



# SOUNDS OF CHANGE

ANNUAL REPORT 2020





# SOUNDS OF CHANGE



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Sounds of Change was gearing up to realise great plans in 2020 and to let the organisation grow. We wanted to build on our work in the Middle East since 2017 and our activities active in 6 countries: Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, Northern Iraq (Kurdistan) and Palestine (the West Bank).

Then Covid-19 put a spanner in the works, and many of our training programmes and our local partners' activities could not continue. People became a threat to each other's well-being, which conflicts with Sounds of Change's objectives. People who lived in isolation in refugee camps and disadvantaged neighbourhoods have become even more isolated.

An additional shock for Sounds of Change was the explosion in Beirut, where founder Lucas Dols first started giving music

training in 2016. Many friends, colleagues and cooperation partners there were directly affected. We did what we could to lend a helping hand, but nothing seemed enough in the face of such devastation.

This year necessarily brought time for reflection and consolidation of our young organisation and its plans. We embraced and made use of this.

It has set us on the path of professionalising our staff and sharpening our vision of the future. It has led to adjustments in our activities to continue to work in this new reality for organisations and people all over the world who need music.

Music as power, as comfort and as a connector.  
Now more than ever.

A photograph showing a group of children in a refugee camp. In the center, a man with his arms raised is addressing the group. The children are looking towards him, some with their hands clapping. The background shows simple, temporary housing under a cloudy sky.

**“THE WORLD NEEDS MUSIC  
NOW MORE THAN EVER”**

**SOUNDS OF CHANGE**

## 2 ACTIVITY REPORT 2020

### Partners: 1. Ruwwad Al-Tanmeya



Egypt

&



Palestine (West Bank)

Ruwwad is a non-profit organisation that works with marginalised neighbourhoods and communities in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Palestine (the West Bank) through education and youth volunteering. Young people from the neighbourhoods are offered scholarships in return for volunteering in their community, for example, teaching children.

Ruwwad offers the students a training programme to support this voluntary work, which focuses on communication, creativity, personal development, cooperation, and teaching children. Sounds of Change takes care of a part of these training programmes. During our training sessions, the young people themselves experience the power of creative music processes and learn to use the Sounds of Change method to work with children and youth in the community. We have been working with Ruwwad since 2017.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on Ruwwad's work. In consultation, we limited our training activities to two locations where it was most needed: Egypt and Palestine (West Bank).

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 measures, together we have explored the transition to an online training programme. It start-



*El Ezbah - Cairo*

ed with significant challenges. The young people we worked with had no previous experience of working online and limited resources. In addition, the lockdown had a considerable impact on their psychological wellbeing, making it challenging to motivate and commit to participating in our training online. Ruwwad temporarily closed its centres in the districts, which put most activities with children on hold. During 2020, Ruwwad provided laptops and data bundles to facilitate online activities for the youth.

In the autumn of 2020, Ruwwad's locations tentatively reopened and our trainees could once again work with small groups of up to six children. Work with young people also resumed, but online. Ruwwad's need to continue with our (online) training programme is great and fits their current needs and demands. Through online Zoom sessions and video instruction, we offered them concrete tools to apply immediately in their work with children and young people. Trainees who have already received several training sessions from us took the lead on-site to help

train first-year students in our working methods. In this way, they deepened their leadership skills and, through peer learning, we can help a new group of students to integrate our techniques into their programmes for children and young people from the community.



