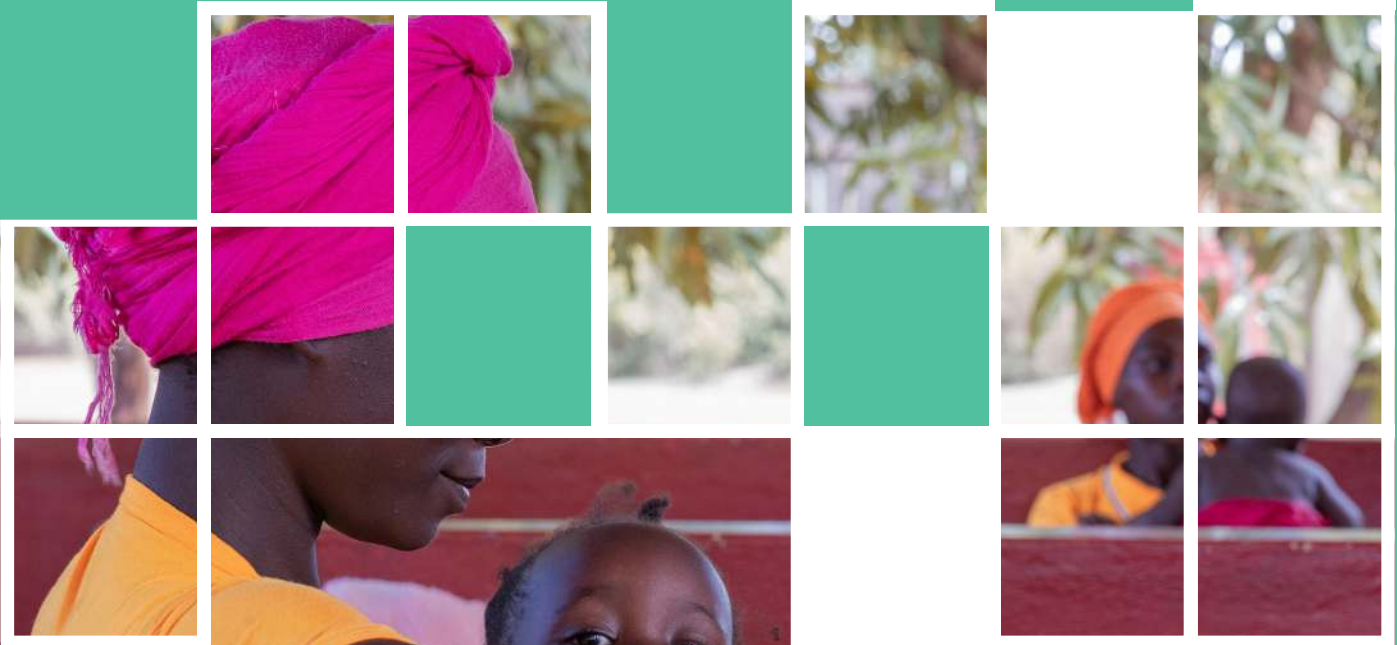


# 20 24

MOVING MINDS  
ALLIANCE



# ANNUAL REPORT

[movingmindsalliance.org](http://movingmindsalliance.org)

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## Abbreviations

<b>AFECN</b>	Africa Early Childhood Network
<b>ANECD</b>	Arab Network for Early Childhood
<b>EAG</b>	Expert Advisory Group
<b>ELP</b>	Early Learning Partnership
<b>ECD</b>	Early Childhood Development
<b>ECDAN</b>	Early Childhood Development Action Network
<b>ECDIE</b>	Early Childhood Development in Emergencies
<b>FCV</b>	Fragility, Conflict, and Violence
<b>GSF</b>	Global Schools Forum
<b>IFWG</b>	Innovative Finance Working Group
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>INSPIRE</b>	Integrated Social Protection Inclusion and Resilience Project
<b>IRC</b>	International Rescue Committee
<b>ISSA</b>	International Step by Step Association
<b>LABE Uganda</b>	Literacy and Adult Basic Education, Uganda
<b>LATAM</b>	Latin America
<b>LLO</b>	Locally-led organisations
<b>MHPSS</b>	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
<b>MMA</b>	Moving Minds Alliance
<b>NRS</b>	Norwegian Refugee Council
<b>OCHA</b>	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>RLO</b>	Refugee-led organisations
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SWANA</b>	Southwest Asia and North Africa
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USG</b>	United States Government

## Section 1: Introduction



### About the Moving Minds Alliance

**Membership** In 2024, MMA membership grew to 40, welcoming 5 new members, including our first local member, LABE Uganda. Other new members included: AFECN, Child to Child, Global Schools Forum, and UNHCR.

**AFECN** champions excellence in early childhood development, influencing policy and practice, and fostering partnerships to protect children's rights across the African continent.

**Child to Child** is a long-established organisation which began 45 years ago and builds upon the potential of children, who, if given the chance, can play a critical role in solving the problems they face. It provides training and resources for peers, siblings, older children and adults to incorporate child participation into programmes for younger children or those who are marginalized, as a key means through which children can realise their rights.

**Global Schools Forum** is a collaborative community that accelerates innovation and strengthens partnerships to improve education outcomes for underserved children in low- and middle-income countries.

**LABE Uganda** is dedicated to empowering communities through innovative intergenerational family learning opportunities, promoting literacy practices for lifelong learning, and supporting education in underserved and rural areas.

**UNHCR** brings its unparalleled expertise in protection, law and policy, inclusion, and durable solutions for forcibly displaced people, working globally to support refugees and stateless persons.

### Brief History

MMA was established in 2017 by a coalition of philanthropic foundations united by a shared vision to increase vital support for young children and caregivers affected by crisis and displacement. They recognised the urgent need to catalyse collaborative advocacy to influence policymakers, donors and other key decision-makers to prioritise lifesaving nurturing care and ECDiE within humanitarian and development response.

MMA's ambition was always to leverage its global reach to impact low- and middle-income countries that host refugees and displaced populations, consistently advocating for strengthened local and national systems able to provide quality, holistic ECD services. The expansion of our membership has been instrumental in achieving this reach.

In 2020, the MMA transformed from a donor collaborative to a multi-stakeholder alliance, which rallied behind its first advocacy strategy. The strategy focused on influencing actors to bring about change across three target domains: donor financing, the humanitarian coordination system (influencing both the actors and the diverse networks within this system), and building and strengthening national and inclusive multi-stakeholder ECD platforms.

**MMA made significant progress towards its objectives, including unlocking financing from the USG and influencing key USG policies.**

**Other achievements have included:**

- Influencing key players across the French development and humanitarian ecosystem to increase prioritisation of children affected by crises, including teams at the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs as well as the French Development Agency, and building valuable collaborations with civil society and key parliamentarians.
- Catalytic investments to the World Bank which helped to unlock additional funding to support early learning in FCV-affected countries.
- Engaging OCHA and securing written commitments to ECD in high-level humanitarian policy.
- Supporting the government of Uganda to develop an inclusive national ECD policy.

**MMA employed a multi-faceted approach, convening members and stakeholders in a diverse range of collaborative actions, including:**

- **Resource Development:** Creating briefing materials on ECD in crisis settings.
- **Advocacy:** Engaging stakeholders through the multistakeholder pledge developed for the Global Refugee Forum.
- **Strengthening Ethical Engagements:** Developing partnerships with local ECD organisations and experts in refugee and host communities.
- **Policy Influence:** Promoting the integration of ECD into humanitarian standards and guidance documents.
- **Research:** Fostering collaboration among global researchers through our Research Forum.

## **MMA Sector Level Theory of Change**

MMA quickly established itself as a thought leader through the production of innovative research and knowledge generation, including a seminal study on humanitarian and development financing for ECDiE – the first of its kind. It leveraged this expertise to influence policies, unlock greater financing and increase leadership in ECDiE.

In 2023, MMA sought to understand what additional change pathways and actions were required to increase the saliency of ECDiE for diverse stakeholders to enhance MMA's advocacy and strengthen its ability to influence decision-makers across the global humanitarian and development ecosystem to achieve greater impact. MMA commissioned a mapping analysis of the humanitarian system, which was undertaken collaboratively with its members and wider stakeholder community. The mapping helped to identify a range of barriers that prevent quality ECDiE and nurturing care from being prioritised for young children and caregivers affected by crises and displacement.

