Annual Report 2025

Abridged Version

voice COCOA NETWORK

vocal COFFEE ALLIANCE

Table of contents

Executive Summary.....3
The VOICE Network.....8
The VOCAL Network.....28
Legal and Governance.....41
Financial Statements.....44

2025 is the first year in which the sister networks, VOICE and VOCAL, are fully functional and thus both in a position to report on their annual activities, wins, and challenges. The organisations function under the same administrative structure but are mostly separate in their activities. Therefore, you can find an overview of both networks in this report, which are divided by sector – cocoa (VOICE) and coffee (VOCAL) – one after the other to provide a complete understanding of each of them. The financial reporting has been conducted together, as the VOCAL Network is legally hosted by the VOICE Network. However, insights into the financial activities of solely VOCAL and/or VOICE are available at the secretariat upon request.

Quotes from sector stakeholders

We want to be a learning organisation. As such, we send out annual surveys, both to key external stakeholders in the cocoa and coffee sectors as well as to our members, where we ask for input in our work. Anonymised quotes from this survey can be found throughout this document, as a testimony of the work we are doing. These quotes will always be in the format of this paragraph.

Executive Summary

VOICE Network and VOCAL Alliance

Vision, alignment and a uniquely critical but constructive voice. The network is sharper than the sum of its parts.

Survey feedback from a multilateral organisation

A clear and central voice raising key issues for civil society at different levels. A central player in debates, pushing the agenda.

Survey feedback from the private sector

Our year in numbers

1 Barometer consultation
Field visit

4 Statements released
Reports launched

5 High-level meetings

Events (co)-organized
8 Speeches and interventions
at international events & webinars

9 Advocacy reports published

12 Members meetings held

33 **Members**
Hours of multi-lingual meetings

1 Barometer consultation

2 Reports launched
Field visits

3 Events (co)-organized

4 Statements released

7 Advocacy reports published
Producer consultations

8 Members meetings held
Members

9 Speeches and interventions
at international events & webinars

b

What we achieved

The past year was one of **coalition-building and system-level positioning** in an increasingly volatile political landscape.

Where in previous years our focus had been on expanding our reach and impact, driving forward new sustainability regulations, 2025 was focused on **defending advances in human rights and environmental protection**, especially in the

regulatory space.

Another key focus continues to be **ensuring rightsholders are increasingly at the table**, and that the global dialogue in cocoa and coffee becomes less focused on the Global North and is as inclusive of rightsholders as can be.

An informed and coordinated civil society

- VOICE strengthened its role as the coordination backbone of cocoa civil society during one of the most politically volatile years for sustainability regulation in recent memory. As EU sustainability legislation faced repeated delays, revisions, and deregulatory pressure, the need for structured alignment, trusted convening, and cross-regional and cross-sectoral coordination is more urgent than ever.
- VOICE ensured that civil society actors across producing and consuming countries remained informed, aligned, and able to respond strategically to rapidly changing political developments. At the same time, we deepened structural collaboration with partners in West Africa, reinforcing the inclusion of producer voices in global sustainability debates.
- VOICE members and allies were actively engaged throughout key global moments, including the Cocoa Barometer processes, Brussels Cocoa Week, and international policy discussions.
- VOCAL strengthened its foundation as a challenger in the coffee civil society space through: public liaising for member-initiative 'The Coffee Scorecard,' by joining the Global Coffee Platform and publishing an agreed set of accountability recommendations for industry, governments and finance.
- VOCAL strengthened its convening and coordinating role in the coffee space by bringing civil society together and advocating at various moments in the coffee calendar, including during World of Coffee, the Swiss Coffee Traders Association, the International Coffee Organization's Global Coffee Leaders' Forum and the Living Income Community of Practice's Indonesia Learning Journey & Forum, among other key moments.
- On cross-sectoral collaboration, VOICE/VOCAL played a key role in transitioning our multistakeholder advocacy coalitions towards a new, truly cross-commodity coalition, the Sustainable Supply Chains Coalition, bringing private sector actors from timber, rubber, soy, palm oil, and cotton into the joint advocacy space.
- VOICE deepened our South–North alignment and farmer integration into policy dialogues, including structured exchanges with our Ivorian and Ghanaian partner networks PICD and GCCP; Organising a Cocoa Barometer launch for the Ivorian cocoa sector, as well as a farm gate price workshop in Abidjan; Integration of our work with the Dutch Embassy hosted Ghana Cocoa Coalition; and LIRP consultations with non-certified farmers

Groundbreaking research on underrepresented topics

- VOICE released the 2025 Cocoa Barometer, the industry-defining state of the sector sustainability report for cocoa, providing an overview of development

changes over 1.5 decades.