Budrus/Qibye - the Westbank

El Ezbah - Cairo



*“It was about music with a message, about collaboration between people, our life style and our difficulties. In these activities we can do it with children or youth. We can learn a lot about people, about how they learn, about their life, without asking direct questions. Because they might be shy and afraid to share. In these activities we can do what we want in a good way.”*

**- Mohammed, Ruwwad Palestine**



Budrus/Qibye - the Westbank

*"This week I'm celebrating myself and my craziness again. I felt like everyone left his masks that we had outside and showed his true self".*

- Reem, trainee Ruwwad Lebanon

**Multi-day training sessions conducted with Ruwwad Al-Tanmeya:**

- Egypte: 3
- Palestina: 1



Egypt

Read the newsletters about our work in [Egypt](#)



Palestine (West Bank)

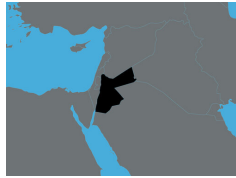
Read the newsletters about our work in [Palestine \(West Bank\)](#)

Budrus/Qibye - the Westbank



# ACTIVITY REPORT 2020

## Partners: 2. MedeArts



### Jordan

MedeArts is based in Irbid and is committed to, among other things, making art and culture play a bigger role in Irbid's society, improving the position of artists outside Amman and giving them tools to initiate meaningful creative projects.

The training sessions with the musicians involved in MedeArts significantly impacted the group of professional and amateur musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds (Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Palestine, Jordan). A deep emotional connection was formed between them by sharing their personal stories through music.

Initially, we planned to have the musicians facilitate creative music workshops in 5 locations in Jordan (Irbid, Ajloun, Amman, Ma'an, Madaba), in cooperation with local cultural institutions. During the Corona lockdown, this part of the training programme came to a standstill. We are postponing part of it to 2021. We completed online training with the group of ten musicians in the autumn of 2020, in which they made beautiful compositions about their perspective on the world with the title "Corona, the day after...". They filmed and professionally recorded the songs in the studio. You can watch and listen to them [here](#).

One of the success factors for these online training sessions was our local Sounds of Change trainer in training: Amjad Mestarehi. More than ever, he was needed on-site and could practice his training skills. Our Sounds of Change trainers were present online via a beamer as coaches while he took the lead on-site. We are proud of this achievement and see many opportunities to carry out the activities planned for 2020 in 2021. In this programme, we want to continue with the group in Irbid, but we will also set up a training programme with artists from Ajloun. The longer-term ambition is to work with MedeArts to reach more and more musicians in different locations around the country.

*Irbid - Jordan*



*"What I learned about myself is how to use the deep down memories inside of me - the sad ones - in a good way. To create something beautiful from it and get rid of it. To take the memory and turn it to something beautiful and to feel more comfortable with that. I want to do my work in the future like this. I want to challenge myself to break the boundaries between how I feel inside and how I express myself outside. (...)*

*I found that there's others here in the group, that have common feelings and issues, that's what made us create what we wrote together."*

**- Rawan, Medearths**

*Irbid - Jordan*



*Irbid - Jordan*



**Conducted multi-day training sessions with Medearths:**

- Irbid:1



**Jordan**

**Read the newsletters about our work in [Jordan](#)**



# ACTIVITY REPORT 2020

## Partners: 3. Azahir



### Lebanon

Azahir is an NGO working in northern Lebanon. Azahir offers programmes in sports, art and education for children who have fled or children who usually can't access these. Azahir focuses, among others, on the communities in the refugee camps in northern Lebanon (Nahr el Bared and Tall Abbass), thus contributing to increasing resilience, stability and peace-building in the region.

Since 2019, Sounds of Change has been training the volunteer team from Azahir to use music during their work with the children in youth refugee camps.

The corona measures have a significant impact on the children and youth: all NGOs have had to put their activities on-hold and there is no replacement education alternative for the children.

Azahir does not have a stable internet connection, so we have tried out a new online concept to reach as many children as possible in an accessible way via Azahir's youth team. Because the volunteer team could meet physically in the community centre, training through pre-recorded video material was a good solution. We prepared the content of the training with one of the young people from the team, [Nadine](#).\* She was able to guide the group on the spot. The group continuously gave feedback

on the progress with video material. Based on that, we created new video instructions. This way, the entire training could take place via Whatsapp. At the end of the week, they completed a more extensive independent assignment to work on themselves with their centres' children.