This learning informed the development of a new, sector-level Theory of Change, which identified leverage points where interventions could be targeted to increase the impact of advocacy for equitable, sustainable, holistic ECDiE for young children and families affected by crises. Coloniality was identified as a key barrier by the systems map; proposed interventions included a commitment to the genuine engagement of affected populations to ensure that their perspectives and expertise shape policy- and decision-making and innovation in humanitarian response. This commitment guided the development of our 2025 - 2030 Strategic Framework. Learn more in Section 3 of this Annual Report.



## Message from the Co-Chairs



**Joel Dieudonne Kikalage**  
Unbounded Associates



**Katie Murphy**  
International Rescue Committee

**M**MA 2024 Annual Report launches at a deeply unsettling time. Just as the world is experiencing increased levels of conflict, displacement, and political uncertainty, the U.S. Executive Orders and dismantling of USAID has contributed to rapid disruptions, fundamental shifts, and wide ripple effects across the humanitarian response system. The U.K.'s subsequent decision to cut aid by £6 billion aligns with a growing trend of prioritising national interests and bolstering defence systems at the expense of foreign assistance. The policies of self-interest, isolation, and disengagement in global cooperation stand in stark contrast to the world that MMA envisions—one rooted in solidarity and shared responsibility and centered on the self-identified needs of crisis-affected communities, which emphasises the urgency of reimagining systems that provide localised, responsive, and sustainable support to young children and families in crisis.

As co-chairs of MMA's Steering Committee, we sit in locations separated by over 7,000 miles and work within very different types of organisations—one in a small, local, refugee-led organisation based in Uganda and one in a large, U.S.-based humanitarian organisation with a long history working in over 40 countries.

From our distinct angles, we are experiencing seismic shifts in humanitarian aid, threatening many of the systems that have historically supported young children and families in crisis. These shifts risk jeopardising progress made by the Alliance and partners in recent years, further deprioritising young

children in crisis. By focusing solely on “lifesaving” and “survival” efforts, they overlook the overwhelming evidence that the earliest years of life shape lifelong health, learning, and well-being.

The work of MMA and the collective actions to center the needs of children and families affected by crisis is more critical than ever. We are proud of the Alliance's important achievements that were highlighted during the 2024 Annual Meeting in Nairobi this past November. The subsequent Steering Committee meetings held in London in January provided the opportunity to reflect on the strengths and contributions of the Alliance in order to develop a new vision, mission, shared purpose and strategic objectives that will drive forward the work of the Alliance for the next five years.

While traditional funding structures and humanitarian priorities may shift, the imperative to ensure families and communities have the resources and support required to nurture the well-being and development of young children remains an enduring, universal need articulated by caregivers and community members from crisis-affected communities around the world. The launch of the Alliance's new strategy arrives at a critical moment, providing a vital framework to accelerate progress, strengthen local voices, and drive coordinated action to ensure that every child, no matter where they are born, can grow, learn, and thrive. In advancing this mission, the Alliance plays a crucial role in shaping a more stable, equitable, and peaceful future for all.

## Message from the Director

As outlined above, the global economic and political landscape has changed significantly since the publication of MMA's last annual review. Taken-for-granted bi- and multilateral institutional and funding frameworks have evaporated, seemingly overnight. There has been a dizzying domino effect across established institutional humanitarian and development donors. The UK, France, and Netherlands – each reneging on commitments to minimum financing for international development and humanitarian response as they respond to – and seek to influence – new global and domestic political realities. The scale and speed of cuts to overseas development and humanitarian assistance, by these governments and the USA, is symptomatic of new political realities and the emergence of previously unimaginable global alliances.

In some contexts, USAID and other donor funding provided most of the funds supporting the effective functioning of national health and education systems and emergency response, including in Sudan, which is experiencing famine. Some systems are reportedly close to collapse. The impacts of these critical developments will have profound, undoubtedly devastating and lifelong consequences for young children and communities in some of the world's most vulnerable and volatile contexts, where funds cannot be rapidly mobilised to fill the gap. Rollbacks on key policy agendas, including diversity equity and inclusion, will likely exacerbate the impact on especially marginalised groups, including – for instance – girls with disabilities.

In contrast, when I cast my mind back to February 2022, when Russia invaded Ukraine, I recall a period characterised by overwhelming global solidarity and support for Ukraine, as evidenced by the compassionate and welcoming response to the hundreds of thousands of women and children who had been forcibly displaced. This was a gold standard response that I wish were the norm for all populations affected by crises, conflict, and displacement. This includes those now affected by ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malians forcibly displaced to Mauritania, and Venezuelans who have fled to Colombia.

Attitudes towards migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees, continue to harden. Immigration teams have been mobilised across the USA to remove them. Walls continue to be built to keep out human beings deemed 'illegal' or 'undesirable'. Populations continue to be displaced. Anti-immigration populist parties continue to rise across Europe and elsewhere.



These ongoing and profound disruptions are eroding norms underpinning humanitarian and development action, which have shaped the commitments of liberal governments to global solidarity since the end of the Second World War. Whilst the systems which evolved to promote and uphold these commitments were profoundly flawed, embedding deeply ingrained post-colonial and inequitable global power imbalances (as highlighted in the learning generated through MMA's Humanitarian Systems Map) the way in which they have been rapidly and chaotically dismantled has forced an urgent reimagining of humanitarian and development response.

Whilst these recent developments inevitably feel overwhelming and disempowering - as described by one of MMA's members, it almost seems as if our sector has been vaporised - now is the time to double down on our mission to ensure that families and communities affected by crisis can nurture the well-being and development of their young children and uphold their rights. This is why MMA was established: to increase prioritisation and funding to ensure quality nurturing care is available to all young children affected by crises and displacement.

Our 2025-2030 Strategic Framework envisages a new architecture of global solidarity that is fit for purpose and prioritises the perspectives and rights of affected populations. Our strategic goal is to reimagine and shape crisis response so that it can meet the needs of young children and caregivers affected by crises and displacement. We will do this by leveraging the strengths of diverse actors, from the local to the global, to collectively advocate for the inclusion of early childhood development in every crisis response.

**Tricia Young**

## Section 2: Year In Review

### Alliance Effectiveness

#### Enhancing MMA's organisational capabilities

In 2024, we reviewed and strengthened our governance processes and expanded the number of places on the Steering Committee from six to eight, with three new members Amna, ISSA and Unbounded Associates joining the steering committee. New Co-Chairs were selected in November: Joel Dieudonne, himself a refugee from Democratic Republic of Congo living in Uganda, representing Unbounded Associates and Katie Murphy, Director ECD and Strategic Initiatives, representing IRC.

Critical new staff were recruited, including our Communications Manager, Lola Ayanda and Knowledge Management Lead, Sarah UI haq. These appointments have enabled MMA to:

- Develop and enhance internal and external communications, with the introduction of the monthly Alliance Post and webinar series, including the MMA Showcase
- Transition the management of the Research Forum to be handled internally by MMA
- Strengthen our learning and evaluation capacities

Consultancy support was also commissioned to support ongoing development and strengthening of our financial management systems and processes.

#### Establishment of the Expert Advisory Group

MMA established an EAG, membership of which comprises of five outstanding individuals who bring substantial professional experience of ECDiE complemented by significant personal experience of crises and displacement. As they are onboarded within MMA, the EAG members will play an increasingly important role in shaping how MMA implements its new strategy. More information about the EAG experts can be found [here](#).

#### Research Forum

MMA transitioned management of the Research Forum internally, taking over from Unbounded Associates who had overseen its initial operations. This move allows MMA to steer the forum's activities and priorities more directly.

In addition, the inaugural cohort of the Research Fellowship Program concluded successfully. Five fellows from diverse backgrounds conducted studies generating important insights into challenges facing young children and caregivers in emergency contexts. This program supports emerging researchers while building a stronger evidence base for early childhood interventions in crisis settings. These developments demonstrate the MMA'S commitment to enhancing organisational effectiveness to better deliver on its mission.



## Evolving Approach to Localisation

MMA's analysis of its localisation efforts revealed:



Complexities in defining  
'localisation' within  
the alliance



Progress in working  
group activities, advocacy  
initiatives, and strategy  
development



Barriers faced by both  
funders and local actors  
in effective localisation



What impresses me most about MMA is how it has continually evolved. This 2024 annual meeting showed me that the alliance is not resting on its laurels but actively pushing the boundaries of what's possible in our field.



