-24 strategic programme has been marked by a 20% increase in our financial volume, as well as notable operational and editorial results. We have been able to maintain our activities in our areas of operation, despite continuing volatile and dangerous conditions, such as the coup d'Etat in Niger in July. The latest audience surveys conducted in CAR, Mali and Niger attest to the high levels of trust that people place in the media we support. Our audiences' loyalty can be explained by both the editorial content in service of the populations concerned, and the combination of local languages, radio – which is the "mass media par excellence" – and our fast-growing digital platforms.

Our results in 2023 include: offering new programmes to support an electoral process by Studio Hirondelle in DR Congo; offering a variety of broadcast modes by sending audio files on WhatsApp in CAR; and strengthening local media in the face of authoritarian regimes in Tunisia and Myanmar. Over the past year, we have also conducted a research project on the coverage of gender-based violence in Burkina Faso and firmed up a concept note for the European Union's Community of Practice (CoP) on media involvement in mediation processes.

At institutional level, we have developed a training programme for all Fondation employees to raise awareness of abuse of power and moral and sexual harassment.

The Fondation Hirondelle Board welcomed two new members: Anna Trechsel, a producer with Swiss public radio, and Marc Hofstetter, former Deputy Executive Director of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD).

Key figures 2023

11 media operations in 11 countries,

10 million regular listeners in Africa

48 % of whom are women*

12,067 hours of audio programming

276 hours of video programming

9,419 web articles

1,475,491 website users

1,006,045 subscribers on social networks

401 media supported

2,314 people trained

^{*} Estimated audiences for Fondation Hirondelle's six programmes and media in Africa (Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, DRC, CAR and Madagascar) based on audience surveys carried out by IMMAR in 2022 and 2023, and Kantar at the end of 2020.



 $A\ Radio\ Ndeke\ Luka\ correspondent\ reporting\ from\ Obo\ in\ the\ Central\ African\ Republic.\\ @\ Gwenn\ Dubourthoumieu\ /\ Fondation\ Hirondelle.$

STRENGTHENING JOURNALISM TO COMBAT "INFORMATION BLACK HOLES"

Today, every country in the world faces the problematic spread of "information black holes", where lack of access to reliable sources of information encourages disinformation. At a time when democratic principles are being called into question in all parts of the world, censorship, threats and lack of funding are endangering independent journalism. This is all the more dramatic in crisis countries, where access to factual, verified, non-partisan information is sometimes vital for their populations. In 2023, the 296 employees of Fondation Hirondelle devoted a great deal of energy and effort to maintaining our action in central Africa and the Sahel, as well as in Madagascar, Myanmar, Tunisia and Ukraine, despite political contexts that are increasingly detrimental to the media. For the current year, our priority will be to continue our work in these countries, which are particularly affected by the scarcity of reliable sources of information; and to extend our action to new regions where this problem is also apparent, such as the coastal countries of West Africa, North Africa, the Middle East and certain countries in Southeast Asia.

MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING (MEAL)

The previously vacant post of MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning required for quality monitoring) manager was filled in August 2023. The MEAL manager has been systemising the way we collect data on our programmes and projects, and supporting country office teams to develop efficient monitoring and evaluation plans, as well as advising on and overseeing external evaluations. A key focus for her during 2023 was the development of a logframe and indicators for the organisation's new strategy. She also oversaw a capitalisation exercise carried out by external consultants, to learn from Fondation Hirondelle's experience of setting up an editorial hub to support media partners during the Covid-19 pandemic. A key part of her role going forward is to unite and strengthen the capacity of MEAL colleagues working in country offices



n 2023, political instability, escalating violence, and the rise of more authoritarian leadership contributed to a climate of fear and uncertainty, further exacerbated by inflation and economic woes. Populations in countries where we operated grappled with intensifying pressures and challenges on multiple fronts. These adversities not only impacted the lives of communities but also complicated the work of media seeking to provide accurate, impartial information.

In the Sahel, we witnessed an increasing reluctance among civil society actors and other contributors to speak out on sensitive and important issues, hindering journalists' efforts to present a balanced, nuanced picture of reality. Meanwhile, worsening security meant access to some communities became difficult. We had to find new sources of reliable information and fresh voices willing to question official narratives. Operating from exile was no less challenging for our Burmese staff, who have now spent years separated from families and friends in order to continue covering human rights abuses in Myanmar via the Doh Athan podcast.

Our online media Justice Info stayed true to its mission of shedding light on issues of justice and accountability worldwide. The team did not shy away from addressing complex, thorny topics, such as accusations of International Court of Justice inertia regarding Israel's approach to the war in Gaza, as well as under-covered stories, such as the alleged war crimes against indigenous communities and Afro-descendants in Colombia.

In a quest to engage new audiences, we experimented with formats such as Tik Tok explainers for elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Le Niger sur Kalangou, a 60-minute daily show for audiences in Niger covering news, justice, sport, health and many other themes, while celebrating the country's cultural diversity and including voices from different regions.

In recognition of the urgent need to address climate change, we expanded coverage and training initiatives, underlining the interconnected nature of climate change with a wide range

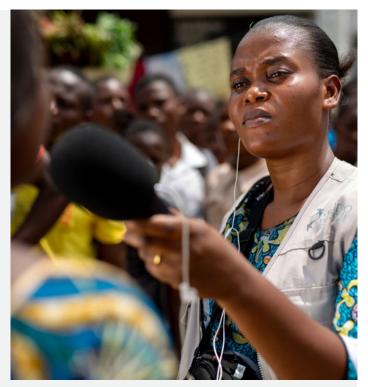
Co-productions and training are on the rise: adapting to climate change has become an editorial priority.

of topics, from politics and security to migration and health. Coverage of the COP 28 in Dubai highlighted its underperformance on issues of importance to African countries. Climate change is among a number of challenges which are shared across

borders and which can benefit from international collaboration, thus, a series of co-productions for the Sahel were produced, seeking to foster dialogue and solutions between communities and countries.

Coordinated disinformation campaigns also crossed borders, and we doubled down on efforts to monitor and address rumours and fake news, and provide dedicated debunking content, in some cases partnering with organisations specialised in disinformation monitoring.

Despite the challenging environments, we saw an increase in audiences, particularly in Niger, where a survey revealed audiences had tripled in 3 years, reaching 3.4 million people weekly. This growth can be attributed to teams' commitment to delivering high-quality, relevant content that resonated with local communities.



A journalist from Studio Hirondelle RDC reports from the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of Congo. © Gwenn Dubourthoumieu / Fondation Hirondelle.

JOURNALISM TRUST INITIATIVE, AN INTERNATIONAL MECHANISM PROMOTING TRUST IN MEDIA

To counter the rapid spread of disinformation/misinformation and the worrying decline in public trust in traditional media, more than 150 media organizations adopted the "Journalism Trust Initiative" (JTI) at the end of 2019 under the impetus of Reporters Sans Frontières This scheme provides a framework for standards and certifies media that practice professional and ethical journalism. Fondation Hirondelle, which operates in crisis situations, is fully in line with JTI's values of transparency and professionalism in editorial processes. Fondation Hirondelle has therefore been actively involved in this initiative from the outset, including the development of the JTI standard. Studio Kalangou, the Fondation's media outlet in Niger, was successfully certified in 2022.

Fondation Hirondelle is also committed to developing the "JTI Campus", a 100% online training centre. It aims to provide media with resources to support them in their self-assessment and certification process. In 2023, Fondation Hirondelle contributed to the development of five modules available in three languages (French, English, Spanish), and to raising awareness of the JTI standard among 45 media outlets. In 2024, Fondation Hirondelle aims to support three new media outlets from its network in their certification process.



n 2023, the three Fondation Hirondelle media in the Sahel -- Studio Tamani in Mali, Studio Kalangou in Niger and Studio Yafa in Burkina Faso -- continued to evolve in a media environment weakened by persistent challenges linked to security, economic fragility and press freedom.

Restriction of the space for expression: the media are struggling to find a diverse range of interlocutors.

Political instability and the security crisis in the Sahel have led to restriction of space for free expression. In the three countries where we work, these constraints affecting the media as well as civil society and citizens have complicated the media's ability to relay diverse voices and create debate on people's concerns and needs.

Following the example of Studio Kalangou in Niger, where the July 2023 coup d'Etat changed the political situation, our three studios have sought to ensure diversity of voices by going to all regions, including the most remote, and staying in touch as closely as possible with the population. They continued to provide local information, vital in this context of crisis.

Relayed by more than 202 partner radio and television stations, Fondation Hirondelle's three studios in the Sahel offered nearly 2,600 hours of audiovisual content in 2023, with a wide range of programmes in 12 languages to which over 7 million people regularly listen. The information and constructive discussions broadcast over the airwaves have become vectors of resilience and hope.

The trust rates earned by these three studios — up to 90% for Studio Kalangou and Studio Tamani, and 80% for Studio Yafa — give them great responsibilities. The studios meet these responsibilities by sticking to the facts and offering reliable information, a key factor in the fight against disinformation. In 2023, the three studios began implementing a digital editorial strategy designed to strengthen the hybridity of content distribution (both online and offline). Pilot media literacy formats and content emanating from this strategy were launched in 2024 to combat disinformation. Implementation of the Sahel editorial strategy for these three studios has led to co-productions on themes affecting all three countries, such as migration and the environment (see box). This regional dynamic will continue in 2024.

CO-PRODUCTIONS MALI-NIGER-BURKINA FASO

Given the common challenges facing Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, the media in these countries have a major responsibility in the way they handle information. This year, Fondation Hirondelle's studios in the Sahel joined forces to co-produce a series of programmes addressing shared issues. By joining forces, Studio Tamani, Studio Kalangou and Studio Yafa have been able to tackle crucial, sometimes vital issues in depth, to encourage constructive debate and promote regional, inclusive and sustainable solutions.

