



Report of the Board

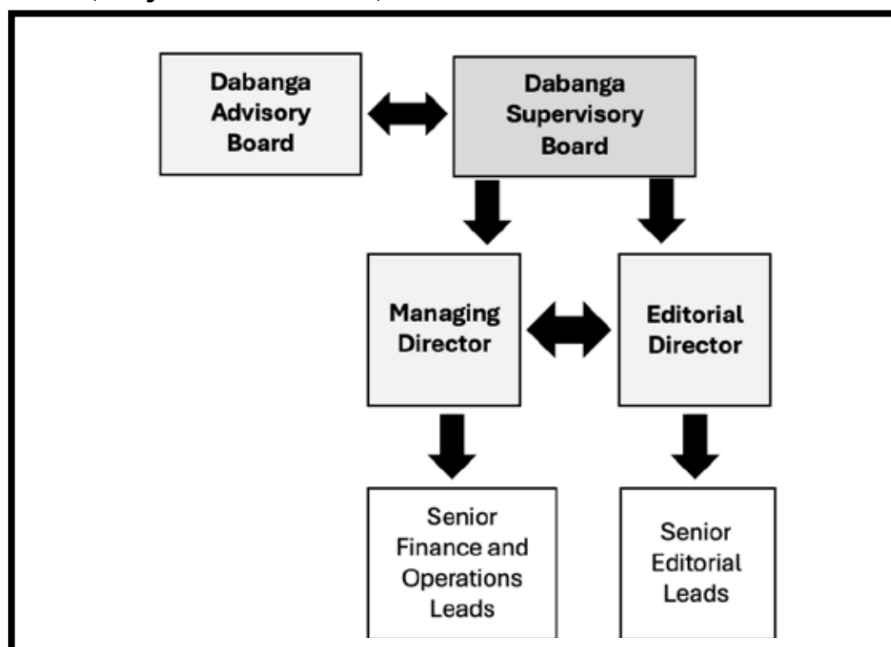
Board Report of 2024

This Annual Report outlines the activities implemented in 2024 by Stichting Dabanga Foundation (Dabanga). The aim being for Dabanga to play a meaningful fourth estate role in Sudan, contributing to peace, reconciliation and the country's long-term democratic transition.

Origins & Statutory Goal

Stichting Dabanga Foundation is a foundation created to enable Sudanese people in Sudan, in all states and regions to participate in the exchange of knowledge, news and information, with the vision of a democratic Sudan where freedom, peace and justice prevail, and where human rights are enshrined, in particular the right to freedom of expression and access to information. Dabanga was registered as a foundation (stichting) under Dutch law on 09-02-2021 (RSIN 862236733) with a corporate seat in the municipality of Amsterdam. Before this, the organisation functioned as a project team with Free Press Unlimited (FPU). As of 09-02-2021, the organisation operates independently with an office in the municipality of Amsterdam.

Board, Key Staff Positions, and Structure



Supervisory Board	
Chair and Member of the Supervisory Board	Hamid Ali Mohamed Nur Hussein, Date of entry into office 08-02-2021



Member of the Supervisory Board	Johannes Jacobus Daalmeijer, Date of entry into office 08-02-2021
Member of the Supervisory Board	Abdelbagi Jibril, Date of entry into office 08-02-2021
Executive Board	
Chair & Managing Director	Nigel Ballard Date of Entry into Office 08-02-2021
Secretary/Treasurer and Editorial Director	Kamal Elsadig, Date of entry into office 08-02-2021

It is the task of the Supervisory Board to supervise the policy of the Executive Board and the general course of business in the Foundation and the organization with it. In the performance of their task the Supervisory Board members shall be guided by the interest of the Foundation and organization with it. No remuneration is granted to the Supervisory Board members. Expenses shall be compensated to the Supervisory Board members on presentation of documentary evidence. The Supervisory Board last met for its Annual General Meeting in April 2025.

The Executive Board is vested with the conduct and management of the business and the affairs of the Foundation. The Foundation shall be represented by the Executive Board, in so far as not otherwise provided for by law. In performing their duties the Executive Board members shall regard the interests of the Foundation and the organization connected with it. The Supervisory Board determines the remuneration and the other employment conditions of the Executive Board members.