**Kasi Joseph Bisimwa**  
Cohere  
Member, MMA Expert Advisory Group

# Strengthening Member Engagement

## Advocacy Working Groups

Work continued last year to strengthen member engagement through existing and new Working Groups adapted to respond to the priorities identified through the 2023 Sector-Level Theory of Change. This led to the development of the operationalisation of five working groups: Donor Engagement, Innovative Finance, Lifting Local Voices, Humanitarian Coordination, and Global Events, all actively pursuing distinct yet interconnected objectives.

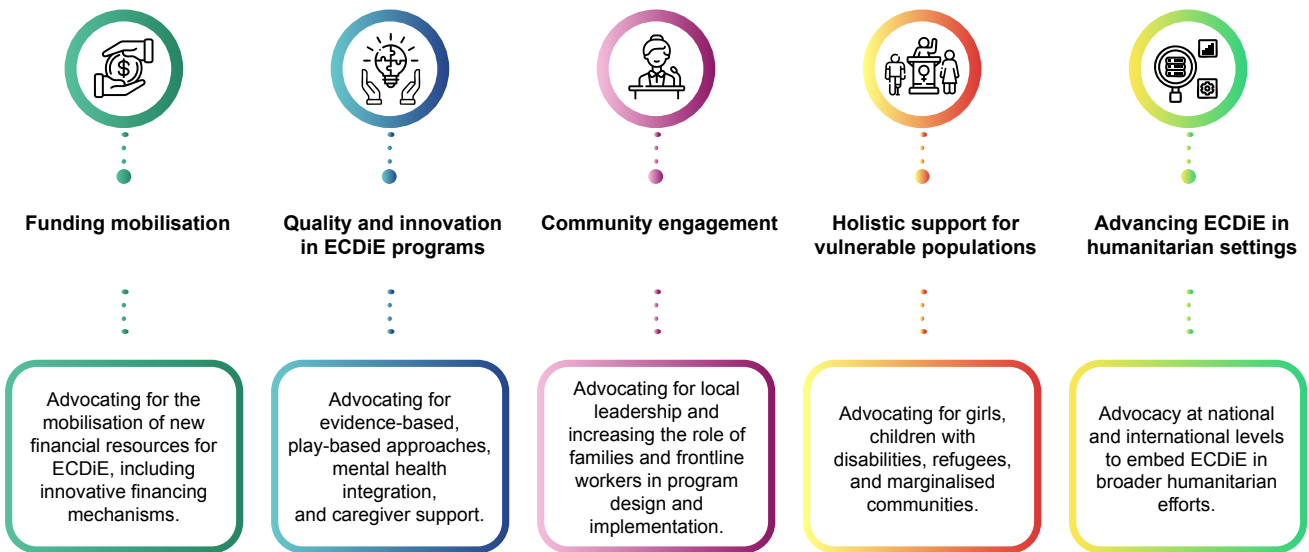
The Donor Working Group leads targeted advocacy efforts with key governments and institutions, aiming to secure commitments through strategic messaging and events like the Nutrition for Growth Summit. The Innovative Finance group has undertaken research to identify potential innovative financial mechanisms to support children affected by crises, while Lifting Local Voices prioritises empowering local actors through training and advocacy support. The Humanitarian Coordination group works to enhance multi-sectoral coordination in crisis situations, and the Global Events group focuses on strategic event planning and ensuring local expert participation in international forums.

The working groups have made significant progress in various areas, including developing strategic work plans, creating terms of reference for financial analysis and advocacy training, supporting the onboarding of the EAG, planning local advocacy efforts in SWANA and East Africa, and strengthening the MMA's localisation initiative. Despite these achievements, the groups face several challenges, such as political instability, limited representation and engagement with local actors, and leadership changes, to name a few. To address these issues, they have requested support in streamlining processes, enhancing collaboration, and securing funding for priority initiatives. This feedback and other insights will guide the MMA as we continue to refine our working groups in alignment with our recently finalised 2025-2030 strategy and broader goals.

## Advocacy and Consultation

MMA completed a mapping of members' advocacy priorities in May 2024.

It identified the following top priorities:



MMA members reported working across different regions like SWANA, Africa, Asia Europe, and LATAM in numerous countries like Bangladesh, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda, Kenya, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Jordan, Ethiopia, and Colombia. The full report on the advocacy mapping can be found [here](#).

## Working Group Spotlights

### Donor Advocacy (World Bank)

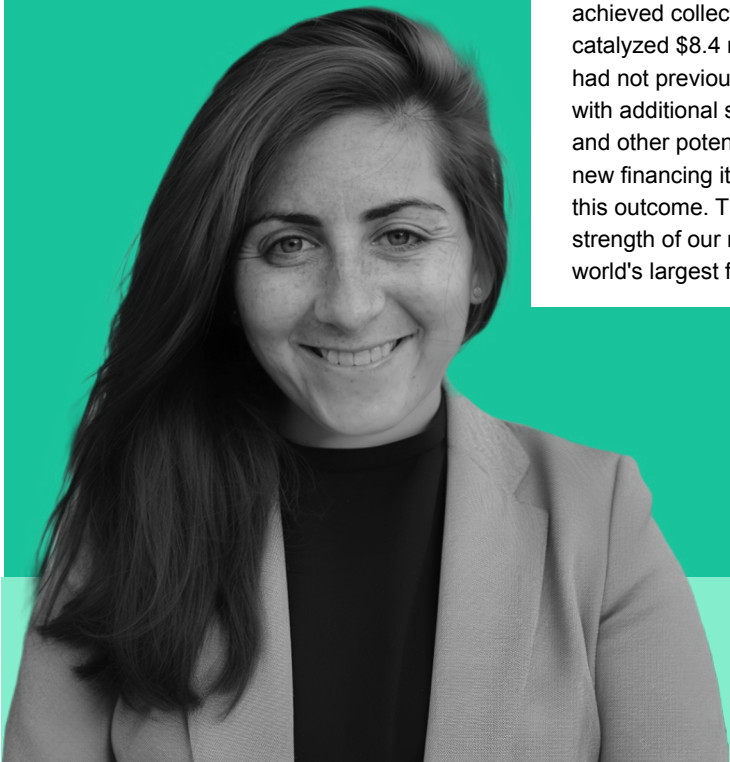
The ELP, with support from MMA funders, launched its ECD in settings of FCV work program in September 2021. This initiative provided \$2.1 million in catalytic grants to 13 countries: Burundi, Colombia, Iraq, Lebanon, Moldova, Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Zambia. An additional 27 grants were awarded to other FCV countries, totalling \$8.4 million. The program adopts an approach that the ELP team has utilised since 2012 to engage World Bank management, country teams, and governments in promoting higher-quality investments in ECD.

Key achievements of the program include reaching 904,905 children with quality ECD services, generating \$500 million in new ECD financing through ELP engagement, and the ratification of the National ECD policy framework in Ethiopia. Additionally, 16 countries received technical support for measuring child development outcomes, 135 policymakers participated in professional development, and three global guidance notes will be released by early 2025. The programme has also faced challenges such as data gaps, underdeveloped mental health sectors, and implementation delays due to government changes. Future plans include increasing cross-country exchanges, providing technical support for psychosocial needs, addressing data gaps, and integrating ECD into refugee education systems through the INSPIRE program.



Collaborating with this small but dynamic network of stakeholders has broadened my perspective on systemic change and reinforced the importance of collective action. Being part of MMA has strengthened my resolve to navigate the complexities of funding and programmatic alignment, proving that even complex issues like ECDiE can be prioritized when approached strategically. If we can do it, this model can—and should—be replicated worldwide.

One of my proudest accomplishments has been the work we achieved collectively with the World Bank. We successfully catalyzed \$8.4 million in funding for ECDiE—an area the Bank had not previously invested in. This amount is expected to grow with additional support and interest from FCDO through INSPIRE and other potential donors. However, I am not just proud of the new financing itself, but of the strategy we developed to reach this outcome. Through a clear vision, resource pooling, and the strength of our network, we secured a commitment through the world's largest financier, and that means something.