- VOICE released a Cocoa Barometer Consultation Paper on the role of Good Governance for Living Income in Cocoa, outlining the key role that the public sector plays in creating an enabling environment for living income for cocoa farmers.
- VOICE, together with partners IDH and WUR, launched the Cocoa Income Inventory, providing a validated and transparent dataset platform to strengthen evidence-based advocacy on living income.
- VOICE launched the Cocoa Sustainability Research Database, a publicly accessible database of most relevant research conducted in cocoa.
- VOCAL published Percolating Responsible Procurement, a first-of-its-kind living document in coffee, advocating for ethical, responsible, and better buying practices from the perspective of producers.
- VOCAL published the key issues brief Make it a Double, advocating for people and planet in the coffee sector, outlining our core advocacy asks for the coffee sector.

Joint effective advocacy

- VOICE/VOCAL played a key role in defending the integrity of EU sustainability regulations, particularly through our collaborations in the EU Cocoa Coalition and in our leading role in shaping the EU Sustainable Supply Chains Coalition, aimed at preserving and improving both the EUDR – which faced repeated delays, simplifications, and political pressure – and the CSDDD, which underwent significant weakening through the Omnibus 1 process.
- Advocacy efforts increasingly required rapid response, coalition alignment, and cross-sector mobilisation, including engagement with companies, policymakers, and international coalitions.
- VOICE/VOCAL contributed to high-level dialogues, including engagement with EU institutions, and participation in global forums such as the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights.

Foreword

‘May you live in interesting times’. It’s an English saying that - wrongfully - attributes this as an ancient Chinese curse; you would wish this upon your enemies. And the last year, 2025, has been interesting and then some.

We started the year with the cocoa and coffee markets in chaos, with exceptionally high world market prices. We ended the year with a strongly reversed market in cocoa, and with coffee threatening to do the same.

We started the year with a delay to the EU Deforestation Regulation. We ended the year with another EUDR delay. However, we also ended the year with a new coalition of large and small companies across seven major global commodities, ready to fight the next battles. And in good news on this front, the CSDDD seems to have weathered the storm, with some damage, but it will still sail well enough.

We started the year at VOICE/VOCAL with a team of two staff members. Now we're six, and the crew is an amazing group of people who give me great confidence in the steps ahead. We’re ending the year with around 40 member organisations in the VOICE network, across all continents, with more than a third of them from origin countries. The VOCAL network is building its membership, with 8 organisations across the spectrum from activist to implementing organisations. And our CSOs in ISCO platform brings together dozens of disparate organisations in all five European ISCO countries.

Those of you who know me know I'm an avid cyclist. Many of my cycling friends will base their decision on whether to go for a ride on the weather app. If it's raining, they stay home. But some cyclists base their decision on their calendar. If you can go, you go. Rain or shine. Just wear the appropriate layers against cold, rain, wind and/or sun.

The cocoa sector in 2025 felt like pretty dismal weather to be cycling, metaphorically speaking. The past year has seen tremendous blows to our sectors, both in terms of funding cuts, of regulatory space, as well as attacks on the acknowledgement of the need for sustainability. Market disruptions, the disastrous rip-stop of USAID, price shocks and other challenges in origin countries, the global attacks on civic space, the European Commission's volte face against sustainability regulations; a perfect storm creating headwinds, downpours, and plain horrible weather for all of us.

For us at VOICE/VOCAL, it means it's time to choose what kind of organisations we will be. Will we let the weather app inform our choices? Or will we look at the calendar and see that it's high time? Do we put on the appropriate layers of protection for our personal health and sanity, gird on some extra courage and stamina, and get on the saddle? If not now, then when has the world ever needed us more?

Last year was quite a ride. Here’s looking to the road ahead and saying “let’s go!”

Antonie Fountain, Managing Director VOICE/VOCAL, June 2026

voice
COCOA NETWORK

The VOICE Network

A bit like a pebble in a shoe –

irritating, but impossible to ignore.

Survey feedback from the private sector

The VOICE Network is a coalition of more than 40 NGOs and trade unions from cocoa-producing and consuming countries, spanning every inhabited continent. Through global collaboration, independent research, and effective advocacy, we unite voices in a mission to achieve a sustainable and fair cocoa sector.

Despite generating over $100 billion annually, the cocoa industry suffers from farmer poverty, deforestation, and child labour. The VOICE Network aims to change this.

Since 2010, we have been a watchdog and catalyst for a sustainable cocoa sector, bringing underrepresented voices and critical topics to the forefront. Through groundbreaking research like the Cocoa Barometer and impactful advocacy, we have driven systemic change to make increasing living income the key concept for the sector, continuously working towards reflecting this in policies and regulations.

Our **Mission** is to be a watchdog and catalyst for a reformed cocoa sector, addressing blind spots and underrepresented issues in the value chain.