Main Targets and Activities in 2024

Objectives:

- Provide news, information & knowledge accessible and relevant for all Sudanese
- Provide news and analysis content relevant to diverse audiences
- Provide informational and educational content to diverse audiences

Executive Summary

2024 saw the continuation of the war that began on April 15th, 2023. As the conflict encompassed the entire country, over 20 armed groups became involved in the conflict, aligning with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) or Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The RSF allied with Darfuri armed groups to besiege El Fasher, the last capital of a Darfur state to remain outside of RSF control. The siege and RSF bombardment of El Fasher and neighbouring Zamzam displacement camp put hundreds of thousands of civilians at risk of starvation as food and other essential supplies dwindled in the city and the camp. El Fasher and Zamzam became emblematic of the



humanitarian crisis present throughout Sudan as a result of the conflict. By the end of 2024, some 11.5 million Sudanese were internally displaced, with 24.6 million (more than half the population) facing acute food insecurity. At this point, 8.1 million Sudanese were in IPC Phase 4 (“Emergency”) and 637,000 in IPC Phase 5 (“Catastrophe”).

With all on-the-ground activities rendered impossible by the conflict, Dabanga continued to operate from headquarters in the Netherlands, broadcasting into Sudan on multiple platforms. Despite these challenges, Dabanga:

- Increased shortwave broadcasts to 2.5 hours daily
- Reached a monthly average of 1.4 million Sudanese online (social media and website)
- Reached 35,000 Youtube subscribers
- Averaged 110,000 monthly website sessions
- Produced 15-min bulletins broadcast twice per day on shortwave and three times per day on all other platforms
- Upheld 24/7 reporting on website and social media platforms
- Continued online and offline audience newsgathering activities
- Relaunched notable feature programmes including Kandaka & Miarems, Youth Issues and Scales of Justice

Objective 1 – Provide news, information & knowledge accessible and relevant for all Sudanese

Shortwave

Dabanga’s shortwave broadcast continued to serve an estimated 2.3 million-strong audience within Sudan and in the border regions of neighbouring countries. Thanks to programme restructuring, broadcasting times were lengthened from 2 to 2.5 hours daily. The value of this service was made clear in February, when an RSF-imposed internet blackout cut off over 30 million Sudanese from online access, for over a month. As other sources of news and information were unavailable to Sudanese, the robust and unblockable nature of shortwave broadcasts enabled Dabanga to provide updates to Sudanese. For those displaced by the conflict or living in ‘internet deserts’; regions without connectivity, Dabanga’s shortwave broadcasts are a consistent information lifeline.

Online Radio

The setup of Dabanga’s digital radio stream saw completion in 2024, seeing enhanced sound quality to provide online listeners a high-quality listening experience. Offering a 24/7 stream, the radio service allows Dabanga to serve online Sudanese living outside of the shortwave coverage area. This broadcast, set up with assistance from Dabanga’s technical support staff, runs automatically and does not require manual programme scheduling, therefore is an incredibly time-efficient platform to operate.



Website

Dabanga's bilingual website caters to the Sudanese online population, both in-country and abroad. Adjustments took place in 2024 to allow greater accessibility based on user habits and needs. This entailed alterations to make the website increasingly mobile-friendly and accessible to low-data users, two key audience requirements. The majority of content over 2024 was published in Arabic, this accounts for the primary language of Dabanga's audience. To offer English-speaking audiences and international readers access to reliable Sudanese news, key articles were also published in English. A monthly average of 434 Arabic and 77 English articles were published over 2024. Despite the February internet blackout, Dabanga's website traffic continued to climb - a 30% increase on 2023 saw an average of 103,000 monthly page views. The Arabic site, in particular, saw a 40% increase in monthly visitors compared to 2023, reaching a high of 84,000 users in March.

Satellite TV

Dabanga's satellite television channel offered Sudanese an alternative means of accessing news 24/7. The channel's technical capacity was upgraded to support moving images and video, whilst also introducing a more structured layout, improved image scaling, dynamic text overlays, and a redesigned news ticker. This allows better visual communication of news stories on the channel. The channel's content has also been kept text-light, instead often displaying news content from Dabanga's social media and website to make these platforms somewhat more accessible to those without internet connectivity.