**Elana Banin**  
Policy Advisor  
International Rescue Committee

## Innovative Finance

The Innovative Finance Working Group (IFWG) completed a major Landscaping Review on Innovative Finance to Support Children, Caregivers and Families Affected by Crisis, Displacement, and Fragile Contexts. Led by Katy Anis from Coalescence Advisory Services, this document is a primer for individuals from the worlds of child development, innovative finance, or crisis situations who wish to be able to ‘cross more than one world’ to work at the intersection of innovative finance for children and caregivers experiencing crisis and fragility. The landscaping is intended to contribute to stimulating the wider field. An internal companion piece will guide the Moving Minds IFWG in developing a vision and plan to support young children and their caregivers in crisis. This piece discusses intersectionality with MMA working groups, potential collaborations, and plans of action.

The IFWG continues to seek ways to engage and amplify its key messages, emphasising the critical need for new financing mechanisms to address global challenges, particularly in light of insufficient traditional development finance. The group advocates for leveraging diverse policy levers, fostering new partnerships across sectors, and aligning financial flows from both public and private sources to achieve sustainable development goals. The group stresses the importance of evolving innovative finance instruments, identifying synergies between SDG outcomes, and developing practical, measurable proposals for donors and governments. Their work underscores the necessity of creating mandatory frameworks that align all financial flows with overarching objectives while highlighting innovative finance’s potential to increase funding volume, efficiency, and effectiveness for development initiatives.



I am currently serving as the Innovative Finance Working Group Co-Lead. Serving in this role has been deeply fulfilling because it allows me to connect very different worlds together; a core area of focus for me centers around nexus of holistic human development and movement of resources. This work in innovative finance with MMA is a prime space with urgent pressing need for us to find ways for those who speak the language of humanitarian aid, early childhood, finance and a plethora of other interrelated areas to forge paths to work together and make good things happen in the world. Seeing the whole hearted response and interest from external stakeholders and internal actors in core themes of landscaping on Innovative Finance to Support Children, Caregivers and Families Affected by Crisis, Displacement, and Fragile Contexts, has been portent with potential.



**Katy Anis**  
Coalescence Advisory Services  
Co-lead, Innovative Finance Working Group



## Strategic Engagements

In the course of the year, MMA participated in series of strategic events including:

- **A FECN Conference:** MMA advocated for investing in ECDiE and highlighted the role of local partners like LABE and Little Ripples.
- **ECDAN Workshop:** MMA joined efforts to boost locally-led childcare advocacy and develop funding strategies for grassroots campaigns.
- **Elevate Children Funders Group:** MMA's Director, Tricia led a session on funding local ECDiE actors, promoting integrated support for caregivers and children.
- **Saving Brains Case Clinic:** Delegates shared insights on MMA's work in response to innovations for children in Kakuma Refugee Camp, alongside organisations like Cohere and NRC.
- **Child Arise Project:** The "Child Voices in Colombia" project concluded with the launch of the new multimedia [resources](#) capturing migrant children's stories, developed with partners including IRC and La Otra Juventud (the local partner).
- **Summit of the Future:** MMA advocated for ECDiE, highlighting its role in achieving the SDGs and building resilient societies through its [press release](#) and [advocacy brief](#).
- **Act for the Early Years Campaign:** MMA joined the inaugural advisory meeting and is commissioning research to track and influence ECDiE funding in crisis settings.
- **Education Cannot Wait:** MMA advocated for holistic ECDiE support and highlighted barriers to local funding access. Plans are underway to research innovative financing for ECDiE.
- **Wilton Park Meeting:** MMA emphasised integrating refugee children into national education systems and advocated for early learning, inclusion of lived experience, and shifting narratives around refugees. [Read the blog here.](#)

Group photo taken after the Wilton Park meeting on integration of refugee children in national education systems.



## Annual Meeting

In November, MMA convened its 2024 Annual Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, bringing together 43 participants around the theme of 'Building a Stronger Network'. 32 participants were from MMA member organisations. 11 non-members attended, including local refugee-led organisation representatives, members from the EAG, and other guests.<sup>1</sup>

The overarching objective of the Annual Meeting was to harness the diverse expertise of network members to further its mission. Critically, this year, the intention was to explore how MMA can meaningfully engage local actors to support children and communities affected by crisis and displacement and to co-create actionable plans for 2025 and beyond, to ensure that their needs are at the forefront of global, regional and national agendas.

The first day was focused on reviewing past successes, current strengths, and future potential. The Alliance has successfully united diverse stakeholders, impacted donor funding through key analyses, and developed valuable advocacy resources. Future potential lies in strengthening local collaborations, advocating for direct funding, and becoming a leading voice in localising humanitarian efforts.

Day two of the meeting delved into localisation through panel discussions and member-led sessions. Participants generated insights on creating a shift in the crisis response system, establishing pathways to localisation, and exploring innovative financing options. Key takeaways included empowering local leadership, driving systemic change, enhancing collaboration and knowledge sharing, and focusing on measurable impact and continuous learning.

The third day, facilitated discussions on advocacy priorities, and engaged participants in brainstorming strategic objectives. Innovative advocacy approaches were proposed, including collaborating with non-ECD sectors, supporting locally-led initiatives, and utilising existing networks to amplify advocacy efforts.

Overall, the Annual Meeting provided an excellent opportunity for engagement, connection, collaboration, and learning among MMA members. It highlighted the importance of integrating and genuinely engaging with local actors. The feedback and engagement from the meeting have subsequently supported the development of MMA's new 2025-2030 Strategy.

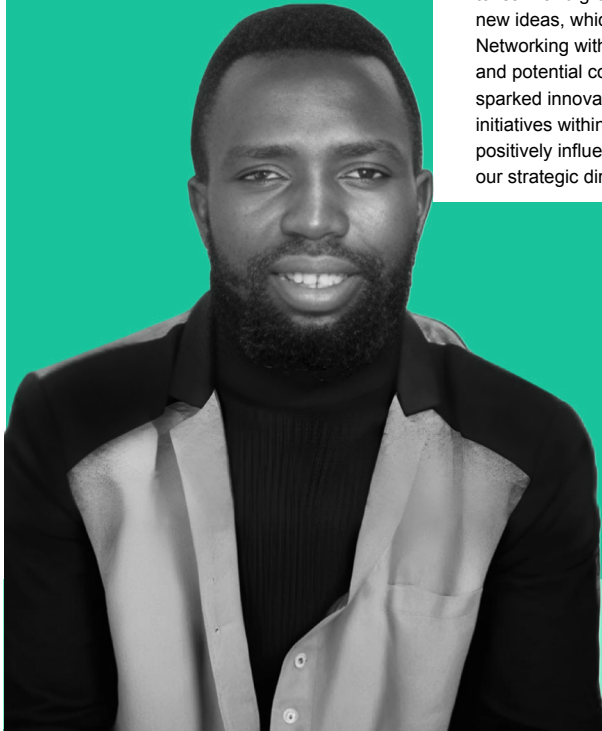


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<sup>1</sup>3 from Expert Advisory Group, 2 consultants, 3 guests, and 3 refugee local organisation representatives.



Participating in the MMA 2024 Annual Meeting was a highly enriching experience. It provided an excellent platform for networking with different leaders, sharing ideas, and exploring innovative strategies. Overall, it was an invaluable opportunity to learn and grow within the humanitarian landscape. I gained new ideas, which I've already begun to implement in my work. Networking with different peers led to valuable connections and potential collaborations. Additionally, the discussions sparked innovative ideas that have inspired new projects and initiatives within my organization. Overall, the experience has positively influenced both my professional development and our strategic direction.



**Matabishi John**  
Founder and Chief Executive Officer  
Kakuma Vocational Center



I've been lucky to work with the Moving Minds Alliance for the past four years, with a focus on humanitarian coordination work. It's been an amazing opportunity to learn from and grow with a really committed group of implementers and advocates. I've particularly valued the insights and experience of our partners who are doing direct work with national governments, as I think that's some of the most important and impactful advocacy work there is.