Our **Vision** is a sustainable cocoa sector, in which all stakeholders can earn a living income, under decent working conditions, where human rights – and especially child rights – are respected, within a thriving and healthy environment.

Our **Core Activities** fall into four categories:

1. Informing and coordinating civil society working on sustainable cocoa
2. Ground-breaking research and publications on under-represented topics
3. Effective advocacy at global and regional level
4. Strengthening voices of rightsholders

Our Strategic Focus Areas are:

1. Living Income and Purchasing Practices
2. Mandatory Sustainability
3. Cocoa Barometer
4. South-to-South Collaboration
5. Cross-Commodity Learning

How we deliver

Our four Core Activities

Our work focuses around four core activities:

1. Informing and aligning civil society
2. Groundbreaking research and publication
3. Effective advocacy, and
4. Strengthening the voices of rightsholders.

In addition to these four core activities, this report also provides an update on the back office work of our secretariat

Core Activity 1

An informed and coordinated civil society

We really appreciate the information flowing from cocoa-producing to and from cocoa-consuming countries. It is really valuable to know what is going on in different areas of the world and how to calibrate what we are doing.

Survey feedback from a VOICE member

What went well

- Strengthened and institutionalised South–North collaboration, deepening structured engagement with civil society platforms and reinforcing alignment on pricing, governance, and living income discussions.
- Increased membership to 33 organisations, including representation from emerging cocoa countries.
- Enhanced the visibility and participation of Global South members in international cocoa discussions.

What we learned

- With the growth of our staff, it was important to strengthen internal systems to support the institutional growth.
- Our work is also lighting the path for emerging origins to navigate the challenges of cocoa sustainability in turbulent times

What we hope to achieve in 2026

- Continue advocacy on 2025 Cocoa Barometer topics across the board, with targeted dissemination in Africa, including new frontier countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cameroon, and Nigeria, through national and regional collaborations (conferences and webinars).
- Expand dissemination to Latin America through national and regional participation in conferences and webinars, ensuring Barometer findings reach civil society and policymakers across producing regions.
- Develop targeted policy briefs summarising key Barometer messages per region and topic, making findings accessible and actionable for a range of audiences.

We facilitate an informed and coordinated civil society working on sustainable cocoa in producing and consuming countries. We do this by creating spaces where global civil society can exchange information, align strategies, and remain up to date on political, regulatory, and market developments in the cocoa sector.

In 2025, this coordination role proved particularly essential, considering the serious turbulence of the sector. Ongoing changes to EU sustainability legislation, increased cocoa price volatility, and governance debates within producing countries required rapid information sharing and structured alignment among civil society actors. VOICE ensured that members across all continents were equipped with timely updates and opportunities to coordinate responses.

Trust remains at the core of our approach. Over time, we have built strong strategic partnerships with civil society coalitions and individual organisations across West Africa, Latin America, Asia, Oceania, the United States and Europe. We put a specific focus on partnerships with producer-country platforms that bring local realities into global cocoa discussions.

Beyond our own membership, we continued to strengthen collaborations along the cocoa supply chain, engaging with relevant national cocoa platforms, international institutions, and sector stakeholders to ensure that producer-country perspectives remained embedded in global discussions. This coordination work is closely linked to VOICE's broader commitment to decolonising sustainability governance by strengthening the role of producer-country civil society in global cocoa discussions.

Core Activity 2
Groundbreaking publications on underrepresented topics

The greatest contribution of VOICE is to consistently identify, ahead of everyone else, the key issues in the cocoa sector that no one wants to address.
Survey feedback from a multilateral organisation

Putting important required actions on the agenda so they will be discussed in the sector and (hopefully) adopted at scale.
Survey feedback from a research institute

The Cocoa Barometer … has become a reference point for the entire sector, providing evidence-based, public data on challenges that many actors would rather leave unaddressed.
Survey feedback from a cocoa sector platform organisation

The Cocoa Barometer is a report that is now of major importance to the sector, unmatched in its kind, and providing clear, rigorous insights that were previously lacking.
Survey feedback from a multilateral organisation

What went well

- Publication and launch of the Cocoa Barometer 2025, including events in Brussels and Abidjan.
- Publication of the Good Governance for a Living Income in Cocoa consultation paper.
- Launch of the Cocoa Income Inventory in partnership with IDH, providing a structured and anonymised platform for cocoa income data.
- Launch of the Cocoa Sustainability Research Database.

What we learned

- With the growth of our activities, we need to become less dependent on individual researchers and authors.
- It is critical to expand our network of researchers and writers to ensure

longterm continuity and the ability to grow and diversify our activities.
- Leveraging various international platforms to disseminate the Barometer has enhanced Barometer visibility and the network, especially in origin countries.