Social Media

Dabanga's social media displayed impressive performance over 2024, with the largest audience being present on the Arabic language Facebook page. Reaching 875,000 followers by the end of 2024, the page had an average monthly reach of 1.4 million unique users. The majority of the page's audience (58-61%) also fell into the 'youth' (under-35) category that comprises Dabanga's primary target audience online. The page was complemented by the smaller English language page, which ensures that Dabanga's key stories are made accessible to non-Arabic speakers. Through these pages, almost 900,000 Sudanese in-country and abroad were served with daily news updates, access to Dabanga's radio programmes adapted for social media, and links to in-depth articles.

Dabanga also continued to post on a niche, bilingual X (formerly Twitter) account, which reached 52,000 followers by the end of 2024. With over 400,000 average monthly impressions, the account demonstrated strong reach, with Sudan being the foremost audience location in the year. Dabanga's Youtube channel also saw success over 2024, with 35,000 followers in December and a monthly reach averaging 3 million users. Dabanga used this channel to share programmes produced for radio and adapted for video, proving to be highly popular. This was evident in the average watch time over the year being 23,000 hours, up from 9,000 hours in 2023. Dabanga has also continued to use Soundcloud as an archive of all radio programmes produced, although this platform is not actively promoted to audiences.



Objective 2 - Provide news and analysis content relevant to diverse audiences

Dabanga's core output is its news content. By making available news in various forms (audio, text, graphic/video), lengths and platforms, Dabanga maximised its reach among a target audience with different preferences for accessing media.

Audio & Broadcast News

Dabanga's news headlines are produced 5 days a week. These consist of brief morning headlines lasting 3-4 minutes, and a longer, 15 minute evening headlines segment, elaborating more details on each story. These news headlines are disseminated via Dabanga's shortwave radio broadcast, online radio, satellite TV channel, Youtube channel, Arabic Facebook page and Soundcloud account. These shorter news headlines are complemented by the longer 'Sudan Today' programme. The programme, produced 5 days weekly, offers insights and analysis of the details and context behind the leading 2 to 3 news headlines. The programme calls on expert opinions and guest interviewees to break down complex issues for better audience understanding of events in Sudan.

Video News

Dabanga's video news-flashes, lasting 3.5 minutes, were created specifically for social media users and tailored to those with low connectivity/mobile data. They were shared daily over 2024, across hundreds of WhatsApp channels. Sharing brief summaries of the top 10 stories, complete with headlines and concise overviews, they are an efficient means of keeping audiences informed of developments in Sudan. These were complemented by longer video news reports, often featuring interviews with topic-specific experts. These longer reports were shared on Dabanga's social media channels, with the [most popular news video in 2024](#) making 268,000 unique user impressions.

Website Articles

Dabanga's bilingual website offers written articles that align with the news headlines broadcast over radio. These articles make the majority of the website's content. Over 2024, the website published a daily average of 14 Arabic-language articles and 2.5 in English. This output catered to a monthly mean of 40,000 Arabic-reading and 24,000 English reading visitors. This was a significant overall increase from 28,000 and 23,000 respectively in 2023.

In the context of the ongoing conflict and disinformation campaigns by warring parties, Dabanga's verification articles have proven particularly valuable. Verification articles were written by Dabanga's newsgathering unit, which was established to combat misinformation and disinformation. It aims to gather new information directly from local communities through a "people's newsgathering" approach, and the team includes journalists who have experience working in Sudan and other regions, specifically focusing on verification and combatting misinformation. These articles offer readers an analysis of news stories that goes beyond



conventional analysis, taking an in-depth look at each fact of a story and explaining this process to audiences, better empowering them to understand the truth of a trending topic.

In 2024, a number of notable verification stories took place:

- The team confirmed the authenticity of a video filmed by an RSF soldier showing the [downing of an SAF military plane](#), verifying its date and location
- A statement attributed to Egypt's defense minister suggesting Egyptian support for the RSF while criticizing the SAF was found to be falsified
- Reports that the General Director of the Telecommunications and Post Regulatory Authority had instructed police to enforce [a ban on Starlink devices](#) were found to be genuine, despite conflicting denials
- The story of an alleged coup attempt within SAF ranks was debunked as disinformation.