**Emily Garin**  
Senior Director of Advocacy  
Sesame Workshop



## Global Engagement and Crisis Response

MMA convened its members and partners to address urgent needs in Gaza, Palestine, facilitating collaboration between local Palestinian partners and global members. This led to tangible outcomes such as:

1. Amna providing trauma-informed MHPSS training to community workers in Palestine
2. UNICEF offering a safe center with internet access for online training in the West Bank
3. Juzoor<sup>1</sup> mobilising staff and partners to support children and caregivers
4. Launch of the “[Shofoo Bi Oyouni: See through my eyes](#)” communications campaign

## Strengthening Localised Approaches: MMA's Journey in 2024

MMA's focus on localisation is rooted in the evidence that local actors possess invaluable knowledge of their contexts, strong community ties, and trusted relationships. They are uniquely positioned to lead effective and sustainable responses that align with community priorities. Over the past few years, MMA has explored localisation through the 2023 Theory of Change, Humanitarian Systems Map, and Working Groups. This work has informed the new Strategic Framework detailed in section 3 of this Annual Report.

Moving forward, MMA aims to adopt a holistic approach to localisation, combining global and local advocacy, leveraging existing local capacity, and ensuring inclusivity. The Alliance will serve as a convener, facilitator, and bridge between diverse stakeholders, fostering meaningful dialogue and collaborative decision-making. By prioritising locally-led approaches and addressing systemic power dynamics, MMA is committed to transforming the humanitarian landscape, ultimately centering the needs of children and families affected by crises.

MMA strengthened its advocacy to become more local, focusing especially on:

1. Increasing funding for ECDiE
2. Prioritising holistic humanitarian coordination
3. Supporting local ECDiE advocacy efforts
4. Enhancing self-reliance through locally-led ECDiE systems

Consultations with refugee- and locally-led organisations, involving 31 survey respondents and 5 key informant interviews from Africa, Asia, SWANA, Europe, and LATAM, revealed that 96.8% of participating organisations were motivated to join MMA, and provided crucial insights into local ECDiE needs, opportunities, and challenges. These consultations revealed that respondents:

- Would welcome engagement with MMA as it would afford them more opportunities for networking, resource access, and increased visibility
- Anticipated challenges with engagement including resource constraints and power imbalances
- Would require robust communication channels and experience sharing
- Have a need for advocacy skills training, crisis coordination, and research support

The full report on these consultations can be found [here](#).

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<sup>1</sup>Juzoor is a Palestinian NGO dedicated to improving the health and well-being of Palestinian families.



## Section 3: Knowledge, Research & Learning

MMA is committed to amplify locally-led research and knowledge, develop key pieces of information and tools for ECDiE advocacy, and engage in knowledge and learning.

In line with this commitment, in 2023 MMA launched its Research Forum on Young Children in Emergencies. The Forum supports the generation of evidence and learning on ECDiE from diverse contexts affected by issues of crises and displacement. We are thankful to Unbounded Associates who supported the development and launch of the Forum as well as the development and promotion of critical knowledge products.

### Research Fellowship Programme

The Research Fellowship program supports early career researchers from the Global South to carry out studies on issues related to young children and their caregivers in emergency contexts by providing a one-time research stipend for research activities; convening a community of practice of researchers around the world who are focusing on young children and families in climate emergency contexts; and providing opportunities for knowledge sharing, mentoring, and dissemination of their research to a global audience through learning events and webinars. The first cohort of the Research Fellowship Programme completed five individual pieces of research highlighting ECD in Emergencies, highlighting five countries: Bangladesh, Uganda, Lebanon, Kenya, and Nigeria:

1. Essential Newborn Care Knowledge, Practices and their Determinants among Mothers in Internally Displaced Persons camps in Northern Nigeria (**Toluwase A. Olufadewa**)
2. Barriers and Enablers of Psychosocial Stimulation Support through the Care Group Approach in the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, Uganda (**Francis Eddie Boyenge**)
3. The Impact of the Economic Crisis and Displacement on the Early Screening of Developmental Difficulties, Lebanon (**Dr. Hiba Mohammad Kassir**)
4. Exploring Roles of Family Dynamics in Providing Nurturing Care to Children of Rohingya Families Living in Refugee Camps in Bangladesh (**Md. Jakirul Islam**)
5. Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition, Development, and the Use of Technology among Urban Refugees and Host Communities in Nairobi, Kenya: A Qualitative Study (**Joyce Marangu**)

The full research compendium report can be found [here](#).

In the coming year, we are expanding the Research Fellowship Programme to include ten researchers, with a focus on the nexus between climate change emergencies, mental health, and early childhood development.

### Study into the Humanitarian Response in Moldova for the Ukrainian Refugee Crisis

In 2024, MMA commissioned a case study to capture lessons learned from the Republic of Moldovan response to forcibly displaced Ukrainian children and caregivers during the 2.5 years of the war in Ukraine. The case study was intended to contribute to a deeper understanding of how existing and new stakeholders across Moldova mobilised to provide critical ECDiE services and to identify those factors which enabled a successful response, and also generate insights into the challenges, barriers, and power dynamics. The case study aims to provide a tangible country-based example of how the humanitarian system does (or does not) respond to ECDiE and practically illustrate the issues identified in the more conceptual systems map produced by MMA in 2023. To produce the study, MMA partnered with ISSA, the ECD Regional Network for Europe and Central Asia, which is a member of MMA, and with Step by Step (Pas cu Pas) Moldova, a member organisation of ISSA.

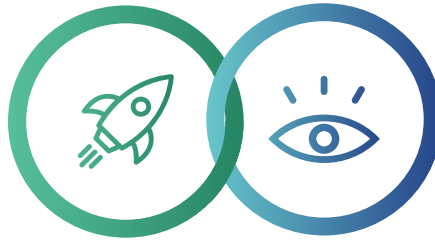
The findings from the study were presented and workshopped at the 2024 ISSA Conference, with researcher Dr. Diana Cheianu-Andrei and MMA representatives. The exercise enabled a rapid assessment of barriers and enablers in the humanitarian response system, by employing systems thinking and engaging a range of participants to develop tangible, proprietary suggestions for their contexts.

## Section 4: 2025 - A Transition Year

### Looking Forward: New Strategic Framework

The rapid and profound changes affecting the complex global environment that governs humanitarian and development responses were unforeseen. Nevertheless, MMA, in collaboration with a diverse array of stakeholders within this ecosystem, has consistently advocated for a transformed system that equitably distributes global resources to crisis-affected populations. These resources encompass both funding and power, and a more equitable distribution will enable affected populations to assume their rightful roles as key stakeholders with the capacity to influence policies and financing aimed at benefiting their children.

The new MMA Strategic Framework is designed to realise this ambition and to influence the state of ECDiE and crisis-response in a fractured and transforming global order. Business as usual cannot be the order of the day and this is reflected in our strategic goal to **strengthen and re-imagine crisis response to best meet the needs of young children.**



**MMA's new vision** is for a world in which families and communities affected by crisis can nurture the wellbeing and development of their young children and uphold their rights.

**MMA's new mission** is to advocate for better outcomes and equity for young children affected by crises everywhere.

Through this process, MMA has clarified and articulated its identity as an advocacy impact alliance and defined its shared purpose as a multi-stakeholder alliance advocating for early childhood development in every crisis response, leveraging the strengths of diverse actors, from the local to the global.

The systems-focused strategic priorities of the new MMA strategy are intended to ensure that MMA can respond effectively to the needs of young children and their caregivers in our fragile and rapidly evolving global environment. The strategy is intended to be future proofed and does not rely on traditional donor partners or political powers to be successful.