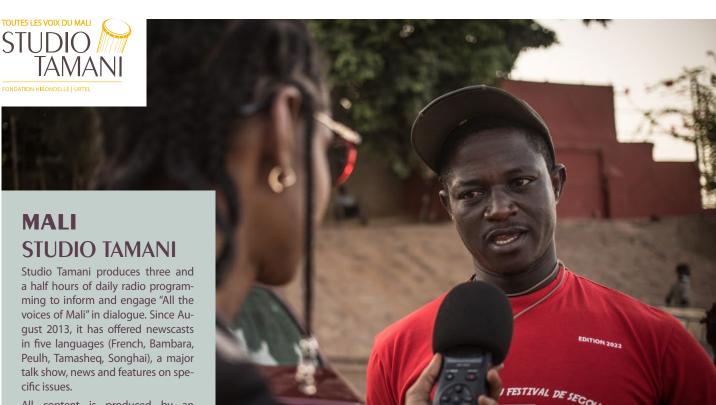
The relevance of this joint response lies in its ability to address topics of regional interest such as peace, security, migration, governance, gender equality and adaptation to climate change. The variety of formats used – roundtables, public debates, features, reports, surveys – also enables us to explore these key issues in depth, and so to contribute to the resilience of communities.

To ensure full understanding and proximity to the audience, they are available in 12 languages, including French, Bambara, Peulh/Fulfulde, Tamashek, Sonrhaï, Dioula, Gourmantché, Mooré, Haoussa and Zarma.

These co-productions now reach over 7 million people.

STRENGTHENING MEDIA TO PREVENT VIOLENT EXTREMISMT

Since November 2021, Fondation Hirondelle and the Peace and Human Rights division of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) have been working together on a training concept to support West African media in helping prevent violence. As a result, 26 journalists from seven countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Togo) have benefited from a project combining four training sessions in Ouagadougou and three editorial coaching sessions. The project, which ended in December 2023, provided participants with tools for prevention, inclusion, dialogue, balanced journalistic content and the safety of journalists and media.



A journalist from Studio Tamani interviews a former tourist guide from Segou in Mali. © Florent Vergnes / Fondation Hirondelle.

INDEPENDENT RADIO CLOSE TO THE PEOPLE, FOR COHESION IN MALI

Studio Tamani is really the best in terms of broadcasting good information. I started listening to you in Banamba in 2019. I am now a loyal listener. I listen to all your programmes morning and evening wherever I am, as well as your Grand Dialogue debate. Long may you continue!

Fofana Cheickné, writing on social networks

In 2023, Mali adopted a new constitution, but the transition initiated in 2020 by the military continues without clarity on the electoral calendar. In April 2024, the activities of political parties were suspended until further notice and the media were forbidden to report on them. The UN multidimensional integrated stabilization mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has withdrawn from the country. Insecurity and the high cost of living persist. Self-censorship is widespread in the media, for fear of arrests and bans on broadcasting. Against this backdrop of misinformation and disinformation, Studio Tamani remains today the only independent media covering the whole country, with "All the voices of Mali" taking account of its social and cultural diversity.

In 2023, Studio Tamani added to its programming a 2 \times 25-minute humanitarian magazine in French and Bambara. Its youth programme was also reformatted with original

content. Over 50 journalists and technicians were mobilized in June to cover the referendum on the new constitution. For the *Biennale artistique et culturelle* in Mopti, the editorial team produced seven special editions. There were also live broadcasts of the nine evenings of competition between regional troupes, as well as 105 reports, debates and magazines.

Broadcast of the studio's programmes extends beyond its network of 180 radio and TV partners. Studio Tamani's programmes on culture, peace and living together are also widely followed on social networks and websites.

Studio Tamani has trained 327 media professionals in crisis, humanitarian and conflict journalism, referendum coverage, community radio management and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

In 2024, Studio Tamani will give more space to culture, sport, and information on climate change. The fact-checking desk will also be strengthened, with emphasis on media education. A new digital strategy is being developed, with the possibility of broadcasting programmes on WhatsApp and offering podcasts.

All content is produced by an editorial team of 43 Malian journalists and technicians based in Bamako, and a network of 45 correspondents throughout the country. Productions are broadcast by a network of 85 radio and three television partners across Mali. The content is also published on their websites and social media, and can be listened to free of charge via a telephone service.

KEY FIGURES 2023

1,108 hours of broadcasting per year
327 media professionals trained
3.4 million weekly listeners
225,000 users on social media
86 % listener trust rate

FINANCIAL VOLUME 1,944,114 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Switzerland (SDC)
- United Kingdom (FCDO-CSSF)
- Switzerland (Project contribution)
- UNICEF
- Sweden (SIDA)
- Czech Republic (MOFA)
- Income generated
- Fondation d'Aide à l'Enfance et au Tiers-Monde
- Fondation Madeleine
- Spain (embassy)
- Danemark (FAMOC)











 $A\ journalist\ from\ Studio\ Kalangou\ reporting\ on\ the\ streets\ of\ Niamey\ in\ Niger.\ @\ Apsatou\ Bagaya\ /\ Fondation\ Hirondelle.$

TRUST AND PROXIMITY IN THE FACE OF DISINFORMATION

This programme brings about change because it encourages children to speak up and understand their rights. Young girls can now say no to forced marriage, and to any proposal from their parents that doesn't guarantee them a better future, free from violence.

Listener of Azourou radio of Tchirozerine

The military coup of July 26, 2023 in Niger led to the dissolution of the main state institutions, including suspension of the Maison de la Presse. The sanctions imposed by ECOWAS and UEMOA have had a major impact on the economy, and the country has faced an unprecedented wave of disinformation.

Against this backdrop, Studio Kalangou worked on its digital strategy to reach new audiences, increase interaction with its audience and combat disinformation. To respond to the strong growth in the use of social networks in Niger, in December Studio Kalangou developed its "WhatsApp Club", a key messaging application in this country which is often used to spread fake news. This enables us to reach a younger, urban audience, who are less regular radio listeners.

A third hour of programming called "Le Niger sur Kalangou" was launched at the start of 2023. This midday programme offers general interest and entertainment content. It has met with great success, particularly in remote areas.

Following the coup d'Etat, in 2023, Studio Kalangou received editorial coaching on journalism in crisis situations and support on the role of media in violence prevention. Support for partner media through editorial, technical and managerial training has enabled 792 journalists, technicians and media managers to be trained.

In 2024, Studio Kalangou will boost its coverage of climate issues by publishing local information geared towards solutions for vulnerable populations. In response to energy issues, Studio Kalangou has moved to solar power, and aims to support its partners in making the same transition. Studio Kalangou journalists will be trained in writing documentary series, while our media partners will receive training on running debates and forums, photojournalism, fact-checking and radio equipment maintenance.



NIGER STUDIO KALANGOU

Studio Kalangou, launched in 2016, produces three hours of daily radio programming about Niger. Today, it offers news bulletins in five languages (French, Haoussa, Zarma, Tamashek and Fulfuldé), cultural programmes, debates and magazines. Thirty journalists are in charge of these different programmes, supported by a network of some 50 correspondents in the country's eight regions. The studio's broadcasting network is made up of 52 private and community radio partners, reaching 70% of Niger's population. Studio Kalangou provides them with financial support and capacity-building in journalistic, technical and managerial fields.

KEY FIGURES 2023

980 hours of broadcasting per year

792 journalists, technicians and managers trained

3.4 million listeners per week **135,800** listeners on social networks

74 % listener trust rate

FINANCIAL VOLUME 2,241,210 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Switzerland (SDC mandate)
- UNICEF
- Germany (MOFA)
- United Kingdom (FCDO CSSF)
- Income generated
- IFPIM- International Fund for Public Interest Media
- Switzerland (SDC programme contribution)
- Germany (GIZ ProRES)
- European Union
- Czech Republic (MOFA)
- United States Embassy
- Fondation du Domaine de Villette, France & Thierry Lombard

((o)) studiokalangou.org











 $A\ journalist\ from\ Studio\ Yafa\ conducts\ an\ interview\ in\ Ouagadougou,\ Burkina\ Faso.\ ©\ Olympia\ de\ Maismont\ /\ Fondation\ Hirondelle.$

KEY FIGURES 2023

checking).

449 hours of broadcasting per year
586 media professionals trained
34 % of Burkina Faso's population reached
127,000 users on social media
80 % listener trust rate

Studio Yafa's activities are carried out in partnership with the Union Nationale de l'Audiovisuel Libre du Faso (UNALFA),

MOUSSO NEWS (online media specializing

in gender issues), and FASOCHECK (an association of journalists specializing in fact-

FINANCIAL VOLUME 2,066,955 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Sweden (ASDI contribution)
- Switzerland (SDC mandate)
- European Union
- United Kingdom (FCDO-CSSF)
- Switzerland (SDC programme contribution)
- France (Crisis and Support Centre)
- Czech Republic (MOFA)
- Income generated
- Fondation d'Aide à l'Enfance et au Tiers-Monde
- Fondation Madeleine
- Fagus lucida-Stiftung









GIVING A VOICE TO THE VULNERABLE

Studio Yafa's programs are very interesting and useful. They deal with a variety of issues, such as the promotion of our cultures, national news, health, and more.

Eric Sib Sie, listener in Gaoua

In 2023, the transitional government of Burkina Faso increased its defence budget to boost the fight against armed groups. The economic situation worsened, with an inflation rate of 14.1%, the highest in West Africa. The country has fallen to 58th place in the Reporters Sans Frontières press freedom index.