Over 2024, the unit completed 184 verification stories and activities. In doing so, these news activities allowed Sudanese to know accurately what is happening in their country. Therefore, audiences were empowered to make decisions, safe in the knowledge that they have been properly informed of the reality 'on the ground'.

Objective 3 - Provide informational and educational content to diverse audiences

Dabanga's programming ensures that all demographics of Sudanese society are represented to as great a degree as possible. This is achieved through thematic programmes offering information and improving awareness of social and political topics from all perspectives, and for all audiences. Dabanga's weekly informational and educational radio programmes are broadcast on shortwave radio, satellite TV, social media, website, and social media.

Kandaka & Meryam Programme

Initially paused in April 2023 in response to the outbreak of conflict in Khartoum, early 2024 saw the resumption of the weekly Kandaka & Meryam radio programme, with an output of 40 episodes over the year. The programme features stories from Sudanese women, perspectives of advocates for women's rights in Sudan, and responses to news events from the perspective of female audience members. Often highlighting the incredible challenges and threats faced by women in Sudan, the programme also puts a spotlight on the impact that female activists, artists and leaders have on their communities and the wider country.

A number of notable episodes were broadcast in 2024 touching on relevant issues to women in the Sudanese context. In May, an episode featured Iman Siddiq, secretary of the Sudanese Journalists' Syndicate, who spoke about the challenges that female journalists face in Sudan, including displacement, arrests and being killed. The episode also used input from a survey of female journalists in various conflict zones. In October, an episode of the programme examined the importance of UN Resolution 1325, which requires the participation of women in the political and humanitarian process, and whether the resolution comprehensively covers the interests and needs of women in peacebuilding processes. The topic was again raised in a November issue, which addressed the disparity in representation of women between peacebuilding at local and



international level - as well as asking the question of whether women in Sudan are united in a single bloc around their issues such as violations during the war.

Youth Issues Programme

The Youth Issues programme provides representation and a voice to Sudan's young population - often the driving force behind social and political change in the country. In the 2024 context of Sudan's ongoing war, Youth Issues resumed its coverage of youth-led peace initiatives, education, and exploration of how the youth were coping with the conflict. 2024 also saw the hiring of a young freelancer to enhance the content production of the Youth Issues program, which allowed Dabanga to connect better with Sudanese youth in various locations. In January, a series of 3 episodes addressed young Sudanese' concerns about the future of their education against the backdrop of ongoing conflicts. The episodes featured a number of young people, parents of students and educational professionals, who weighed in on the challenges faced by young people seeking to continue their education in Sudan. Throughout the year, episodes repeatedly zoomed in on the agency of youth in peacebuilding processes. A key episode reported on a conference bringing together 32 youth initiatives with the aim of merging them into one body for more impactful peacebuilding activities at the local and national levels.

Scales of Justice Programme

Scales of Justice continues to be an important platform for discussions on legal and human rights issues, particularly in the context of Sudan's ongoing conflict. In 2024, the program focused on war crimes, accountability, and the role of international justice in addressing violations committed during the war. A major highlight was the coverage of the Ali Kushayb trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC), including the final hearings and deliberations on his 31 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Beyond the Kushayb case, Scales of Justice examined other pressing legal matters linked to the conflict. Several episodes addressed the rise of hate speech in Sudan, its legal implications, and efforts by civil society to counter its spread. Other episodes focused on enforced disappearances and unlawful detentions, highlighting legal safeguards under international law and the challenges of holding perpetrators accountable. The program also featured discussions on the Sudanese legal system's handling of war-related crimes, linking international justice mechanisms with domestic efforts to address impunity. Throughout the year, audience engagement remained central to the program. Listeners actively participated through social media, WhatsApp, and voice notes, sharing questions and perspectives that helped shape discussions. Scales of Justice continues to provide expert legal insights and first hand testimonies, ensuring that Sudanese audiences remain informed on justice-related developments, even amid the ongoing conflict.

Sudan Files Programme

Sudan Files, an in-depth interview program exploring national issues with key political and social figures. The show was relaunched at the end of 2023 the program was redesigned to directly engage leaders and bring citizens' concerns to the forefront. Through interactive discussions, Sudan Files addresses pressing topics and ensures leaders respond to audience questions. In 2024, the program aired 44 episodes, covering the political crisis, humanitarian emergencies, and social issues affecting Sudanese citizens.