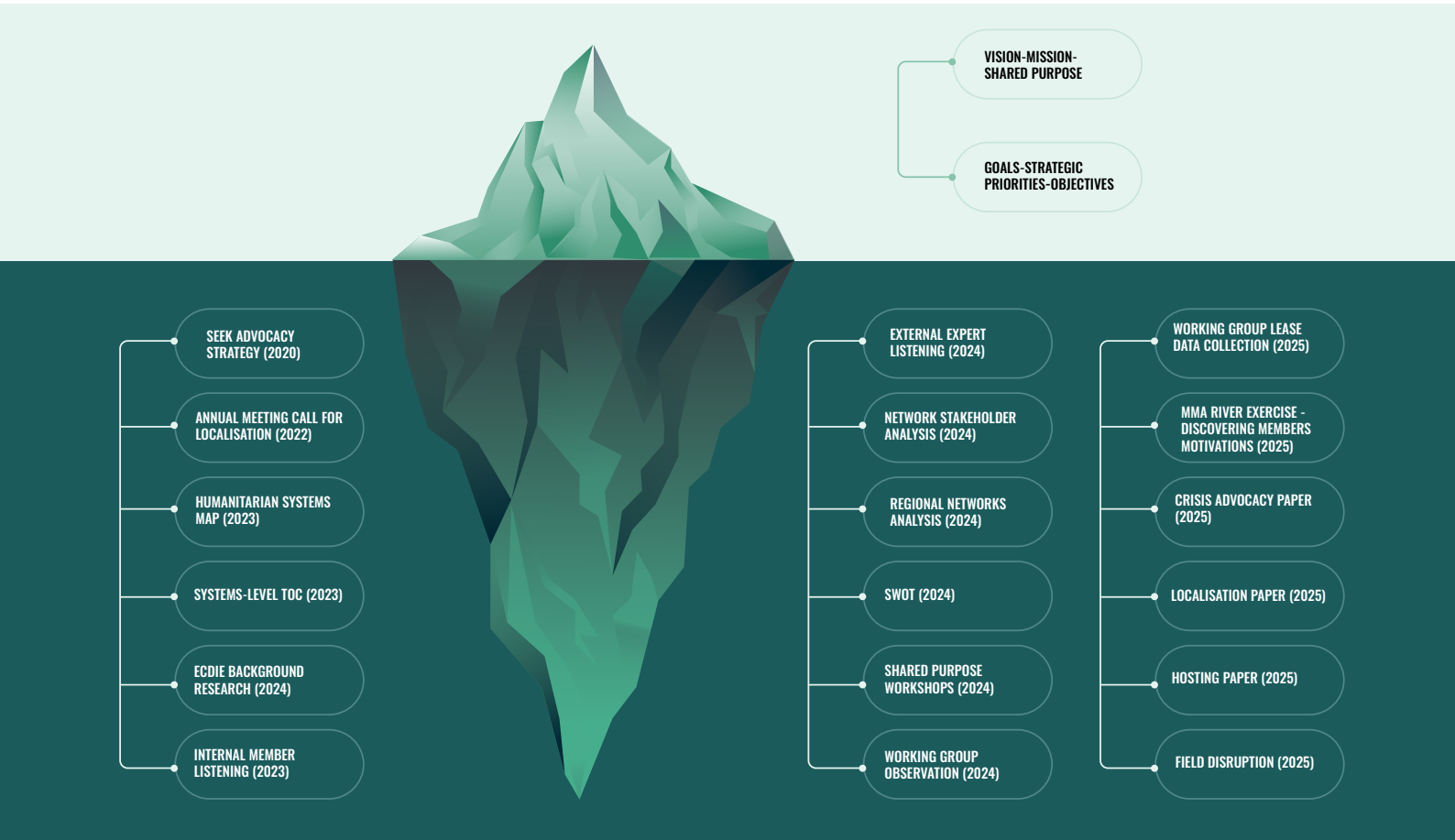
**To this end, our strategic priorities are:**

1. Growing, developing and diversifying the community of early childhood development in emergencies advocates.
2. Accelerating innovation and new ways of working in crisis response.
3. Generating and promoting uptake of evidence and learning.

As 2025 marks the first year of our Strategic Framework, we will lay a strong foundation to build on in the coming years. The strategic objectives and specific plans for 2025 are outlined in subsequent pages of this report.

Involving members in shaping the 2025-2030 Strategy

In June, MMA commissioned the development of a new strategy that reflected the aspirations and abilities of members whilst respecting, leveraging and building upon past strategic undertakings. Mialy Dermish, the consultant who led this work, had previously represented the Van Leer Foundation on the MMA Steering Committee. Prior to that, she was the Executive Director of the SIRIUS Policy Network for Migrant Education, therefore bringing a wealth of knowledge about the MMA, and multinational multi-stakeholder networks, which has been invaluable for the strategy development process.



The strategy development process generated critical insights. Background research on the field of ECDiE identified growing areas and regions of the world where the humanitarian system does not reach and where rapid advancements in digital technologies are being created and used by those present on the ground. A landscape analysis deepened understanding about the complex ecosystem in which MMA operates, identifying numerous coalitions, alliances and networks within the ECDiE advocacy space and a saturation of players in the field.

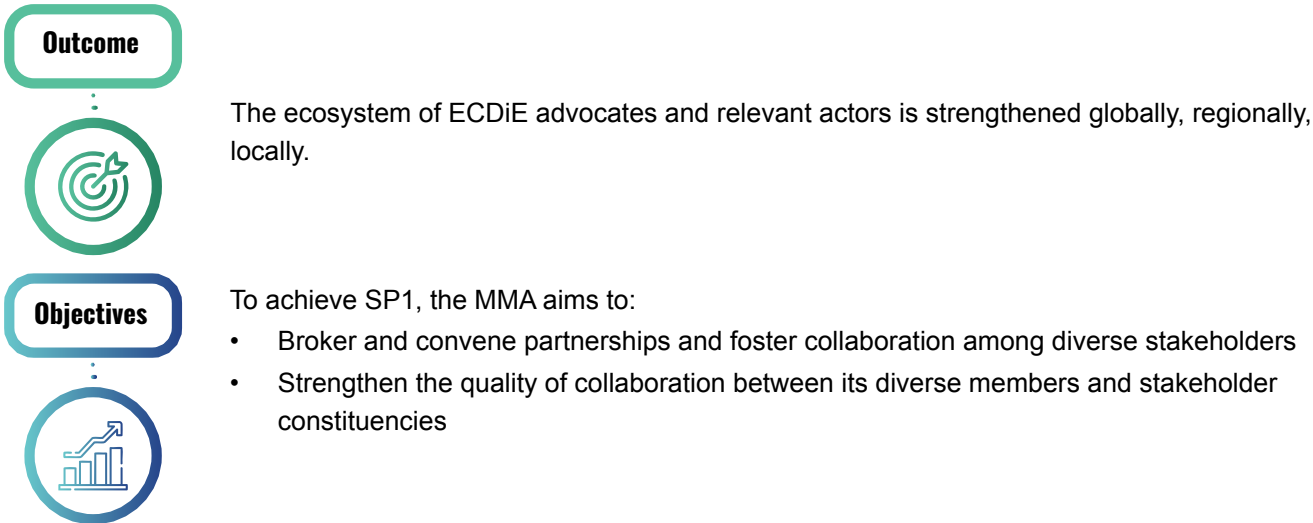
These insights complemented learning generated by other network directors within MMA, and a report from Seedling Education which highlighted the critical importance of understanding how networks in the

ECDiE space could thrive, grow and be more effective; and how they could collaborate more impactfully on ECDiE advocacy.

Members and stakeholders from the MMA ecosystem actively engaged with new insights during the 2024 Annual Meeting. Through listening exercises, workshops, and activities, members shared their interests, aspirations, and perspectives on their engagement with MMA. Inputs collected via Mentimeter informed the Strategic Framework development.

Key agreements highlighted MMA’s unique focus on advocacy for ECDiE and its multi-stakeholder membership, which enhances collaborative advocacy and impact in the ECDiE field.

Strategic Priority 1 (SP1): Grow, develop and diversify the community of ECDiE advocates



MMA will achieve this outcome through:

- Membership Growth:** MMA will expand and diversify its membership annually, engaging key stakeholders in ECDiE advocacy including organisations focused on nurturing care domains not yet sufficiently represented within the Alliance.
- Strategic Partnerships:** MMA will establish strategic partnerships with global and regional networks, refugee and locally-led networks, and influential stakeholders to strengthen collaborative action on advocacy to strengthen ECDiE.
- Engaging Collaborators:** MMA will increase engagement with stakeholders outside the ECD ecosystem to ensure that these diverse actors understand why supporting young children and caregivers affected by crises and displacement should be everyone’s priority. Stakeholders to be targeted will include the private sector, diaspora groups, governments, and organisations focused on diverse intersectional issues impacting crisis-affected families.
- Convening:** MMA will strengthen the ECDiE advocacy community through diverse virtual and in-person events to foster participation, collaboration, and knowledge enhancement.