The most significant benefit of this approach is that it appeals to the independence of the team. This is exactly what we want to do to make our working method permanent and to continue it in the long term. Besides trying it out with other partners, we see great potential in continuing with this team and therefore want to continue the same type of coaching with them in 2021.

*\* link to the movie we made about our trainees Nadine Ahmad Ali*

Nahr el Bared camp - Lebanon





Nahr el Bared camp - Lebanon

*“The training was really special. Because it presented a new way of connecting with each other, of listening to each other. We started to know which is the best way to work as one team. Just like the counting game we did. At first we weren’t listening, not waiting and not focussing. But then we started to gradually improve until we counted to ten, and it became successful. I hope we will carry on with that.”*

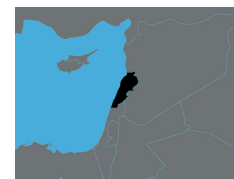
**- Ghannam, Azahir**

*“As a summary, and what inspired me: In this life, there is nothing impossible. I think we should not say “I don’t know, I can’t do it, or I am not supposed to do it”. At least we can try and we might like it.”*

**- Nadine, Azahir**

**Conducted multi-day training sessions with Azahir:**

- Nahr el Bared camp: 1



Lebanon

**Read the newsletters about our work in [Lebanon](#)**

Nahr el Bared camp - Lebanon



# ACTIVITY REPORT 2020

## Partners: 4. SPARK



Northern Iraq/Kurdistan Turkey

Sounds of Change has partnered with organisation SPARK since 2019. SPARK provides (vulnerable) students, especially women and refugees, with scholarships in the Middle East, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. Their goal is to provide them with access to the labour market and tools to rebuild their own country, mainly Syria. A major emphasis is on self-employment. Sounds of Change focuses its training on creative leadership and everything that comes with it to benefit their own entrepreneurship. It's important to create a safe climate for people to express themselves and be seen and heard.

SPARK was one of the first partners that wanted to use our on-line programme. Many of their students were already living in isolation because they arrived as refugees in their current environment, where they can't connect with the 'hosting community'. SPARK saw how their students became even more isolated due to various lockdowns and felt the urgency to set up activities to bring back a sense of belonging, give them tools to cope with the stress and bring mental stability.

One of the remarkable outcomes of our online training with the students of SPARK was to work with students from Palestine, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq in one group. We also saw how the training led to friendships: some students continued to video

call each other after the training. And some continued to compose music together after the training.

## Conducted multi-day training sessions with SPARK:

- Noord Irak/Koerdistan, Turkije: 4



Northern Iraq/Kurdistan

Read the newsletters about our work in [Northern Iraq/Kurdistan](#)



### 3

## IMPACT

The stories and reactions of our target groups and cooperation partners showed us the effects and impact of our training sessions. In 2019, we worked hard on a monitoring & evaluation (M&E) programme, to make the impact transparent to our donors and supporters in the Netherlands. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has changed our operations so much that we have to re-evaluate our impact plan in 2021.

We intend to free up a budget in the coming years to put our newly developed plan into action to independently measure our impact, evaluate our programme and publish the results. For now, we are evaluating with our participants and cooperation partners with interviews and group discussions. These are also covered in our newsletters and the activity report above. The quotes in our activity report are part of this.

See also the [impact page](#) on our website with more information and stories.

Maite van der Marel has written reflections on the impact of Sounds of Change's work on our website, which can be read [here](#).



## 4 BUSINESS REPORT

### Organisation

Sounds of Change is a small, agile organisation made up of volunteers and freelance staff.

#### Board

The membership of the board of the Sounds of Change Foundation is an honourable, but unpaid function. If desired, board members can claim the costs of their board membership. There is a schedule of resignation. And the prevention of (undesired) conflicts of interest is actively monitored.