What we hope to achieve in 2026

- Develop targeted policy briefs summarising key Barometer messages per region and topic, making findings accessible and actionable for a range of audiences.
- Start work on one or more Consultation Papers towards the next Cocoa Barometer, highlighting key questions arising in the sector.
- Start work on a second Latin America Cocoa Barometer, highlighting key developments in this upcoming cocoa-producing continent.

Since our founding in 2010, VOICE has consistently developed independent publications and analytical tools addressing the many sustainability challenges in the cocoa sector, including structural drivers of poverty and inequality, environmental degradation, and human rights abuses. Our work focuses on systemic issues that are often insufficiently examined in mainstream sustainability debates, including governance structures, purchasing practices, regulatory developments, and the distribution of value along the supply chain.

Rather than concentrating solely on project-level interventions or certification outcomes, VOICE examines how policy frameworks, market concentration, pricing mechanisms, and institutional accountability shape the living conditions of cocoa farmers. This structural perspective enables a more critical assessment of progress and identifies where sustainability efforts risk addressing symptoms rather than root causes.

In 2025, we strengthened the analytical foundation of our work by publishing thematic consultation papers, expanding sector-wide data tools, developing and launching a new research platform, and launching the latest version of the tri-yearly Cocoa Barometer. These efforts aimed to improve transparency, support methodological clarity in income measurement, and provide civil society, policymakers, and industry actors with accessible, evidence-based reference points for decision-making.

Core Activity 3: Joint effective advocacy

[VOICE shows] the willingness to engage constructively across the sector while still speaking uncomfortable truths. As a platform working with multiple stakeholders, we find it valuable that VOICE maintains a clear civil society perspective without closing the door to dialogue with industry and policymakers.

Survey feedback from a multistakeholder initiative

[We appreciate VOICE's] critical thinking about what matters most, being vocal about it in a very constructive way in small groups, and in a very clear and powerful way in the public domain.

Survey feedback from a research institute

What went well

- Coordinated joint company–civil society and cross-commodity engagement to fight the deregulation momentum, including work to avoid the reopening of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), and protecting key elements of the CSDDD in the EU's Omnibus deregulation.
- Formalisation and operationalisation of the Smallholder Sustainable Commodity Coalition (SSCC).
- In Ghana, VOICE joined the Dutch Embassy-hosted Ghana Cocoa Coalition to strategically engage in joint advocacy for policy influencing

What we hope to achieve in 2026

- Maintain pressure on the regulatory space through bilateral and coalition work, including expanding the scope to other geographies.
- Deepen engagement with the sector on necessary systemic changes to living income, especially in the space of regulations and in the space of procurement. Part of this will pivot towards structured high-level convenings with sector leaders to develop tools that are currently missing.

Joint advocacy is central to VOICE's approach to advancing structural change in the cocoa sector. By coordinating civil society organisations across producing and consuming countries, VOICE helps translate shared analysis into collective advocacy positions that can influence policy frameworks, corporate behaviour, and sector governance.

This work increasingly extends beyond the cocoa sector itself. Many of the regulatory,

market, and sustainability challenges affecting cocoa are shared across other agricultural commodities. VOICE therefore works closely with partners across commodities to align advocacy messages, strengthen civil society influence in policy processes, and ensure that the perspectives of smallholder farmers remain central to international sustainability debates.

In 2025, this coordination role became particularly important as major sustainability regulations in the European Union came under political pressure, and discussions emerged about reopening or weakening existing frameworks. VOICE helped mobilise coordinated responses across civil society and sector partners to defend regulatory ambition while continuing to advocate for structural reforms that support living incomes and sustainable production systems.

Our voice was heard across the planet and on many various stages, both bilaterally and in public. This includes events such as Amsterdam Cocoa Week, at key industry platforms such as the WCF Partnership Meetings, the ICCO Consultative Boards, ICI Board meetings, the Living Income Community of Practice, and many other fora.

Core Activity 4: Strengthening the voice of rightsholders

Members' voices and call for action were collectively conveyed to stakeholders.

Survey feedback from a West African VOICE member

Opening membership to organisations like ours shows that VOICE wants to fulfil its mission.

Survey feedback from a West African VOICE member

What went well

- Strong growth of membership in origin countries.
- Deepened collaboration with the PICD and GCCP, strengthening civil society coordination in the world's two largest cocoa-producing countries.
- Facilitated South–South dialogue on cocoa governance, pricing systems, and sustainability regulation through exchanges between civil society organisations across producing countries.
- Conducted field engagement and in-country exchanges in Côte d'Ivoire, supporting dialogue on EUDR readiness, traceability systems, and sector governance.
- Strengthened the visibility of producer-country perspectives in international cocoa discussions, ensuring that advocacy on living income, pricing, and sustainability reflects realities on the ground.