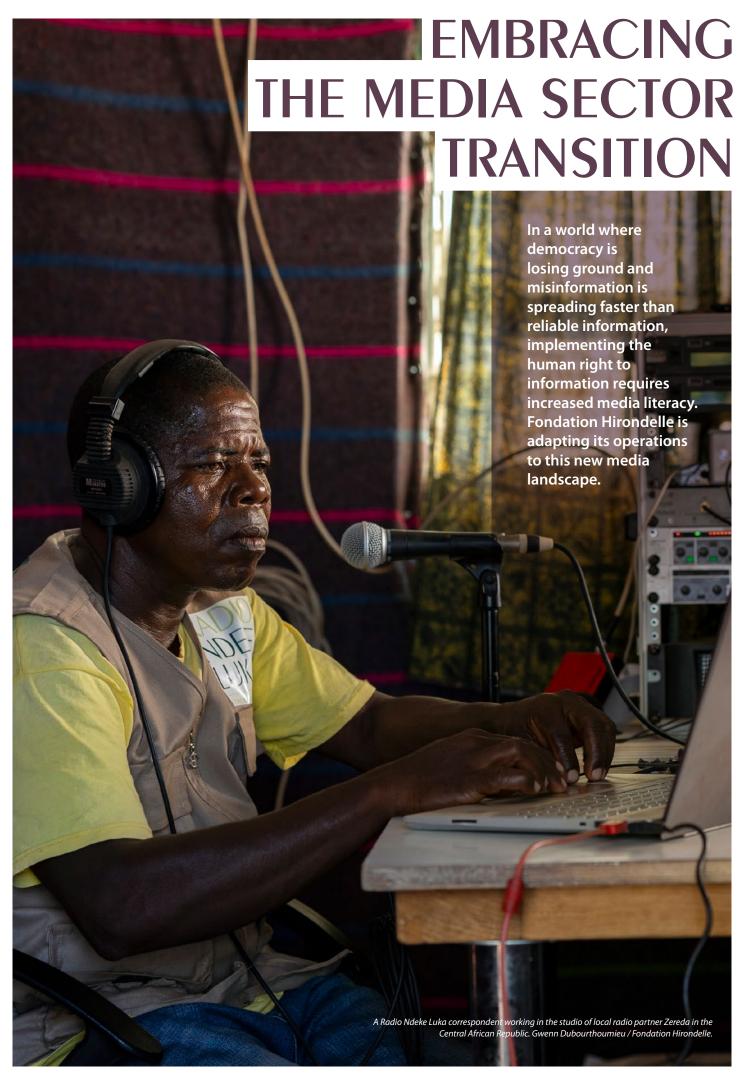
Against this backdrop, Studio Yafa aims to be at the heart of the daily lives of young people, women and the vulnerable, with a series of programmes such as

"Yafa celebrates women", "Yafa at school", "Yafa in the fields" and slots such as "Getting dengue and measles booster jabs". It has produced two television programmes: one promoting young people with socially responsible projects, in partnership with national broadcaster RTB; and one on accountability and citizen watch with BF1, the country's most-watched private channel. Five Studio Yafa articles were republished by *Courrier international*, and two were posted on the Worldcrunch platform.

Studio Yafa is seeking to increase its funding to continue its humanitarian radio programming aimed at internally displaced persons and host communities, which is unique in West Africa. Similar efforts are underway for a programme dedicated to parenthood

To deal with false information, Studio Yafa journalists have been trained in fact-checking. Training has been given to partner radio stations, as well as to women from civil society organizations, to coach them in public speaking and media techniques.

In 2024, Studio Yafa plans to set up a fact-checking unit. Media literacy initiatives will be strengthened to encourage responsible and critical use by the public of resources available online and on social networks. Journalists from the partner media will benefit from editorial courses and the creation of a unit dedicated to monitoring hate speech in the country's 13 regions.





A Radio Ndeke Luka listener keeps up to date through various social media media. Adrienne Surprenant / Collectif Item.

he media are key players in social transformation. They have a major role to play in the exercise of democracy, in crisis situations and, of course, in the ecological transition. Today's audiences expect solutions-based journalism, and the media sector is seeking to reinvent itself, if chaotically. Yet information fatigue, a crisis of confidence among citizens in their institutions, especially the media, and inequalities in the use of new technologies are increasing worldwide.

It is estimated that around 70% of the world's population lives under a regime with autocratic tendencies, and in this record election year with more than half of humanity called to the polls, this proportion could be revised upwards. In 2023, the Centre for Strategic Studies on Africa (US Department of Defence) found 189 documented disinformation campaigns on the African continent, almost four times as many as the previous year. These carefully crafted campaigns poured millions of intentionally false and misleading messages into online social spaces aimed at the continent.

Media education to help people distinguish truth from falsehood has become a necessity on a global scale.

The right to information must be considered as a collective good, necessary to any healthy society, and cannot be monetized based on numbers of views and clicks. In the digital age, governed by the "attention economy", the right to information includes not only support for independent media

and access to public information, but also good use of public information. Media education to help people distinguish truth from falsehood has become a necessity on a global scale. It is in this new media environment that Fondation Hirondelle is today adapting all its operations.

Diversification of funding sources

In the countries where we operate, the biggest challenges facing the media sector remain financial viability, political will to ensure media freedom and independence, and local ownership of media development. For almost three decades, Fondation Hirondelle has been supporting independent and public service media and contributing to their sustainable development in complex contexts. We create or support income-generating structures and activities that contribute to the sustainability of these media.

ANALYSIS OF THE MEDIA SITUATION IN BENIN

The crisis of confidence between Benin's population and its media is deep and complex. Commissioned by the Swiss Cooperation department in Benin, Fondation Hirondelle carried out an analysis of the country's media landscape in 2023.

According to this analysis, the media are often perceived as favouring certain political parties or economic interests. This polarization fuels public distrust, with many journalists regularly pointing to a lack of ethics and rigour. Fake news is widespread, further undermining public trust in traditional media. Public media have a reputation for being controlled by the government and attempts to censor and repress independent media reinforce perceptions of manipulation of information. The media also face major economic challenges, with limited resources and financial insecurity compromising their independence and ability to conduct investigative and critical journalism.

To overcome this crisis of confidence, it is essential to promote transparency, independence and ethics in the media, as well as strengthen the diversity of voices and perspectives. Fondation Hirondelle's initiatives to support and strengthen Benin's media began in 2024.

TRAINING JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA PROFESSIONALS IN BURUNDI

The Burundi media support programme, implemented in partnership with NGO Radio La Benevolencija, and funded by the European Union, ended in 2023. It benefited 10 media outlets and 3 local associations, including the Association Burundaise des Femmes Journalistes (AFJO), the Association Burundaise des Radio-diffuseurs (ABR) and YAGA (a bloggers' collective).

Assessments and exercises in capitalizing on experience have enabled us to verify results achieved, particularly in terms of building the capacity of Burundian journalists and media professionals to produce and broadcast reliable, pluralist information in a professional and inclusive manner.

END OF THE HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMME IN PAKISTAN

Fondation Hirondelle and Tribal News Network (TNN), its media partner in Pakistan, conducted the "Media to support flood response and information to affected populations in Pakistan" project, as part of the humanitarian response to flood-related emergencies. This training, coaching and content production programme, supported by H2H Network, ended in April 2023. The training courses benefited nearly 70 journalists from various types of media, mainly correspondents from the affected areas. This training was conducted in three languages: English, Urdu, and Pashto.



A Radio Ndeke Luka journalist reports from Bangui in the Central African Republic. © Gwenn Dubourthoumieu / Fondation Hirondelle.

RELIABLE INFORMATION TO SUPPORT RECONCILIATION AND RECOVERY IN CAR

Political tensions along with the economic and social crisis have continued to fuel an unstable security environment in the Central African Republic. In this fragile context, the role of independent media is essential in helping to bring about lasting peace and reconciliation at national, local and community level. Yet the Central African media sector, characterized by its technical and economic fragility, is highly exposed to the risk of manipulation for geopolitical reasons, and to the wave of disinformation facing the country.

I really liked the on-air coverage throughout the day. It was very professional. Keep training talented and professional journalists, so that we can all enjoy listening to local and national radio!

Chevignon Wayne Gueret, listener in Bangui, on RNL's coverage of July 30 referendum vote

Faced with these complex challenges, Radio Ndeke Luka (RNL) and its radio partners have developed a programme of information and dialogue, taking the changing political and security context into account as well as the population's needs for reconciliation and recovery. RNL has promoted local information, given communities a voice, and covered the link between decisions taken in Bangui and their effects in the regions. Topics covered have included issues of national importance (reconciliation process, sustainable peace) and the day-to-day concerns of Central Africans (access to basic social services, mobility, specific problems of minorities).

RNL broadcasts on 100.9 FM from its transmitters in Bangui, Bambari, Bangassou, Beloko, Berberati, Birao, Bossangoa, Bouar, Bozoum, Bria, Mobaye, Ndele and Obo. Its presence on Canal Satellite Afrique gives it national coverage. The radio can also be streamed from its website.

Editorial and technical teams and managers from RNL and partner radio stations received training throughout the year: 70% of managers have received training in managerial and leadership skills and 85% of correspondents have benefited from ongoing training.

2024 will see implementation of educational strategies to combat disinformation and hate messages, through community awareness-raising sessions and interventions at schools in Bangui and provincial towns, as well as on radio and social networks.

Radio Ndeke Luka, created in 2000 by Fondation Hirondelle, is the most listened-to radio station in the Central African Republic. It broadcasts live 24/7 in French and Sango via a dozen FM transmitters, and collaborates with some 20 community radio stations. It is also present on Canal+ Afrique and social networks.

Over nearly 25 years, Radio Ndeke Luka has built itself up as a public service institution, helping to solve vital, everyday problems in a country facing crises and governance challenges. With a team of around 100 employees, it produces and broadcasts a variety of content, including 13 daily newscasts, debates, educational programmes, entertainment, music and features.

KEY FIGURES 2023

8,760 hours of broadcasting per year
125 media professionals trained
2.4 million listeners (2022)
53,000 users on social media
78 % listener trust rate

FINANCIAL VOLUME 3,276,715 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- European Union
- Switzerland (Project contribution)
- Switzerland (SDC Programme contribution)
- Income generated
- UNICEF
- Hirondelle USA

((O)) radiondekeluka.org









A journalist reporting from Kasai, a province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, for Studio Hirondelle RDC. © Gwenn Dubourthoumieu / Fondation Hirondelle.

COMMITTED CITIZEN MEDIA TO STRENGTHEN DEMOCRATIC CULTURE AND FIGHT MISINFORMATIONN

Even though I'm not old enough to vote, I've managed to understand the rationale behind elections and how they work. I'm way ahead of the students at my school.