- **Jan-Willem Dol**, *chairman* - Member since 2017  
Amnesty International – campaign coordinator
- **Grietje de Vries**, *treasurer* - Member since 2018  
Paid position: Protection administrator, mentor, curator.  
Other positions (unpaid): Board member of Goois Women's Choir, Member of the Supervisory Board of the Hilversum Library and Volks Universiteit
- **Ad van Roosmalen**, *secretary* - Member since 2017  
Expert in (online) collaboration, Genuine Contract trainer and consultant.
- **Essam Zaki**, *board member* - Member since 2020  
Customer manager of the City of Amsterdam  
Board member AddCulture
- **Caro Nieuwenhuis**, *board member* - Member since 2018  
Change consultant and leadership coach

#### Artistic director and founder

Lucas Dols

Secondary activities: Freelance trainer, workshop leader and (acoustic) bass player

#### Artistic management

Maite van der Marel

Secondary activities: Freelance trainer, workshop leader and musician.

#### Business management

Denise Harleman 1/1/2020 – 1/6/2020.

Gusta Korteweg 1/9/2020 – present.

Secondary activities: Rosa Ensemble (Utrecht), business manager; Shout! Partners in Cultuur (Amsterdam), partner.

#### Trainers

Lucas Dols, Maite van der Marel, Sander van Goor, Hashem Kabreet, Geerte de Koe, Marijn Korff de Gids, Han van 't Land.

The board has a contract of engagement with the artistic director and periodically holds progress meetings with the director. There is a management statute, which defines the division of tasks and powers of the board and the artistic director.

The other freelancers work on a project basis and report to the director. Sounds of Change operates within an extensive network of professionals, which allows for the rapid deployment of customised work, advice or services. Often at reduced rates or completely free of charge because many people support the work of Sounds of Change.

# BUSINESS REPORT

## Risk management

- Since only freelancers are connected to Sounds of Change, the foundation has no employer obligations.
- The foundation has no permanent office space and has no inventory and stock, saving on fixed costs and insurance.
- The organisation is hybrid and can quickly adapt to changing environmental factors, allowing activities to continue, whether or not in a modified form.
- The foundation has a sufficient freely disposable reserve to absorb unforeseen setbacks.
- OZCAR Administration Office in Amsterdam takes care of the financial administration and the preparation of the annual accounts.
- Every quarter, the treasurer approves the results achieved, the invoices and the declarations of the director.
- Funding mix: Sounds of Change tries (and increasingly succeeds since 2018) to create a stable base through multi-year support from funds and individuals. In addition, Sounds of Change receives varying contributions and gifts from individuals, businesses and partners. Sounds of Change also has income from training activities in business, crowdfunding and the sale of products such as t-shirts.

## Good commissioning

### Fair pay

The foundation is committed to paying its employees fairly, taking into account the nature of the organisation.

A daily allowance for the trainers of Sounds of Change is €250, excluding VAT.

When it comes to the training sessions abroad, most local trainers who contribute to Sounds of Change activities are associated with the local partner organisations as employees or volunteers. When this is not the case, Sounds of Change offers a fair fee based on the local compensation standard.

### Security

The work of Sounds of Change can involve a certain degree of risk because we often work with a target group that suffers from psychological traumas to a greater or lesser degree. The trainers of Sounds of Change are (and will be) trained to deal with this.

Furthermore, it is ensured that the (foreign) workplace cannot pose a direct physical threat to the welfare and/or health of the trainers of Sounds of Change.

The trainers of Sounds of Change work with a Code of Conduct and Sounds of Change is committed to a trusted and respectful working environment.

There is a protocol to report inappropriate behaviour to the board.

# BUSINESS REPORT

The personal information held by Sounds of Change (including data of volunteers, employees, donors, sympathisers and newsletter subscribers) is kept secure and not made available to third parties.

## Personal development

Despite the lack of employer responsibility, Sounds of Change strives to employ the best person in the best place. The organisation is willing to invest in its freelancers' needs aiming for a long-term relationship as a client. An example of this is the plan developed in 2020 for the Academy, a training facility for new trainers, half of which are status holders.