From the Other Side Programme

Dabanga's programming delivers to not only a range of demographics, but also to those across Sudan's diverse political spectrum. From the Other Side offers perspectives on Sudanese issues from an array of social and political positions. This programme has become a valuable effort to foster dialogue in the divisive context of the current conflict, where entrenched positions are a clear obstacle to peace. For instance in March, an episode hosted activist Al-Sadiq Issa Hamdeen and former member of the Sovereignty Council Dr. Siddiq Kafi, who discussed the possibilities for justice in the shadow of conflict, in territories controlled by RSF and SAF. An April episode discussed the issue of racism in Sudan with Kassala-based political activist Hamrour Hussein, making use of diverse opinions received from ordinary Sudanese via Dabanga's WhatsApp newsgathering mechanism. The issue of division within Sudan was again addressed in November, with an episode hosting legal expert and former advisor to the Minister of Justice Dr. Mohamed Adam Al-Numan, who spoke on the central role of identity in shaping both Sudan's political crises and the ongoing war.

Financial position in 2024

Income was slightly higher than the year before: with €1,680,752 the foundation realised 106% of the income of 2023 (€1,584,958). In 2024, an additional amount of almost €1,000.000 was spent via the fiscal sponsor, leading to an annual income of €2.6 million euro (€2.2 in 2023).

Expenditure was aligned with the budgeted amounts as proposed to the donors making the work of Stichting Dabanga Foundation possible. All donors approved the reports and the expenditure reported and continued supporting the organisation after the reporting year, except for one (see below). There is a small deficit of €20,137 at year end. This is mainly caused by a sick leave of one person.

Normally, the foundation is able to project and manage its expenditures well due to its long experience with the type of costs involved with its activities and its stable team within and outside of the organisation.

Reserves

In 2024, the foundation faced a small deficit. With this, the Foundation now has a continuity reserve of €32,600 compared to €54,820 as at year-end 2023. The continuity reserve amounts to 1.8% of the average annual operating costs of Dabanga, estimated at €1.8 million. The continuity reserve will be used to cover costs during a funding gap or to cover costs that donors cannot or will not reimburse.

According to best practices of nonprofit organisations in the Netherlands, a reserve of around 50% of annual operating costs, or €1.1 million would be reasonable to ensure stability and sustainability of the work of the organisation.



In addition to its continuity reserve the foundation also has an appropriated reserve for fixed assets. This reserve shows the remaining balance of the total purchase price of tangible fixed assets covered in full by donors through project grants, decreased by annual depreciation which is included as an expenditure.

Investment policy

Stichting Dabanga Foundation does not hold any financial investments or participations. Its investments in equipment are made possible by donors who fund the full investment costs, for instance for the mobile studios the Foundation has and all of its broadcast and office equipment and furniture. The organisation as a policy only makes such investments if and when they can be recovered from grants. Given the low level of the continuity reserve it is not desirable to invest beyond this.

Financial continuity and expectations for 2025 and beyond

The foundation has ambitious goals for the year ahead, through activities beyond the regular newsroom work as well as investments in organisational development, including further development of potentially income generating activities outside project grants. For the year 2025, initially a budget of €2.3 million was secured from ongoing grants since (the end of) 2024.

This comfortable financial outlook was overturned dramatically by the new US Administration when the foundation received notice of suspension of its main grant in January 2025. In April 2025 the grant was terminated. This made it necessary for SDF to restructure its work and team. Related costs are not included in the financial statement as it is not allowed to provision for these costs if they were incurred after the reporting year only. We nevertheless wanted to disclose this information here, as these events do impact our organisation.

Given our track record and the dire situation on the ground in Sudan, in combination with cost-savings and investments in generating unearmarked income that were started in 2024 already and intensified in early 2025, we are confident that we can cover the funding gap in 2025 and acquire the funds needed for the next two years.

Budget 2025 in EUR

Income

Income from grants	1,494,544
Income from donations	10,000
Total income	1,504,544

Expenditure

Staff costs	1,122,425
Broadcast costs	191,921



Activity costs	31,251
Organisational costs	148,948
Total expenditure	1,494,544
Balance of income and expenditure	10,000