Eric Amboka, schoolbov listener to Radio Mwana in Mbandaka

The year in the DRC was marked by presidential and legislative elections. Fighting with the M23 armed group intensified in the east of the country, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to move and exacerbating community tensions. Against this backdrop, the Congolese media, already weakened by a lack of resources, were particularly exposed to the risk of manipulation, especially given the growing challenges of misinformation on social networks.

Between October and December 2023, Studio Hirondelle DRC produced 10 features, two studio debates and two public debates in five languages (French, Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba, Swahili). These programmes addressed the main electoral issues at national and local level, including public policy analysis and the civic and political engagement of young people.

Studio Hirondelle DRC broadcast its programmes via its network of 124 community radio stations and 23 television partners, present throughout the country. In 2023, the studio developed new digital formats for broadcast on social networks, notably Facebook and YouTube, but also aimed at a younger audience on TikTok and Instagram.

In Kinshasa, Kananga, Goma and Mbandaka, media partners have benefited from editorial and technical training, as well as courses focusing on the challenges of managing a community radio station. Studio Hirondelle DRC's editorial team received support to refine its digital strategy. The team took part in a workshop on journalism for solutions applied to the environment and climate change.

In 2024, Studio Hirondelle RDC will partner with Debunk, an independent organization specializing in the analysis of dis/misinformation, to help the Congolese media deal with online hate speech. Media education programmes will be produced to develop citizens' skills in the critical use of different sources of information. Training for trainers will be organized, with a view to setting up a team of Congolese trainers.

Studio Hirondelle DRC is a Fondation Hirondelle project in the Democratic Republic of Congo, working since 2014. Via professional, committed media, it aims to help consolidate democracy in the country through better involvement of Congolese citizens, particularly women and young people.

Its programmes place people at the centre, providing them with reliable, independent information, and getting their voices better heard through strengthened local media. From September 2023, its work focused primarily on the various electoral events that took place in December

KEY FIGURES 2023

22 hours of broadcasting 124 radios and 23 TV partners 28 000 social network users 48 media professionals trained

FINANCIAL VOLUME 570,303 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- European Union
- Switzerland (SDC Programme contribution)
- Income generated

















Thanks to this

training, our journalist

has acquired many new

journalistic techniques,

which we will use in our

Director of Radio Sufetula

radio station and our

programmes.

Tarek Benhmissi,

in Sheïtla

Two journalists conducting an interview in the streets of Kef, Tunisia. © Lotfi Rahmouni / Fondation Hirondelle.

OPENING UP PUBLIC SPACE AND ENCOURAGING DIALOGUE

Tunisia's political transformation since 2011 continues to confront the country with structural difficulties. In response to this crisis, the nation's President has taken drastic and controversial measures, including the introduction of a new constitution in 2023. On the economic front, the country's financial situation has deteriorated sharply. Against this tense backdrop, the number of illegal migrants seeking to reach Europe has reached record levels, social protest has grown and human rights abuses have risen sharply.

Faced with this reality, Fondation Hirondelle has supported the creation of a network of 19 journalists, nearly 80% of whom are women, with an average age of between 25 and 35. Trained and coached in local governance issues, this

network representing 14 local and regional media, has produced over 270 pieces of journalistic content since 2021, including 232 video reports. This content has covered public policy issues such as the difficulties of accessing local governance structures or the lack of employment opportunities for young people.

The journalistic contents were broadcast by the network's media outlets, on their airwaves and online platforms, as well as on a dedicated Facebook page, giving them greater visibility.

The network's journalists have received ongoing training, particularly in mobile journalism, and elected representatives and local authorities have received training to enable them to speak clearly to the media and organise press conferences.

In 2024, the network of journalists and media partners will be expanded, with a target of 20 to 25 new media including web radios and bloggers. Journalists will be encouraged to focus on issues facing vulnerable communities, and a fact-checking component will be included.

Since 2020, Fondation Hirondelle has been implementing the media component of the PACT (Participation Active des Citoyennes et Citoyens Tunisiens) programme, in consortium with the Danish organization NIRAS. The aim of this project is to expand civic space and encourage dialogue between governments and citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, in order to achieve real co-construction of public action in the High Steppes region (governorates of Gafsa, Kairouan, Kasserine, Kef. Sidi Bouzid and Siliana).

Phase 2 of the project began in May 2023. Fondation Hirondelle is continuing to support local media as players in good governance and sustainable development on a local scale.

KEY FIGURES 2023

14 media partners 19 media professionals trained 5,500 users on social media

FINANCIAL VOLUME 115,636 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

 Switzerland (SDC mandate) via NIRAS







Correspondents from Studio Sifaka, Fondation Hirondelle's partner in Madagascar, receive journalism training. © lako Randrianariyelo / Fondation Hirondelle.

PROMOTING THE VOICE OF YOUTH FOR AN INCLUSIVE AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

I find Studio Sifaka's programmes very interesting. You cover almost every theme of interest to young people. My favourite programme is Ketrika Sy Kadra, where we can hear different business ideas and testimonials from young start-ups.

Christian Rakotomanga, listener in Antsirabe Madagascar is an extremely poor country, with 75% of the population living on less than \$2 a day, and a human capital index among the lowest in the world. It is also a young country, with 60% of the population under 25. Among those aged 15 to 24, 70% are illiterate, mainly in rural areas. The country's young population represents an opportunity for development, but also a huge challenge in terms of education, training, employability, health and civic engagement, particularly in 2023, the year of the presidential election.

To meet these challenges, in 2023 Studio Sifaka continued to produce two hours of daily radio programmes: news bulletins; features on a range of issues like health, the economy, sport and culture; reports and debates. The "Young People's Debate", produced and broadcast three times a week, focused on issues of democratic process. It enabled young people to obtain key information on, for example, the progress of the presidential election and the candidates' programmes

The network of broadcasting partners expanded in 2023, from 40 to 50 radios, covering 22 out of 23 regions and almost 63% of the population. Collaboration with the social enterprise Viamo has made it possible to broadcast some of the content chosen by the editorial team on a free telephone number available nationwide.

Studio Sifaka has been strengthened both organizationally (training in management and project management) and editorially (coaching in the basics of journalism, how to lead a debate, how to present a news bulletin), as well as through the development of its listener clubs, now numbering 25.

In 2024, Studio Sifaka will continue to produce radio programming with a view to strengthening the role of young people in Madagascar's political and decision-making processes. This will include local and national news, programmes on training and employment issues, health, environmental issues and good citizenship education, with an increased number of text versions for the Web and social networks.

cans. Since July 2021, Studio Sifaka has become an independent NGO pursuing its commitment to helping better access to news.

The project provides daily pro-

The project provides daily programming unique in Madagascar, lasting two hours and broadcast by a nationwide network of 50 radio partners. It includes a national and regional news bulletin, as well as features and programmes offering advice (on health, employment, the environment, etc.), dialogue, music and Malagasy culture. The content is produced by a group of young Malagasy journalists, editors, presenters and technicians. Productions are also shared on the studio's website and social networks.

KEY FIGURES 2023

730 hours of broadcasting per year69 media professionals trained50 radio partners94 000 users on social media

FINANCIAL VOLUME

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Switzerland (SDC Programme contribution)
- European Union
- FEDEVACO

435,121 CHF

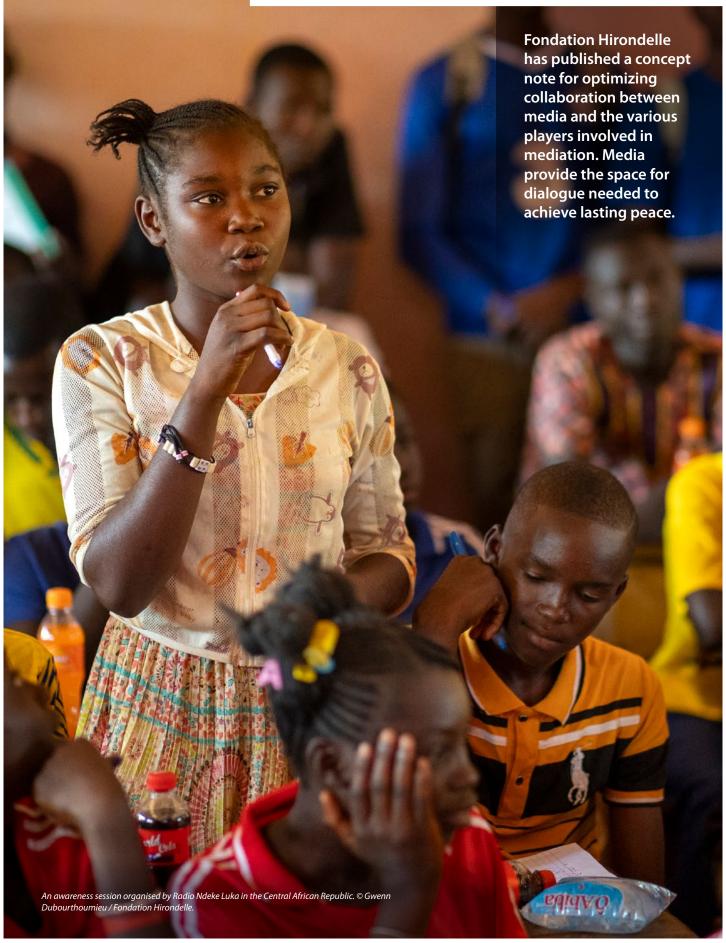








MEDIA CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE EFFORTS Fondation Hirondelle has published a concept





An awareness session organised by Radio Ndeke Luka on the dangers of rumours and disinformation in Boali, Central African Republic. © Gwenn Dubourthoumieu / Fondation Hirondelle.

ondation Hirondelle has been active for 30 years in conflict and post-conflict contexts, which implies covering both formal and informal mediation processes, whether driven by the international community or local players. In its broadest sense, mediation encompasses both the assistance of a third party in negotiations between two conflicting parties, and the facilitation of dialogue towards a new social contract. Media, according to the etymology of the word, are intermediaries. They link different realities, points of view and human groups in order to share perceptions and knowledge about the causes and consequences of violence and conflict. The way in which the media cover mediation processes therefore widely determines the chances that mediation will take place, lead to peace agreements and have lasting effects.