What we learned

- Leveraging collaboration with national/regional CSO platforms provided an opportunity to engage with a wide range of CSO and farmer cooperatives and broaden our footprint in origin.
- The discussion on sustainable cocoa can't only look to Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, but must include other origins, in West Africa, in Central Africa and in Latin America.
- The volatile market situation highlighted the critical value of having a coalition of members that can highlight the impacts in origin countries.
- Local presence and engagement are essential to be effective, which is why we launched the Cocoa Barometer in Côte d'Ivoire as well. At the same time, we will need to adapt publications at country/regional level going

forward.

- By intentionally disseminating the Barometer through platforms in origin, the Network's visibility has been enhanced and interest to collaborate increased.
- Creating spaces for Origin members to actively engage in network discussion has deepened their contribution to the Secretariat's mandate.
- There is a willingness for the different origin members to collaborate and develop joint advocacy actions.

What we hope to do in 2026

- Strengthen our support work in additional regions, including Latin America and other parts of West/Central Africa.
- Continue promoting Southern producer voices and active participation in key events, processes and regulations affecting them.
- Concretely build collaborative partnerships that support CSOs in emerging origins.

Strengthening collaboration among civil society organisations in cocoa-producing countries remained a key priority in 2025. In line with our commitment to decolonising the cocoa sustainability debate, VOICE worked to ensure that organisations from producing countries are not only consulted but positioned as central actors shaping sector discussions. This included deepening engagement with national civil society platforms in West Africa, while creating space for stronger South–South exchange on shared challenges such as pricing systems, governance, and sustainability regulation.

Through regular exchanges and field engagement, VOICE helped connect organisations working directly with cocoa farmers with broader international policy discussions. These efforts aim to ensure that debates shaping the future of the cocoa sector remain grounded in producer-country realities and that leadership from the Global South plays a central role in defining solutions to the sector's structural challenges.

Behind the scenes

Being able to do our convening, advocacy and publication work is only possible with an efficient secretariat. In that light, 2025 saw several major developments.

What went well

- Introduced a new membership structure to allow us to continue to grow whilst retaining internal cohesion as an advocacy network.

- Celebrated our 15th anniversary as a network.
- Grew our staff from three to seven people, spread over five countries.
- New visual identity and website.
- Consolidated internal financial and administration systems.

What we hope to do in 2026

- Develop our 2027-2030 multi-year strategy through bottom-up consultation with our members.
- Further develop internal HR and management systems.

vocal
COFFEE ALLIANCE

The VOCAL Network

The VOCAL Network is VOICE's sister network, an alliance of eight member organisations from six countries. VOCAL unites civil society to uncover and address the systemic roots of poverty and poor working conditions, deforestation, and reduced biodiversity in the coffee sector.

Early work on Vocal started in 2018, with several European NGOs and coffee sector professionals starting to think about the launch of a dedicated coffee network to drive urgency in the coffee sector. After unexpected delays due to the global pandemic, organisational design and outreach began, until we formally launched in January of 2024.

Our **Mission** is to strengthen the voice of countervailing powers to the producing industry in the coffee sector. By building a network of civil society that adequately represents the diversity in coffee across producing and consuming countries in the Global North and Global South, we act as a watchdog and catalyst for a sustainable coffee sector.

Our **Vision** is a coffee sector in which value, risk, resources and power are shared equitably between actors in order for smallholder farmers and workers to earn a living income or wage under decent working conditions, where inequalities are reduced, and human rights are respected within a thriving and healthy environment and climate.

Our **Core Activities** fall into three categories:

1. Aligning civil society working on sustainable coffee through information-sharing
2. Informing civil society through bottom-up research on underrepresented topics
3. Equipping civil society to be vocal about underrepresented issues

Our Strategic Focus Areas are:

1. Prosperous and dignified people
2. Healthy & thriving environment
3. Responsibility & transparency
4. Unfiltered accountability

How we deliver

Our Core Activities

Our work focuses around four core activities:

1. An aligned civil society
2. Groundbreaking publications
3. A vocal civil society

In addition to these four core activities, this report also provides an update on the back office work of our secretariat.

Core Activity 1

An aligned civil society

[The secretariat] is a wealth of knowledge and an important advisor for our work, offering tailored advice for upcoming reports and campaigns.

Survey feedback from a VOCAL member

Member calls are enormously helpful. Having access to the VOCAL Network email list is a great way to remain connected to the members.