## Sustainability

Sounds of Change tries to keep its carbon footprint as small as possible. When travelling, this is taken into account by minimising air and car travel and using public transport where possible.

We contribute to sharing and recycling by encouraging employees to use refurbished materials and to share facilities with others.

Fairtrade and 'green' products and services are preferred and actively sought as conscious and responsible alternatives.

## Funding

The Sounds of Change income comes from donors and funds, which make a gift or donation to support the general work, or specific projects, on an incidental or structural basis.

- In 2020, there were 122 members of the Orchestra of Change-makers, our monthly donors. Sounds of Change aims to grow this number annually.
- Sounds of Change was financially supported in 2020 by Stichting Vivace, Paradiso, MassiveMusic, Triodos Foundation, Umoja Fonds, BNN/VARA and Stichting 't Trekpaert.
- By organising workshops for businesses, benefit performances, crowdfunding actions and the sale of merchandise, Sounds of Change generates a growing amount of income of its own.
- Sounds of Change receives variable annual revenues as compensation for the delivered training activities from the cooperation with international partner organisations. This compensation partially covers the costs of our training activities.
- The management and recruitment costs together amount to 25% of the annual turnover. Sounds of Change is striving for at most 20%, so that about 80% goes straight to designing and implementing the goals. This balance is monitored quarterly.

## Sponsors

In the field of musical instruments, Sounds of Change has two sponsoring partners.

- RBI Music/Rhythm Band – Boomwhackers
- Goldon Music Instruments

# BUSINESS REPORT

## Financial result

In 2020, the turnover amounted to 127,350 Euros.

The annual accounts have a positive result of 40,999 Euro, 18,000 Euro of which will be used for the Sounds of Change Academy and 8,000 Euro will be added to the Vivace Lebanon/Jordan designation reserve. The remaining amount of 14,999 Euros will be added to the general reserve. As a result, the general reserve at the end of 2020 amounts to €45,404.

The resilience (in relation to the total income) amounts to 0.59%.

The management costs amounted to €19,884, of which €5,620 was for recruitment costs. Relative to the turnover, this is 15.6%.

The annual accounts can be downloaded [here](#)

## Communication

Sounds of Change operates entirely in the digital domain when communicating with its target groups and sympathisers. Social media are powerful channels to realise a national and international reach. Both when announcing activities or a recruitment campaign. A wish for the near future is a study into the various channels' output so that expressions and means can be used even more efficiently.



## Communication projects in 2020

### Instruments for Change

This project is a collaboration between MassiveMusic, Deep House Amsterdam and Sounds of Change. Instruments for Change is a software and sample pack for DJs and producers, which allows them to integrate sounds and music from the Middle East in their compositions and productions. For this project, we recorded 5 musicians from Syria, Turkey and Senegal. The software and sample pack can be downloaded on a donation basis. The proceeds will benefit our international training programme.

For more information: [www.instrumentsforchange.nl](http://www.instrumentsforchange.nl)

### Sounds of Change at Work

On our new website [www.soundsofchangeatwork.com](http://www.soundsofchangeatwork.com) you can find our range of training courses and workshops for businesses. We offer programmes in the areas of leadership, team building and creativity. With the proceeds of these activities, we finance part of our work in the Middle East.

### Website

In 2020, we made some updates to our website. You can now find songs of our trainees under 'sounds', you can read stories of our trainees under 'stories' and Maite van der Marel writes [reflections](#) on our work.

You can also read all our newsletters on the [website](#).

For more information see: [www.soundsofchange.org](http://www.soundsofchange.org)



## BUSINESS REPORT

### Newsletter

In 2020, we regularly kept our supporters informed of our work. As a result, the number of subscriptions to our newsletter has grown by over 25%. Our newsletters can be read here on the [website](#).

### Social Media

Sounds of Change is active on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. We keep our followers informed of our work and call for subscriptions to our newsletter, crowdfunding or membership of our Orchestra of Changemakers a few times a year.



**SOUNDS OF CHANGE.ORG**

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