Fondation
Hirondelle
initiated in 2023
a reflection
to optimize
collaboration
between
journalists and
various actors
in mediation
processes.

However, the quality of information provided by the media to local populations most directly concerned is often undermined by media fragility and polarization, misinformation on social networks and the lack of exchange between the media and actors supporting these processes. Furthermore, the very nature of mediation, namely the principle of confidentiality, constrains or slows down information sharing with the public. Similarly, the different types of peace process (ranging from ceasefire agreements to the definition of a new social contract) influence the possible involvement of the media.

Fondation Hirondelle has been active since 2018 in the European consortium ERMES (European Resources for Mediation Support) with other organizations active in mediation processes. We initiated in 2023 a reflection with several NGOs on "Media and Mediation" to optimize collaboration between journalists and various actors in mediation processes. Discussions on a pilot implementation project are underway with several donors involved in mediation issues.

GIVING LOCAL POPULATIONS A VOICE IN PEACE PROCESSES

Studio Kalangou covered in 2023 the process led by national, traditional and religious authorities and representatives of civil society in the Tillabéri region, northwest of Niamey, to bring peace between communities. Pressure from terrorist groups and limited access to resources had exacerbated existing tensions between rival communities, leading to instability in the region. Studio Kalangou produced a video in the Tondikiwindi locality, which was then posted on social networks.

In November, the editorial team followed up. A radio feature looked at the impact of the peace agreement by giving a voice to people from different communities, so that they could express their feelings on what the peace process had changed for them.

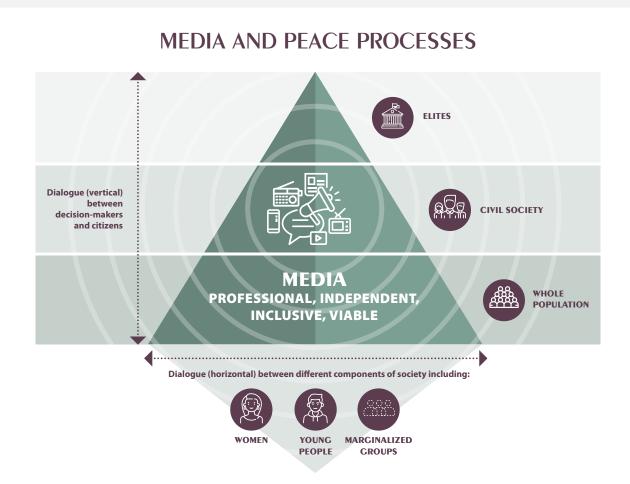


A video report by Studio Kalangou on the peace agreement signed by the communities in June 2023, is available on YouTube "Signature accord de paix à Tondikiwindi".

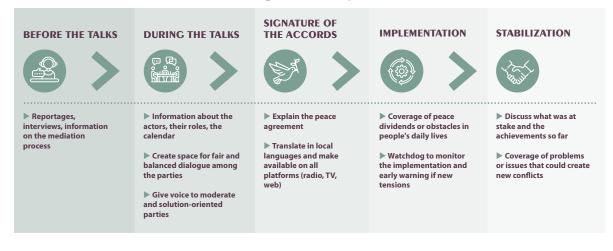
MEDIA AND MEDIATION CONCEPT NOTE

The Fondation has summarized recommendations in a concept note to ensure that media involvement in mediation processes is qualitative, more systematic, and maximizes their contribution to peace efforts. They include:

- Strengthen the inclusiveness and access of all populations concerned to information on the mediation process, in their local language(s) and through appropriate technologies (taking into account the digital divide and the "leave no one behind" principle);
- Encourage the establishment of partnerships between mediation protagonists and the media, upstream of the process;
- Support the media so that they can provide in-depth, ongoing coverage of these processes;
- Strengthen media capacities well in advance of mediation processes;
- Strengthen psychosocial support for mediators and for journalists covering mediation processes;
- Train mediators in media issues;
- Strengthen media and information literacy among the general population.



The media's role in different stages of the process





A displaced person listens to the radio in a temporary shelter in Danai, Kachin State, Myanmar. @ Ye Aung THU / AFP.

ESSENTIAL COVERAGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN MYANMAR

Myanmar's fragile democratic experiment was shattered by a military coup in February 2021. Since then, over 26,000 people have been arrested by the junta and more than 4,700 killed. Armed resistance has spread throughout the country, displacing over 2 million people. Journalists are at great risk inside the country. The public has become more reluctant to talk to the media.

Against this difficult backdrop, in 2023 Doh Athan produced human rights podcasts not only in Burmese, but now also in English. The team regularly produces and publishes videos in both languages. 'Doh Athan Doh Talk', a discussion podcast with experts, academics and activists We make our voices heard, and so does Doh Athan. We're not a media company, so we can't produce a good podcast, but we feel that Doh Athan does that for us.

Nang Moet Moet, General Secretary of the Women's League of Burma

was launched. Its aim is to offer the Burmese public balanced debates on human rights issues, more in-depth and with more analysis than can be provided in other programmes. Doh Athan has also produced special reports (interviews, mini-videos, etc.) to mark certain dates, such as Human Rights Day, six years after the atrocities committed against the Rohingya and their exodus to Bangladesh.

Podcasts and videos are broadcast on social networks (Facebook, YouTube, Soundcloud, Spotify) as well as on partner websites and social media. The number of subscribers on Facebook and YouTube more than doubled in 2023. Podcasts are also broadcast on shortwave and FM by our partner Voice of America.

In 2023, Doh Athan worked with five local media partners and six freelancers, supporting them in their reporting and paying them for their work. This helps support Myanmar's media, improve their skills and offer the public reports from different parts of the country. Webinars on human rights and discrimination have also been organized with these partners.

KEY FIGURES 2023

relocated to Thailand.

Myanmar.

55 podcasts in Burmese, 31 in English

15 hours of broadcasts

+ 123,000 social network users

Frontier Myanmar is an award-winning news website on Myanmar. It

was one of the first media outlets

to develop a paid membership model, working towards financial

sustainability and building com-

munity with the public. Following

the 2021 coup, most Frontier My-

anmar and Doh Athan staff were

17 media professionals trained

FINANCIAL VOLUME 239,946 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Switzerland (SDC Programme contribution)
- UNDP
- Fondation Alfred et Eugénie Baur
- Büchi Foundation
- Temperatio-Stiftung













In Lviv, during a bomb alert, residents hide in the catacombs of a church. @ Lâm Duc Hiên / Agence VU' for Fondation

HELPING UKRAINIAN MEDIA SURVIVE AND COPE WITH WAR

There has been a big learning curve. We now master new editorial approaches, particularly digital, which has enabled us to continue working and providing independent information to our audiences in the territories occupied by the Russian army.

Igor Novikov, journalist with Visti Snigurivshchyny (Snihourivka)

The Russian invasion of February 24, 2022 resulted in a takeover of the Ukrainian media in the occupied zones. By the end of 2023, eleven journalists had been killed in the course of their work on Ukrainian soil. And many others, in Russian-controlled territories and on the frontline, are under serious threat. Helping these media survive by adapting to the constraints of war remains a priority.

All Fondation Hirondelle's activities in Ukraine are geared towards meeting the concrete needs of our partner media. In most cases, they have had to relocate their newsrooms, but have been able to recover their work tools and resume their activities. The project's strength lies in its flexibility, individual

approach and responsiveness. This has led to the development of websites and Telegram channels for print media, training courses on media management in crisis situations, how to use open-source data, and the training of new journalists freshly hired by our partner media.

Emphasis has also been placed on coverage of war crimes trials, for which a network of Ukrainian journalists has been set up and supported. One of the most notable advances has been giving more voice to the defence, which was previously inaudible.

Over the course of these activities, a strong professional bond has been forged between the 18 Ukrainian media partners in the project. While many of the managers and journalists already knew each other, their relationships have grown stronger, leading to content sharing between several platforms, and even to some co-productions.

In 2024, editorial work on war crimes trials will be continued with them, as will training to improve their physical and digital safety. Psychological support, set up with Reporters Sans Frontières, will also be provided.

UKRAINE **SUPPORTING MEDIA RESILIENCE**

Since April 2022, Fondation Hirondelle, with its local partner the International Institute of Regional Media and Information (IRMI), has been implementing a multi-faceted project to support the Ukrainian media. The aim is to provide the population of the occupied territories and internally displaced people (east and southeast) with access to reliable news on issues of public, humanitarian and social interest, as well as justice-oriented content on war crimes.

The editorial, managerial and financial strengthening of 18 local media outlets is at the heart of a mentoring programme rooted in our partners' realities, enabling us to continuously assess and respond to the priority needs of journalists and media managers, with one essential goal in mind: to help them survive, by adapting their mission of providing information to the existential constraints of war.

KEY FIGURES 2023

18 media partners 96 content elements on war crimes trials

134 media professionals trained

FINANCIAL VOLUME 1,133,251 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Swiss Solidarity
- Fondazione aiuto alla cooperazione e allo sviluppo
- Fondation genevoise de bienfaisance « Valeria Rossi di Montelera »
- Fondation Philanthropique Famille Sandoz
- Switzerland (SDC Programme contribution)
- Private donations







Illustration for Justice Info's special report on "the disappeared who will never be forgotten" © Marina Margarina for Justice Info.

COMPLEXITY AND EVOLUTION OF JUSTICE IN THE FACE OF MASS VIOLENCE

The world is witnessing a shift towards use of transitional justice in the West, whereas it had tended to be confined to the "global South". This shift is due notably to the emergence of demands from indigenous peoples, collective awareness of environmental rights, the resurgence of issues concerning the colonial past, and the growing importance of universal jurisdiction.

Justice Info coverage in 2023 was marked by several initiatives, such as a special issue devoted to "enforced disappearances". The trial in Guinea of the September 28, 2009 massacre, which is closely followed in that country, received particular attention, as did the historic Swedish trial of two Lundin oil company executives for complicity in war crimes. Justice Info also continued its coverage of

Justice Info allows me to explore issues that are rarely addressed by the media in my country, which are obsessed with immediacy and headlines. I can relate the expectations of victims, tackle complex issues and reflect on the legitimacy of justice.