Survey feedback from a VOCAL member

What went well

- Hired dedicated staff to lead VOCAL's efforts in addressing the social, environmental, and economic issues along the coffee value chain.
- Adopted a cooperation statement defining shared principles and boundaries for collaboration within the VOCAL network.
- Developed a systems analysis and started working on value chains, networks, and policy.
- Facilitated regular information-sharing and coordination among civil society organisations, enabling members to stay informed about sector developments and each other's work.

What we learned

- Civil society interested in advocating in coffee is often not well informed about the coffee sector, but rather human and environmental rights issues that arise within the sector. This complicates alignment and shared understanding of the problems in their sector, their root causes, and what solutions are necessary.
- Funding conditions for CSOs constrain resources, including human capital and their time and attention. This not only limits participation in advocacy activities for many organisations, but it also reallocates available resources towards internal organisational (fundraising) strategy and redirects attention from what may be required for sector advocacy, including learning and alignment activities, towards what is in the interest of existing donors.
- Diversity among organisations is significant, especially between Global North and Global South-based organisations. VOCAL needs to develop a

strong value proposition for Global South-based organisations, whose interests are often more local or regional. VOCAL also needs to hold the diversity of positions around stakeholder accountability, as some members are actually implementing organisations for industry, while others are extremely critical of the private sector.

What we hope to do in 2026

- Host VOCAL's secretariat and support its governance setup, membership growth, and monthly member dialogues to build the institutional infrastructure for independent civil society accountability-holding in coffee.
- Host WAKE UP Sessions, which will platform different CSOs' research, activities and insights in an informal setting for CSOs-only, to create a safe space for learning and alignment.

Our first priority is to facilitate an informed and coordinated civil society working on sustainable coffee. We do this by creating spaces where global civil society – including but not limited to VOCAL participants – are informed about current events in the sector, are aware of each other's activities, and through this, can increase their effectiveness, synergies, and alignment. VOCAL actively encourages alliance building between civil society stakeholders and strives to establish a conducive environment for civil society stakeholders (such as producers, workers, NGOs and unions) to engage and contribute to sustainable coffee discussions at both national and international levels.

By bringing together civil society organisations from the Global North and Global South, VOCAL seeks to foster a more coordinated and informed civil society presence in coffee sustainability discussions. This alignment helps strengthen the collective ability of civil society actors to engage in sector debates, contribute to policy discussions, and advocate for improvements in the social, environmental, and economic conditions across the global coffee value chain.

Beyond direct core membership, we also reach out to a broader 'outer shell' of allies and partners and regularly host workshops and meetings bringing farmer-based organisations and civil society from coffee-producing and consuming countries together.

Critical to make progress against our ambition is our ability to institutionalise joint advocacy and collaboration. Regularly participating in events, meetings, priority setting, governance, and other activities makes this possible.

Core Activity 2

Ground-breaking publications

Being able to create partnerships and collaborations with fellow members has led and is leading to some standout campaigns and projects that are creating a body of evidence that will be essential for future advocacy.

Survey feedback from a VOCAL member

What went well

- Released 'Make it a Double', outlining VOCAL's accountability framework for industry, policymakers and financial actors
- Released 'Percolating Responsible Procurement', outlining producer-informed advocacy insights on responsible procurement in coffee

What we learned

- 'Percolating Responsible Procurement' was published as a 'living document' for the purposes of setting the agenda on procurement in coffee and establishing new, concrete collaborations on the topic. We tried to build collaborations in advance of the first publication, but it was challenging to get buy-in as a new organisation.
- VOCAL was aware that procurement would be a hot topic in 2026 across the sector, so publishing our paper before GCP/IDH/Solidaridad and GIZ/SFL parallel processes was important for agenda setting, while these other organisations blocked the participation of VOCAL in their processes.

What we hope to do in 2026

- Publish the 2026 Coffee Barometer in collaboration with The Coffee Collective, a coalition of civil society organisations, setting a baseline for sector-wide transparency.
- Expand our advocacy on procurement, including publishing a 2.0 of Percolating Procurement (or a small series of short papers), based on collaborations in and beyond the existing VOCAL Network.
- Contribute to the Coffee Scorecard to make it a core advocacy tool in the coffee sector. This includes back-end scoring and grading of companies'

submissions, and creating public-facing advocacy opportunities.

Our second core objective is to provide groundbreaking publications on underrepresented topics. Information is one of the most effective tools for improvement, and a public and informed debate on the most pressing issues is essential. Envisioned activities include (bottom-up) research papers as key input to identify a joint agenda, priorities and recommendations. All of them will go through several drafts of re-writing based on the collective input of all our members, and, where funding allows, will include direct consultations with producers and civil society in producing regions. Though this process takes time, it is a very valuable means to create strong collective buy-in in the problem analyses and recommendations of the papers. As a result, when released, members feel strong ownership of the content and incorporate key recommendations in their individual outreach to the coffee sector. This ensures continuous follow-up on the publications. While managed separately, the research agenda and topics will be aligned with and build on the Coffee Barometer efforts and initiative.