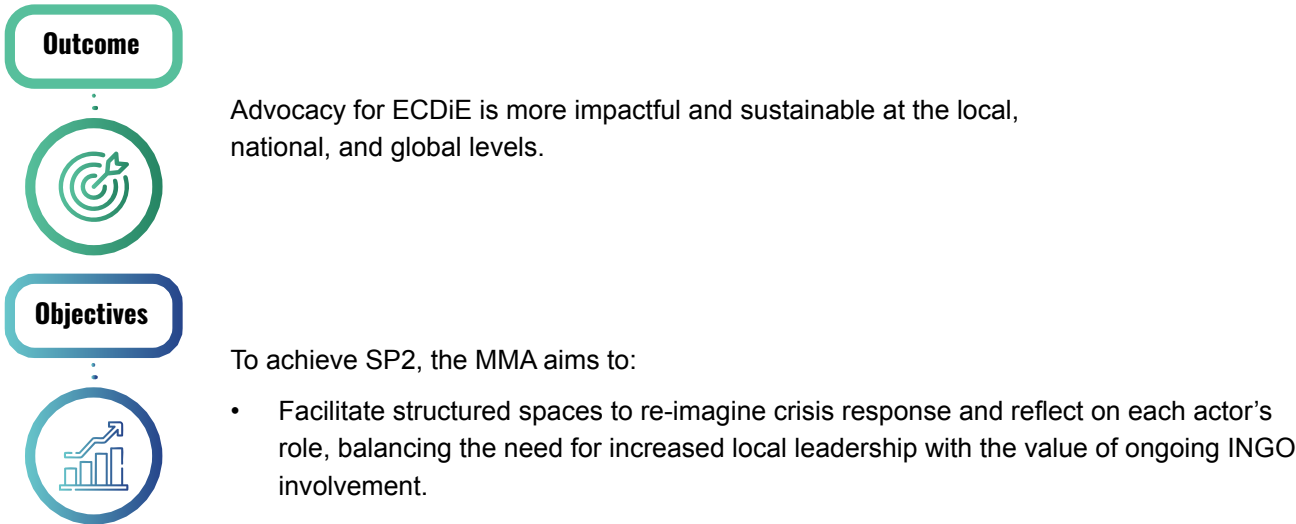
2025 SP1 Actions:

To build on MMA’s existing connections and ambitious goals for strengthening the ECDiE advocacy ecosystem, and enable the Alliance to grow in meaningful and purposeful ways, we will:





Strategic Priority 2 (SP2): Accelerate innovation and new ways of working in crisis response

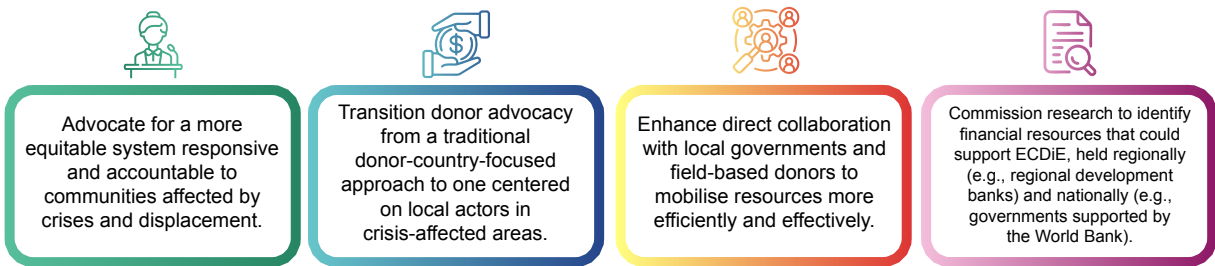


MMA will achieve these outcomes and objectives through:

- Enhanced Partnerships:** Increase the quality and quantity of partnerships between INGO members and refugee-led and locally-led partners, exemplifying good partnership practices.
- Coordinated Advocacy:** Strengthen coordinated advocacy with all actors in the ECDiE ecosystem to address the full continuum of decision-makers and influencers.
- Tool and Data Engagement:** Increase engagement, development, and uptake of tools and data-sharing mechanisms co-developed with a wider range of stakeholders, including communities with lived experience.
- Investment Commitments:** Secure commitments to increased investments for locally-led and nationally-led ECDiE from key stakeholders, including national and donor governments and innovative finance actors.
- Mainstreaming Critical Issues:** Identify and mainstream emergent mission-critical issues such as climate, new ways of working, including Innovative Financing, use of tech and data through the membership and wider ECDiE advocacy community.
- Rapid Mobilisation:** Rapidly mobilise members and engage stakeholders active in emerging crisis geographies to promote awareness and uptake of relevant ECDiE advocacy and other resources by wider stakeholders (including journalists).

2025 SP2 Actions:

MMA will utilise existing structures to connect local advocacy efforts to global initiatives. and mobilise local and national advocates to lead ECDiE advocacy. In 2025, we will:



Strategic Priority 3 (SP3): Generate and promote uptake of evidence and learning

Outcome



Uptake of contextually relevant evidence and learning has strengthened ECDiE investments, policies, and practices.

Objectives



- To achieve SP3, the MMA aims to:
- Enable contextually relevant knowledge production co-created with communities with lived experience.
  - Enhance the body of quality evidence and learning on contextually relevant ECDiE generated by local researchers and other stakeholders.
  - Identify and showcase best practices.

MMA will achieve these outcomes and objectives through:

- **Learning Exchanges:** Convene learning and knowledge exchanges between national and regional researchers, knowledge partners, and policy makers to promote the uptake of contextually relevant evidence and learning.
- **Showcasing Innovations:** Showcase innovations in ECDiE leadership, programs, resourcing, and advocacy by diverse stakeholders.
- **Annual Journal:** Publish and promote awareness of the annual Nurturing Futures journal, harnessing diverse perspectives, evidence, and learning on ECDiE.
- **Information Sharing:** Contribute to information sharing to support swift collaborative advocacy and resource mobilisation.
- **Crisis Engagement:** Ensure MMA members present and engaged in crises contribute to sharing developments impacting ECD through MMA infrastructure and fora.

2025 SP3 Actions:

This year, we will:



Launch Reporters for Early Age Child in Humanitarian Crisis (REACH) Network, a global movement of reporters dedicated to improving care and support for young children and their caregivers in emergencies, displacement, and crises.



Revamp Webinar Series: Launch two webinar series aimed at engaging a broader range of ECDiE stakeholders, spotlighting sustainable and innovative ECD programs, sharing valuable lessons, and exploring collaboration opportunities.



Develop Digital Hub: Create a fully branded, mobile-optimised digital hub to streamline communication, knowledge sharing, and community engagement, providing tailored user experiences.



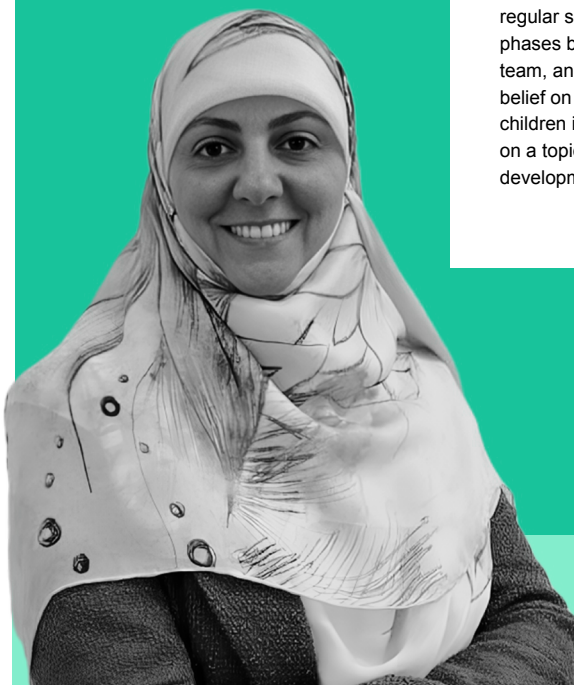
Launch the 2025-26 Research Fellowship Programme to explore the nexus between climate change emergencies, mental health, and ECD, with a cohort of 10 researchers from the Global South.



Partner with a locally-based or regional network in the SWANA region to deliver a research-focused advocacy event showcasing topical research in multiple priority areas related to ECD in crisis.