Andrés Bermúdez Liévano, Justice Info correspondent in Colombia

the vast transitional justice process in Colombia. In Ukraine, we continued to monitor war-related trials. Unprecedented coverage was set up to report on trials taking place in occupied territories or in Russia. The end of the year was marked by intense activity at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, notably on Palestine.

Consolidating an audience of 500,000 web users and 130,000 on social networks was a priority for Justice Info. Traffic is now of better quality and more stable, thanks to human investment in search engine optimisation (SEO), publishing methods and our archives.

In 2023, the first meeting of Justice Info correspondents was held. Around ten international journalists met in Geneva for editorial exchanges. Justice Info has trained 38 Ukrainian journalists to cover war crimes trials.

In the coming months, there are plans to produce major investigative reports in partnership with other media. The editorial team plans to launch a series of reports on Palestine. Justice Info will also be involved in covering a trial in Paris of personalities close to the Syrian regime. Finally, Justice Info plans to hold annual meetings of its correspondents in order to develop a collective strategy and capitalise on its diverse network.

KEY FIGURES 2023

the face of mass violence.

456 articles published 38 correspondents trained around the world **500,000** web users 130,000 social network users

commissions, reparations, remembrance, reconciliation and universal

The role of Justice Info is to make

these processes accessible, to democratize transitional justice,

make it understandable, and

enable dialogue between its actors

and those it should serve. Over

200 articles are produced each

year by some 30 correspondents

plus experts around the world,

providing a unique source of

reports and debates on the

experience of human societies in

jurisdiction.

FINANCIAL VOLUME 473,571 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Switzerland (SDC Programme contribution)
- Fondation Isocrate
- Anonymous foundation
- Private donations

justiceinfo.net

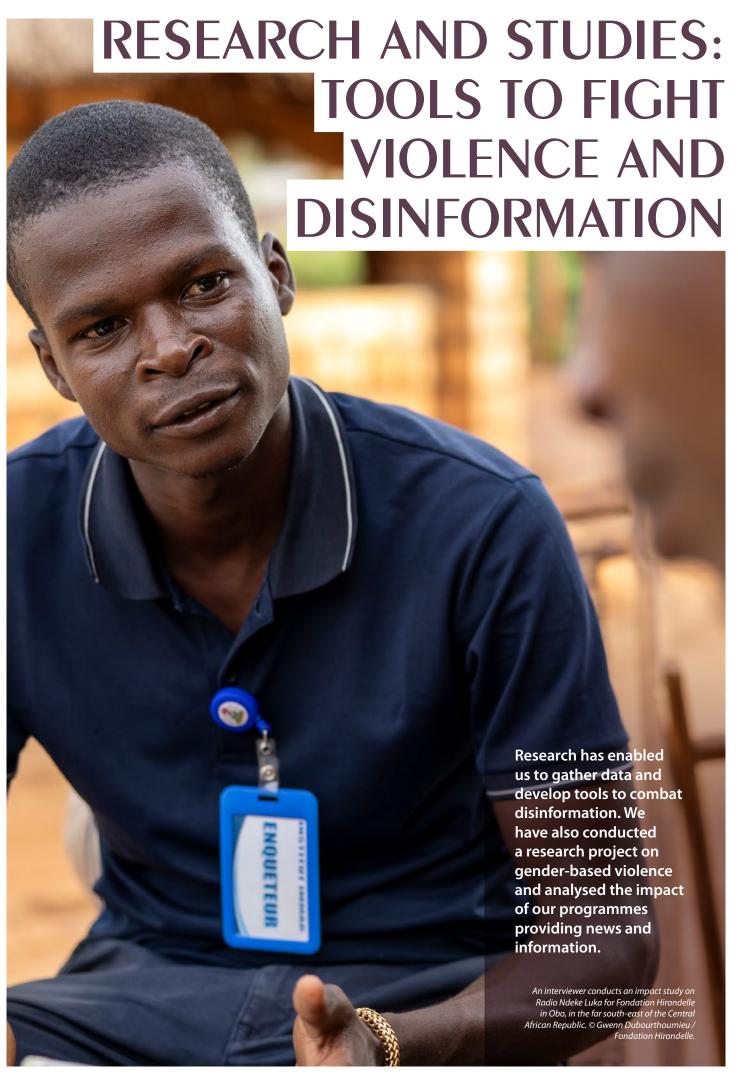














An interviewer conducts an impact study on Radio Ndeke Luka for Fondation Hirondelle in Obo, in the far south-east of the Central African Republic. © Gwenn Dubourthoumieu / Fondation Hirondelle.

ondation Hirondelle aims to be a learning organization, adapting and improving its activities in the light of objective information. For more than a decade, we have been working closely with the academic world to measure the impact of our action and adapt our information programmes as much as possible to people's needs. In 2023, our Media Research and Policy department carried out research projects and held various panels focusing on the themes of violence and disinformation.

in Burkina Faso hiahliahted how traumatic it can be for journalists themselves to cover these situations of violence.

A research project Our journalists and partner media journalists are confronted with violence on a daily basis. In 15 years, the Sahel has seen a 2.000% increase in the number of deaths of civilians and soldiers. In 2023, almost half the attacks listed by the Global Terrorism Index worldwide took place in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. This violence generates massive humanitarian crises and an increase in displacement due to instability. Burkina Faso is facing one of the largest internal

displacement crises in Africa. The vast majority of displaced persons are women and children under the age of 15. These people have an increased need for protection against genderbased violence (GBV) and associated psychological trauma.

In 2023, we conducted a research project in Burkina Faso, aimed at strengthening the capacity of journalists to respond to the information needs of survivors of gender-based violence. This included raising journalists' awareness of how their own prejudices and working context influence their ability to deal with gender-based relations of domination, and to manage trauma in their interactions with victims. The study also highlighted how traumatic it can be for journalists themselves to cover these situations of violence. Trauma management by journalists will be at the heart of the follow-up we want to give to this project in 2024.

We carried out this project with a multidisciplinary team of international researchers from the University of Sheffield and Harvard Medical School & School of Public Health, as well as with experts based in Burkina Faso, at Thomas Sankara University, the NGO Pull for Progress and our Studio Yafa journalists.

The research project was divided into three phases:

- 1. Group discussions and individual interviews with journalists in the capital, rural areas and "red zones" affected by the conflict;
- 2. A detailed content analysis of a year of programmes produced by Studio Yafa, including topics and formats, women's participation and interactions between men and women;
- 3. Training for journalists in trauma management and gender mainstreaming, and drafting recommendations with journalists.

IMPACT STUDY IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

In 2023, as part of Geneva Peace Week, we co-organised a panel with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Interpeace and BBC Media Action to discuss evidence of the effectiveness of anti-disinformation programmes. On this occasion, we shared the initial results of a study measuring the impact of Radio Ndeke Luka (RNL), Fondation Hirondelle's media outlet in the Central African Republic, before and after its launch in border areas. Initial results show that access to RNL, following the installation of new radio antennas, has had a tangible impact: in particular, there has been a change in listeners' perceptions of disinformation. The final results for all the localities covered by the study will be available in 2024.



Radio Ndeke Luka listener is interviewed during a report from Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic. © Gwenn Dubourthoumieu / Fondation Hirondelle.



Interview with a market gardener in Niger by a journalist from Studio Kalangou.

© Apsatou Bagaya / Fondation Hirondelle.

INCLUSION AND VISIBILITY OF FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA

English is the dominant language at international events. Without a common language, knowledge sharing and collaboration would be impossible, but the near-exclusive use of English has an undeniable impact on geographical representativeness. Representatives from French-speaking Africa are often absent from international media exchanges. With over 10 million daily listeners in Africa, Fondation Hirondelle strives to ensure media visibility in the Sahel and central Africa through its research partnerships and events. In 2023, Fondation Hirondelle ensured that several African experts committed to strengthening the media came to speak at the Forum Media and Development (FOME) in Bonn and at the conference of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) in Lyon.



ithin the Agenda 2030 framework, support for independent media and press freedom are prerequisites for achieving several sustainable development goals. Among these, Goal 16 focuses on just, peaceful and democratic societies. For almost 30 years, Fondation Hirondelle has been asserting through its action in the field that media are, like health and education, a priority sector to support. General awareness has grown in recent years on the importance of reliable, credible information. Research findings and the sometimes painful experience of media weakening, particularly in the West, show that when the media fail to play their role, democracy goes wrong.

Our advocacy work takes the form of publications, position papers and presentations at international media conferences. In 2023, Fondation Hirondelle continued its advocacy work with Swiss, European and UN bodies, in the form of publications, position papers, regular exchanges and presentations at 20 international media conferences. This cross-functional work, led by the Head of Research and Policy, the Head of External Relations and the Representative to the European Union in

Brussels, was translated during the year into specific objectives for the next strategic period 2025-2028.

Together with the Swiss Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, we organized during Geneva Peace Week a high-level panel on the spread of disinformation in the Sahel. Three Special Representatives for the Sahel (Switzerland, European Union, Spain which was at the time holding the presidency of the European Union), a Geneva-based Togolese researcher and a journalist from Studio Tamani in Mali discussed non-military solutions to the ongoing crisis in the region. The presence of senior African officials in the room added to the debates.

INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATORY ON INFORMATION AND DEMOCRACY

In October 2023, the International Observatory on Information and Democracy officially launched its first work cycle at the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Kyoto, Japan. As part of this, the Observatory opened a call for experts and researchers from academia or civil society who had produced relevant research work on priority topics (Al, data governance, media in the digital age). Our Head of Research and Policy was selected and will bring perspective on the media landscape from the fragile countries where we work. Scheduled for release at the end of 2024, this first report aims to provide a comprehensive synthesis of international academic research on crucial issues at the intersection of information and democracy.