By generating and disseminating insightful, data-driven and bottom-up research, VOCAL aims to uncover systemic issues and drive informed action within the coffee industry. This research will highlight underrepresented topics and emerging trends and provide a solid foundation for advocacy and stakeholder engagement. The research activities enhance transparency, foster a deeper understanding of the coffee sector's complexities, and support the overall mission of VOCAL by aligning efforts with broader industry initiatives.

Core Activity 3

A vocal civil society

The existence of the network, in and of itself, demonstrates to the private and public sectors and stakeholders across the value chain that there is going to be pressure for change.

Survey feedback from a VOCAL member

Having more voices speaking together to put pressure on corporations and governments is exciting.

Survey feedback from a VOCAL member

What went well

- Civil society advocacy coordinated to defend the EUDR, including joint letters to policy-makers.
- Writing two core papers on sector issues and stakeholder recommendations, as well as responsible procurement practices.
- Boosting our visibility by creating our website, establishing a presence on LinkedIn, showing up and speaking out in international sector spaces, and thus getting acknowledgement in the coffee sector and with CSOs.
- Preparation for the first Coffee Scorecard, including an information session to support industry understanding of the upcoming accountability tool.

What we learned

- The modern, conventional coffee sector is not accustomed to advocacy and is sensitive to criticism and accountability. Civil society also needs to find its way in that. Some of the more collaborative NGOs need to adapt to a more critical stance. Some of the more critical NGOs, often new to the coffee sector, need to adapt to the sector's inexperience to a more confrontational approach. Physical (and virtual) presence at industry events is essential for (at least early stages of) network recruitment, as other CSOs are able to witness our advocacy positions and interventions - it builds trust based on alignment and shared solidarity on issues and accountability.
- Despite the above, deeper investments are necessary to build trust and actionable collaboration and solidarity among non-member CSOs and grow the network, especially among Global South CSOs.
- Significant advocacy exists within the specialty coffee sub-sector, especially

among commercial actors. In fact, advocacy and marketing are blurred, and there are significant allies in the commercial specialty space that are not eligible members of a CSO network. This creates opportunities and challenges for sector advocacy and network-building.

What we hope to do in 2026

- 2026's 'theme' is procurement. We hope to influence sector processes with industry to ensure sector-level procurement discussions are informed by producer realities and major social, economic and environmental issues in the sector.
- Ensure VOCAL is represented at major global coffee discussions, maintaining a consistent civil society voice that holds industry and governments to account.
- Organise a multistakeholder workshop in coffee to bring together diverse actors and advance collective responsibility beyond the farm level. Engage with rightsholders directly or through collaborations, on af key issues such as procurement, farmgate price and living income; ensuring that data and findings reflect lived realities rather than industry narratives.

The above activities directly inform and guide VOCAL's joint advocacy. By ensuring that civil society stakeholders are well-coordinated and knowledgeable about sectoral developments, we enhance our collective ability to articulate concerns and priorities effectively. This synergy amplifies our impact, enabling us to push for significant changes in industry standards and regulatory frameworks. In our advocacy efforts, specific attention will be given to raising the voice and concerns of the underprivileged and addressing blind spots and underrepresented issues in the value chain.

While many sustainability debates take place in industry fora, policy spaces, and international conferences, civil society voices — particularly those representing producer perspectives — are often underrepresented.

VOCAL seeks to address this gap by supporting civil society organisations in bringing forward evidence, perspectives, and concerns that might otherwise remain overlooked. This includes coordinating advocacy efforts, facilitating civil society engagement in sector initiatives and policy discussions, and amplifying producer perspectives in debates around sustainability regulation, procurement practices, and value distribution in the coffee sector.

Through participation in industry fora, engagement with policymakers, collaborative advocacy efforts, and communication activities, VOCAL helps ensure that sustainability discussions in the coffee sector are more balanced, informed, and inclusive.

The following chapters cover the workings of both VOICE and VOCAL, as VOICE provides the legal and organisational support and secretariat to both networks.

Legal and Governance

Incorporation of association

The VOICE Network is an association with full legal capacity. It has been established by notarial deed dated 27 August 2015, by notary C.G. Zijerveld. The association is registered with the Chamber of Commerce under number 64003833. We are registered with the Dutch tax authority as a tax-exempt charity (ANBI) and are not liable for turnover and corporation tax.

Statutory regulations concerning the appropriation of the results

According to article 13, paragraph 2 of the articles of association, the annual statements are determined by the general meeting. By taking a Board decision in a Board meeting, such as recorded in article 12 paragraph 3 of the articles of association, the allocation of the result is determined.