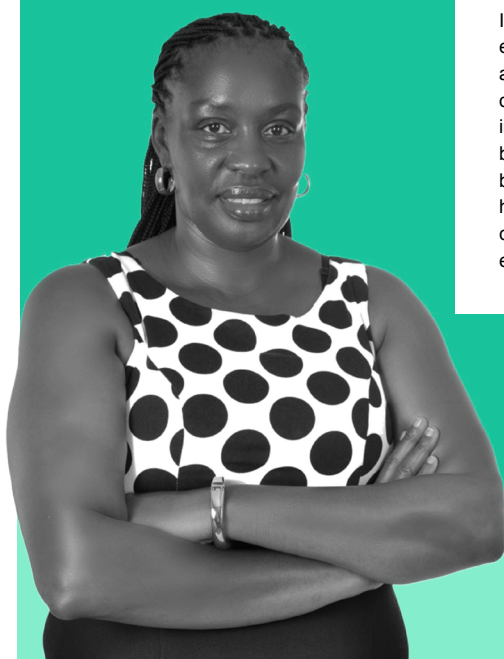
Develop a robust monitoring, evaluation, research, learning, and accountability framework to complement the new strategic priorities and direction of the MMA.



Conducting my research through the MMA Research Forum was a rich experience due to the opportunity to interact with researchers from different countries and fields, which helped adopt new views in early childhood research.

Additionally, the necessary support was secured through regular scientific seminars, mentorship of the research phases by the Arab Network Early Childhood Development team, and provision of required resources. The MMA team's belief on the importance of early childhood for families and children in crises and displacement made it possible to work on a topic related to mental health during a critical developmental stage and in challenging circumstances.

**Dr Hiba Mohammad Kassir**  
MMA Research Fellow



In 2024, LABE made history by becoming the first locally-led organisation to join the Moving Minds Alliance. As part of this influential alliance, I contribute LABE's expertise in community-driven education, particularly in Uganda's refugee-hosting districts. This collaboration provides me with a platform to showcase our innovative educational models, such as home-based ECD, while engaging a broader network of organizations and policymakers.

I actively participate in multi-stakeholder dialogues that focus on elevating local voices, advancing innovative financing for ECD, and reimagining humanitarian action. Through these discussions, I advocate for inclusive and sustainable educational interventions, ensuring that education in emergencies remains both accessible and effective. This involvement has significantly broadened my professional network and perspectives on humanitarian work, strengthening my role in LABE and our collective mission to drive transformative change in the education sector, particularly in crisis settings.

**Stellan Tumwebaze**  
Executive Director  
LABE Uganda

## Section 5: MMA Financial Statement 2024

### Financial Statement January 1<sup>st</sup> - December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024

MMA is hosted by IRC and MMA administers a pooled fund supported by contributions for membership fees and activity grants from its members. The pooled fund enables the implementation of MMA program activities and covers MMA operational costs.

The annual budget that consists of programme and operational costs is presented to the MMA Steering Committee for review and approval before the start of each financial year.

Income and expenditure for the reporting period have been prepared using the accrual basis of accounting and are detailed below.

	Amount (USD)	Amount (USD)
	2024	2023
Income received	316,351	1,193,617
Expenditure reported	1,105,522	861,656

	expenditure (USD)	expenditure (USD)
	2024	2023
MMA Operations	434,213	300,321
MMA Networking and Activity Costs	570,808	483,002
Total direct cost	1,005,020	783,323
Indirect cost recovery at 10%	100,502	78,332
Total cost	1,105,522	861,656

During the reporting period, MMA received income from the following organisations, listed in alphabetic order: Porticus and Van Leer Foundation.

Expenditure covers all costs related to the implementation of MMA initiatives, including: Alliance strengthening and engagement; joint advocacy and communications campaigns; strategy, learning and development; knowledge curation and production; and, localisation. Operational costs are also included, such as MMA's hosting fees from IRC, salaries of the MMA core team, and office and Alliance running expenses.

Overall, MMA ended its financial year on December 31, 2024, with an underspend of 26% against the approved budget of \$1.5 million.

### Budget Variance Analysis

2024	Budget (USD)	Actuals (USD)	Variance (USD)	Variance (%)
MMA Operations	478,185	434,213	43,973	91%
MMA Networking and Activity Costs	885,720	570,808	314,912	64%
Total direct cost	1,363,905	1,005,020	358,885	74%
Indirect cost recovery at 10%	136,391	100,502	35,889	74%
Total cost	1,500,296	1,105,522	394,774	74%

The operations budget specifically reflected an underspending of 9% against the approved budget. This was primarily due to reduced staff costs stemming from the IRC restructuring and redundancy processes, as well as lower-than-anticipated office and alliance operational expenses.

MMA's networking and activity budget shows an overall underspending of 36% against the approved budget. The main contributing factor for underspending was that activities did not proceed due to the ongoing work to finalize the MMA Strategy and Structure.



## Section 6: Acknowledgements

### Our Valued Partners



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our visionary funders whose generous support fuels our mission. In alphabetical order:

**LEGO Foundation:** Building a future where learning through play unleashes every child’s potential.

**Porticus:** Contributing to a just and sustainable world where human dignity flourishes.

**Van Leer Foundation:** Championing early childhood development for a more peaceful, prosperous world.

**W.K. Kellogg Foundation:** Empowering communities through education and child development.

We thank our valued members whose expertise and commitment have been instrumental to our success:

### Steering Committee Members

Andrea Torres  
Dieuwerke Luiten  
Gabriella Brent  
Joel Dieudonne (Co-Chair)  
Katie Murphy (Co-Chair)  
Leah Anyanwu  
Liana Ghent  
Nadya Hossain

Van Leer Foundation  
Porticus  
Amna  
Unbounded Associates  
International Rescue Committee  
The LEGO Foundation  
International Step-by-Step Association  
BRAC

### Outgoing Steering Committee Members

Jessica Hjarrand (Resigned January)  
Mialy Dermish (Resigned April)  
Sara-Christine Dallain (Resigned June)

Porticus  
Van Leer Foundation  
iAct

### The Core Team

Lola Ayanda  
Nour Jarrouj  
Sarah Ul haq  
Tricia Young  
Victoria Murphy

Network Communications Manager  
Senior Manager, Engagement (Advocacy)  
Knowledge Management and Learning Lead  
Director  
Operations Officer

### Expert Advisory Group

Cheng Laban Ndoh  
Dulguun Batmunkh  
Ihab Abu Ward  
Jamila Razzaq  
Kasi Jaseph Bisimway

Great Step Initiative  
Independent  
Independent  
Independent  
Cohere

### Working Group Co-leads

Elana Banin, Donor Advocacy  
Dr Ghassan Issa, Humanitarian Coordination  
Kavita Rajagopalan, Global Events  
Katy Anis, Innovative Financing  
Lindsay Sheridan, Lifting Local Voices  
Micheal Simpson, Donor Advocacy  
Muna Sarsak, Humanitarian Coordination  
Nicole Rogers, Global Events  
Priyanka Upreti, Lifting Local Voices

International Rescue Committee  
Arab Network for Early Childhood Development (ANECD)  
Global Schools Forum  
Coalescence Advisory Services  
Results Canada  
Their World  
International Rescue Committee  
Plan International  
Global Schools Forum

**Outgoing Research Forum Core Group**

Erum Mariam Co-Chair  
Dr Ghassan Issa  
Joan Lombardi Co-Chair

**Outgoing Research Forum Members**

Catherine Hidalgo Jara  
Kate Anderson  
Saba Saeed

**Outgoing Research Forum Members**

Manjuma Akhtar Mousumi  
Mohammad Safayet Khan  
Dr Jakirul Islam  
Sakila Yesmin

**Communications Hub Members**

Charlotte Davidi  
Hannah Rothschild  
Joyce Nairuba  
Maya Autret  
Priyanka Upreti  
Ruth Namara

**Outgoing Members**

Emily Garin  
Lisa Langberg  
Muna Sarsak  
Nicole Rogers

**Consultants**

Candice Duprix  
Mialy Dermish  
Sarah Hartigan

**BRAC IED**  
**Arab Network for Early Childhood Development**  
**Independent / Stanford University**

**Unbounded Associates**  
**Unbounded Associates**  
**Unbounded Associates**

**BRAC IED**  
**BRAC IED**  
**BRAC IED**  
**BRAC IED**

**Van Leer Foundation**  
**Van Leer Foundation**  
**LABE Uganda**  
**International Step-by-Step Association**  
**Global Schools Forum**  
**Unbounded Associates**

**Sesame Workshop**  
**International Rescue Committee**  
**International Rescue Committee**  
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