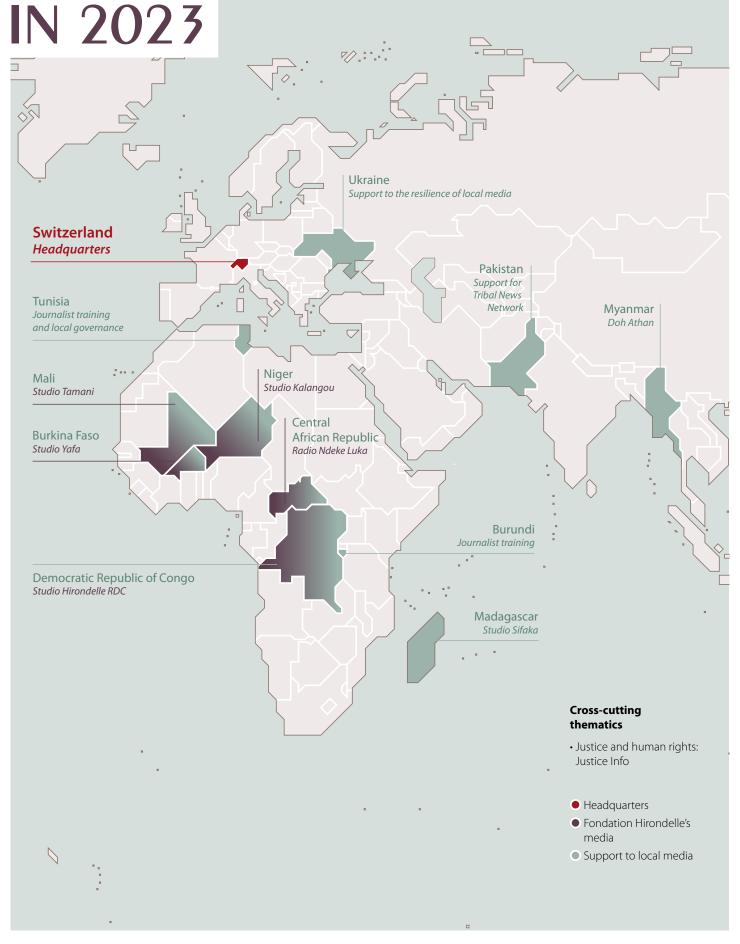
A journalist from Studio Kalangou, the Fondation Hirondelle media in Niger, at the EU-NGO Forum on Human Rights. © Daphne Matthys.

With the European Union, we shared several concept notes on the importance of media in crisis zones, particularly in the Sahel which has seen regime changes and shrinking freedoms. We joined the European NGO networks for democracy (TED Network) in May and for human rights (HRDN) in September. Two of our "Youth" journalists from Madagascar and Niger visited Brussels as part of the EU NGO Forum devoted to youth. They shared their experiences and expertise on the information needs of young people, their vulnerability to disinformation and the growing need for media literacy.

As an active member of the Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD), we lobbied major donors to increase the percentage they allocate for supporting the media sector. This percentage (0.3% of total development aid) has remained unchanged for 10 years. We also took part in a public consultation initiated by the OECD on draft principles for relevant and effective support of media and information space. We stressed the importance of maintaining, and even increasing, support for independent media, as well as the need to improve aid coordination and investment in knowledge, research and learning.

The two issues of our biannual "Mediation" newsletter were devoted to the links between "media and democracy" and "media and transitional justice". Among other things, these two publications highlighted the work of Radio Ndeke Luka, the leading radio station in the Central African Republic, and the work of Justice Info, our online website covering international justice initiatives.

FONDATION HIRONDELLE OPERATIONS



ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

GENERAL FINANCIAL SITUATION

Fondation Hirondelle saw its volume rise by 20% compared with 2022, with a total realized volume of CHF 14.8 million. This growth can be explained by an increase in our activities in Burkina Faso, Niger, CAR and Ukraine, despite complicated external factors such as the growing insecurity in the Sahel.

Fondation Hirondelle achieved a positive result of CHF 85,404, which is lower than for 2022. This result will nevertheless enable us to strengthen the organization by boosting its equity base.

Almost 90% of the Fondation's expenditure is allocated to our projects in the field. Management and administration costs (Finance, HR, IT) account for 9% of expenses, while communication and fundraising costs represent 1.5%. All the 2023 accounts and expenditure indicators are presented in accordance with Zewo standards, for which Fondation Hirondelle has been certified since 2019.

An independent auditor has certified that the financial statements summarized below give a true and fair view of Fondation Hirondelle's financial position. A full report of the 2023 financial statements is available on our website www.hirondelle. org.

HUMAN RESOURCES

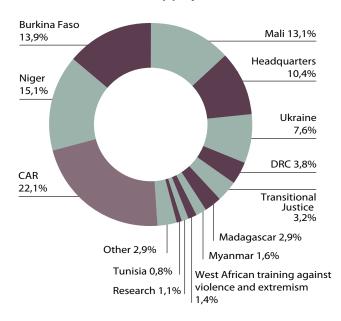
We conduct our work with a team of 296 professionals worldwide (as at December 31, 2023). Fondation Hirondelle has 257 national staff in the countries where we operate. The number of expatriate staff in the field was 10 at the end of 2023. There were 29 positions in Switzerland, including apprentices and trainees, corresponding to a full-time equivalent (FTE) of 19 at the end of 2023.

In addition to these employees, we have a large team of correspondents and freelancers who enable us to work staying as close as possible to our beneficiaries in the countries where we operate. We also regularly call on training experts to strengthen the capacity of our team partners.

PROJECT EXPENDITURE

Projets 2023	en CHF
CAR	3 276 715
Niger	2 241 210
Burkina Faso	2 066 954
Mali	1 944 114
Headquarters	1 540 738
Ukraine	1 133 250
DRC	570 302
Transitional Justice	473 570
Madagascar	435 120
Myanmar	239 946
West African training against violence and extremism	200 887
Research	156 841
Tunisia	115 636
Editorial innovation	113 703
New projects	104 079
Miscellaneous projects	71 733
Pakistan	50 841
Burundi	47 082
MEAL	40 085
Benin	9 441
TOTAL 14	832 256

Distribution by projects



FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Sources of revenue	in CHF	in %		
Public funding				
Switzerland				
Partnership contract SDC	3 444 175	22,9%		
FDFA, Peace and Human Rights division	220 977	1,5%		
FEDEVACO	70 320	0,5%		
SDC Mandate and project contribution	2 330 312	15,5%		
Other				
United Nations agencies (UNICEF, UNPD)	949 293	6,3%		
Germany (GIZ + MoFA)	480 979	3,2%		
Denmark (FAMOC)	-8 292	-0,1%		
European Commission	3 455 373	23,0%		
Spain (embassy)	10 159	0,1%		
United States (embassy)	23 805	0,2%		
France (Crisis and support Centre)	40 490	0,3%		
Czech republic (MoFA)	77 426	0,5%		
United Kingdom (FCDO-UKCSS, H2H Network)	718 349	4,8%		
Sweden (SIDA)	906 602	6,0%		
	12 719 970	84,6%		
Private funding				
Switzerland				
Swiss Solidarity	883 168	5,9%		
Private Donors	38 055	0,3%		
Private Foundations	665 256	4,4%		
Loterie Romande	30 000	0,2%		
RTS Partnership	75 000	0,5%		
Other				
Other donors	137 381	0,9%		
IFPIM	136 374	0,9%		
	1 965 234	13,1%		
Other products				
Income from services and sales	350 859	2,3%		
	350 859	2,3%		
TOTAL INCOME	15 036 063			

FOUNDATIONS & CORPORATE DONORS

We wish to thank the following for their support in 2022: Büchi Foundation, Däster-Schild Stiftung, Domaine Public, Fagus lucida-Stiftung, Fondazione aiuto alla cooperazione e allo sviluppo, Fondation Alfred et Eugénie Baur, Fondation d'Aide à l'Enfance et au Tiers-Monde, Fondation d'aide sociale et culturelle du Canton de Vaud, Fondation du Domaine de Villette, France & Thierry Lombard, Fondation genevoise de bienfaisance «Valeria Rossi di Montelera», la Fondation Internationale Prix Balzan, Fondation Isocrate, Fondation Madeleine, Fondation Philanthropique Famille Sandoz, Fondation Philanthropique Takoha E&D Wanner, Karl Popper Foundation, Temperatio Stiftung, anonymous foundation and individual donors.

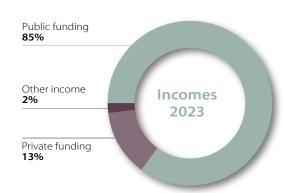
SUMMARY OF FONDATION HIRONDELLE ACCOUNTS

The overall presentation of Fondation Hirondelle accounts meets the requirements of the Swiss norms GAAP RPC and GAAP RPC 21. This presentation gives a true and fair view of the financial situation and income of the organization. The accounts comply with Swiss law and the Fondation's statutes. The summary of accounts is based on the annual accounts as of December 31, 2023, which have been prepared in accordance with the above-mentioned principles. The audit report of the annual accounts and the notes to the accounts for the financial year are available on our website at the following address: https://www.hirondelle.org/en/who-we-are/financial-audit

BALANCE SHEET AS OF DECEMBER 31 (in Swiss francs)

	2023	2022
ASSETS Current assets		
Liquid assets	5 289 193	7 842 192
Credits	109 627	184 899
Funding to be received	1 970 764	1 031 581
Other receivables	660 872	299 642
Accruals and deferred income	277 303	185 917
	8 307 760	9 544 232
Intangible assets		
Financial assets	359 707	332 631
Fixed assets	68 281	42 037
	427 987	374 668
TOTAL ASSETS	8 735 747	9 918 900
LIABILITIES Short-term liabilities		
Short-term debts	610 009	483 946
Funding received in advance	4 391 794	5 848 659
Accrual and deferred income	279 149	198 273
Various loans	14	392
	5 280 966	6 531 270
Long-term liabilities		
Provision for legal contingencies	76 046	128 164
Provision for termination of staff contracts	102 040	73 310
	178 086	201 474
Allocated funds		
Initiative Fund	-	216 468
Solidarity Fund	51 149	46 014
Support Fund	569 307	569 307
	620 456	831 789
Equity capital		
Foundation capital	50 000	50 000
Capital FNL	12 315	12 315
Operating capital	2 508 521	1 830 990
Final result	85 404	461 063
	2 656 240	2 354 368
TOTAL LIABILITIES	8 735 747	9 918 900

OPERATING ACCOUNT OF FONDATION HIRONDELLE (in Swiss francs)



INCOMES	2023	2022
Public funding		
Switzerland		
Partnership contract SDC	3 444 175	3 175 300
FDFA, Peace and Human Rights division	220 977	57 023
FEDEVACO	70 320	68 100
SDC Mandate and project contribution	2 330 312	1 695 823
Other		
United Nations agencies (UNICEF, UNPD)	949 293	421 802
Germany (GIZ + MoFA)	480 979	179 340
Denmark (FAMOC)	-8 292	267 146
European Commission	3 455 373	2 634 078
Spain (embassy)	10 159	-
United States (embassy)	23 805	13 766
France (Crisis and support Centre)	40 490	257 993
Czech republic (MoFA)	77 426	81 870
United Kingdom (FCDO-UKCSS, H2H Network)	718 349	91 342
Sweden (SIDA)	906 602	1 976 000
	12 719 970	10 919 583
Private funding		
Switzerland		
Swiss Solidarity	883 168	392 046
Private Donors	38 055	109 128
Private Foundations	665 256	312 382
Loterie Romande	30 000	30 000
RTS Partnership	75 000	75 000
Other		
Other donors	137 381	449 983
IFPIM	136 374	-
	1 965 234	1 368 540
Other products		
Income from services and sales	350 859	573 136
	350 859	573 136
TOTAL INCOME	15 036 063	12 861 258
Of which non-tied income	467 259	757 264
Of which tied income	14 568 804	12 103 994



EXPENDITURES	2023	2022	
Expenditure for projects			
Staff	6 816 042	6 160 938	
Operations	5 826 406	4 193 754	
Depreciation	649 069	488 736	
	13 291 517	10 843 427	
Expenditure for Administration			
Staff	770 797	758 083	
Operations	506 437	450 283	
Depreciation	48 727	18 303	
	1 325 961	1 226 669	
Expenditure for Fundraising and communica	tion		
Staff	166 328	251 928	
Operations	46 784	75 805	
Depreciation	1 666	1 666	
	214 778	329 399	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	14 832 256	12 399 494	
Operating result	203 806	461 763	
Financial results			
Financial income	1 210	440	
Gain/Loss (-) on foreign exchange	-134 957	9 429	
	-133 748	9 869	
Exceptionnal result			
Exceptionnal Expenditures (-) and Incomes	15 346	-10 569	
	15 346	-10 569	
Annual result before allocations	85 404	461 063	
Allocations / deductions			
Allocation to Unrestricted Capital	-301 872	-461 063	
Withdrawal of Related Funds	216 468	-	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	-	-	

TABLE OF CAPITAL VARIATION (in Swiss francs)

Description of funding	Position of funds 01.01.2023	Inter- nally ge- nerated income	Attribu- tions to funds	Internal transfers	Use for projects	Position of funds 31.12.23	Funding received in advance	Funding to be received
Allocated funds (Fundin	g to be receiv	ed /received	in advance)					
Funds Burkina Faso	868 996		2 102 127		-2 093 522	877 601	1 443 910	-566 135
Funds Burundi	-169 267		177 229		-47 865	-39 903	-	-39 903
Funds Benin	-		-		-45 150	-45 150	-	-45 150
Funds Covid	-22 750		28 845		-	6 095	6 096	-
Editorial innovation Funds	-		113 704		-113 704	-	-	-
Funds Research	-		159 602		-162 060	-2 458	5 542	-8 000
West Africa training against violence and extremism Funds	191 977		-		-220 977	-29 000	-	-29 000
Funds Transitional Justice	106 000		439 875		-489 875	56 000	56 000	-
Funds Miscellaneous projects	- 4 419		58 663		-88 658	-34 415	-	-34 415
Funds Madagascar	-46 885		488 500		-447 046	-5 429	145	-5 573
Funds Mali	279 636		2 012 754		-1 924 252	368 138	381 829	-14 550
Funds MEAL	14 400		26 995		-41 395	-	-	-
Funds Myanmar	-11 530		333 481		-252 777	69 173	76 185	-7 011
Funds Niger	339 283		1 571 575		-2 259 848	-348 990	53 935	-402 238
Funds New projects	1		104 079		-104 079	-	-	-
Funds Pakistan	20 410		32 842		-53 251	-	-	-
Funds Central African Republic	2 107 368		665 595		-3 284 659	-511 697	51 659	-563 356
Funds Democratic Republic of Congo	7 879		1 639 966		-595 531	1 052 313	1 052 313	-
Funds Ukraine	766 366		1 271 502		-1 252 669	785 198	1 010 524	-225 327
Funds Tunisia	-111 536		258 556		-147 580	-561	29 546	-30 106
Funds Headquarters	481 146		728 268		-985 304	224 109	224 109	-
Total allocated funds	4 817 076		12 214 156		-14 610 204	2 421 027	4 391 793	-1 970 764
Tied funds								
Initiative Fund	216 468		-	-216 468	-	-		
Solidarity Fund	46 014		5 135		-	51 149		
Support Fund	569 307		-		-	569 307		
Total tied funds	831 789		5 135		-	620 456		
Foundation capital								
Initial capital	50 000		-		-	50 000		
Capital FNL	12 315		-		-	12 315		
Income from services and sales	-		411 989		-425 859	-		
Unrestricted Capital	2 292 053		85 404	216 468	-	2 593 925		
Net profit/(loss) for the year	-		-		-	-		
Total Foundation capital	2 354 368		497 393		-425 859	2 656 240		
TOTAL	8 003 232		12 947 054		-15 036 063	5 697 723		

MEMBERS OF THE FONDATION HIRONDELLE BOARD IN 2023*

Tony BURGENER

Chairman of the Board. Former Director General of Swiss Solidarity.

Former ICRC Head of Press and Private Fundraising.

Akram BELKAID

Deputy Editor, Le Monde Diplomatique.

Marie-Jeanne EBY

Head of fundraising at WWF. Formerly held various positions at the ICRC.

Mario FETZ

General Secretary of Apprentis d'Auteuil International. Former director of fundraising and marketing at WWF.

Marc HOFSTETTER

Former Deputy Executive Director of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD).

Dick MARTY**

Former member of the Swiss Senate. Former Attorney General of canton Ticino.

Doris PFISTER

Consultant in organizational management and strategic communications. Former journalist.

Nathalie PIGNARD-CHEYNEL

Director of the Academy of Journalism and Media, University of Neuchâtel.

Professor of digital journalism.

Isabelle WERENFELS

Former journalist. Senior fellow at the Middle East and Africa Research Division of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

Martin WOKER

Former head of the international editorial department at *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (NZZ).

Management

Caroline VUILLEMIN

General Director

Nicolas BOISSEZ

Director of Operations

Philippe BOVEY

Secretary General, in charge of services (until July)

Carine PRESTAT

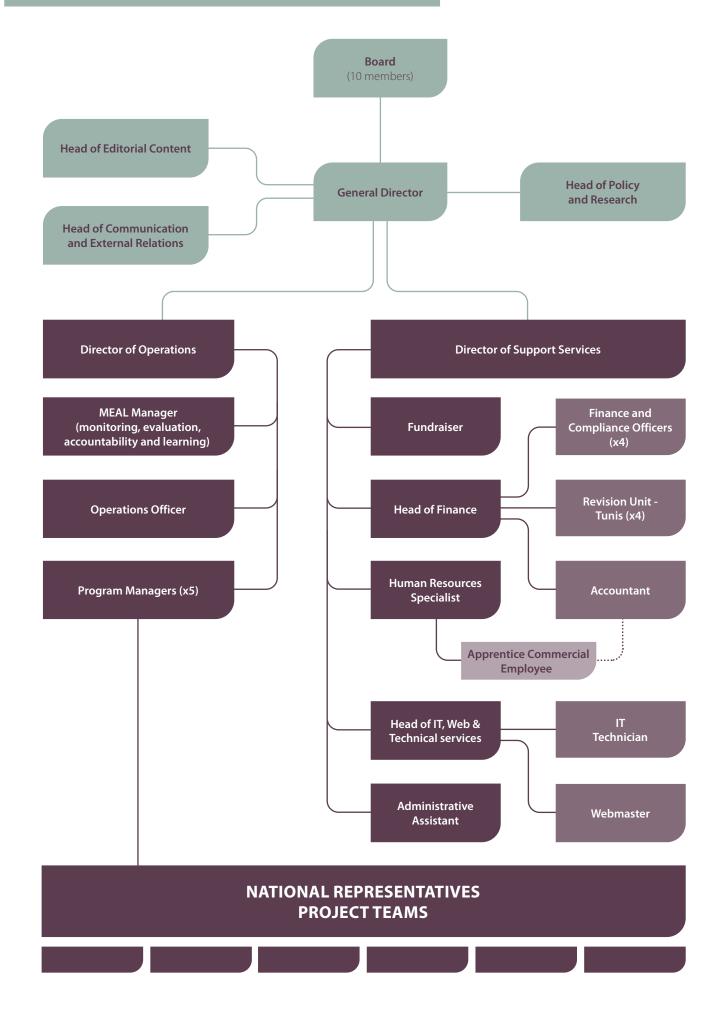
Director of Services and Support (from August)

We wish to pay tribute to the memory of Dick Marty, who died in December 2023.

^{*}The updated list of board members for 2024 is available on the Fondation Hirondelle website.

**until June 2023

ORGANISATION CHART



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Caroline Vuillemin

Conception, edition

Céline Kohlprath Benjamin Bibas / la fabrique documentaire Thibaud Oberli

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Marek Zielinski

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Fondation Hirondelle is a Swiss non-profit organization which provides information to populations faced with crisis, empowering them in their daily lives and as citizens. Through our work, millions of people in war-affected countries, post-conflict areas, humanitarian crisis and societies in democratic transition have access to media that speak to them and give them a voice.

Fondation Hirondelle

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