Members

Our highest body is our Members Assembly, which met twice in 2025. Our membership in 2025 is split into core members (decision-making power) and associate members.

VOICE is comprised of:

Core members:

- ABVV-FGTB/Horval (Belgium)
- Action against Child Exploitation (ACE) (Japan)
- Fundación Alisos (Colombia)
- Be Slavery Free (Australia/The Netherlands)
- Ecocare Ghana (Ghana)
- Fern (Belgium)
- Green America (USA)
- IDEF - Initiatives pour le Développement communautaire et la conservation de la Forêt (Côte d'Ivoire)
- INADES – Institut Africain pour le Développement Économique et Social (Côte d'Ivoire)
- INKOTA Netzwerk (Germany)
- Mighty Earth (USA)
- NDF - Nature & Development Foundation West Africa (Ghana)
- Oxfam Belgium (Belgium)
- Oxfam Ghana (Ghana)
- Oxfam Novib (Netherlands)

- Rikolto (Belgium)
- ROSCIDET - Réseau des Organisations de la Société Civile pour le Développement du Tonkpi (Côte d'Ivoire)
- SEND Ghana (Ghana)
- Solidaridad Europe (Netherlands)
- Südwind Institut (Germany)
- Tropenbos Ghana (Ghana)
- Tropenbos International (Netherlands)
- WWF Belgium (Belgium)
- WWF France (France)

Associate members:

- Canopée (France)
- EFFAT - the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism trade unions
- FGDH - Forum pour la Gouvernance et les Droits de l'Homme (Republic of Congo)
- Gardja - Agricultural & Rural Development Journalists Association (Ghana)
- Global Labor Justice (United States)
- Green Development Advocates (Cameroon)
- Good Chocolate Hub (Switzerland)
- Public Eye (Switzerland)

VOCAL is comprised of:

Core members:

- Coffee Watch (United States)
- Fern (Belgium)
- INKOTA Netzwerk (Germany)
- Oxfam Belgium (Belgium)
- Public Eye (Switzerland)
- Rikolto (Belgium)
- WWF Switzerland (Switzerland)
- Fairfood (Netherlands)

Associate members:

- Ethos Agriculture (Netherlands)

Board

The Members of the Association elect a Board. Board members are not paid for their board duties. At the moment of publication of this Annual Report, the Board consists of Abdulahi Aliyu (Rikolto) – Chair, Evelyn Bahn (INKOTA Netzwerk) – Secretary, Kris Goossenaerts (not affiliated with a member organisation) – Treasurer, Wendy Arenas (Alisos) and Bakary Traoré (IDEF) – general Board members.

Staff

The staff are accountable to the Board. At the end of 2025, the staff comprised seven employees: Antonie Fountain (Managing Director), contracted for 36 hours per week as a hired employee; Emmanuelle Pringot (Finance Manager), contracted for 2 days per week as a hired employee; Ashlee Tuttleman (Global Coffee Lead), contracted for 3 days per week as a hired employee); Suzan Yemidi (Head of Strategy Partnerships), contracted for 3 days per week as an integrated consultant; Kiki Lindenau (Project Manager), contracted for 2 days per week as an integrated consultant; Albéric Pottier (coordinator of the CSO's in ISCO platform), contracted for two days per week as an integrated consultant; and Claire Biason-Lohier (Latin America Lead), contracted for 3 hours per week as an integrated consultant.

Financial Statements

This chapter outlines the finances of VOICE and VOCAL acting as one legal entity, referred to as “Network” in the following paragraphs, over the fiscal year 2025.

Sources of Income and Expenses

The core funding of the Network is threefold: financial contributions by members, dedicated funding for projects, and grants or donations from third parties. The coordination work of the Network is provided through financial contributions by its members. Projects were funded by contributions from members, as well as by funding from NGOs, foundations, and institutional donors.

Please note that many of our members contribute in-kind through human resources, legal and/or technical expertise, media outreach and engagement, organisation of workshops, etc., which are just as crucial to advance our cause. An exercise to ‘monetise’ this is virtually impossible, but we would not be where we are today without their support.

The Network does not accept funding or contributions from companies, which it is our mission to critically follow. A significant part of our advocacy work in 2025 continued to be covered by an unrestricted grant of €65,000 by the Chocolonely Foundation. This foundation is funded by the chocolate company Tony’s Chocolonely, however the foundation has an independent Board from the Tony’s Chocolonely chocolate company. It is important to note that there are no conditions for this funding in addition to the obligation to publish an annual report and an annual audit, and it does not prevent the network from critically monitoring the company’s actions.

In 2025, expenditures were 6.1% lower than budget. The total income for 2025 was 6.7% lower than budget due to lower-than-forecasted member contributions (-16%).

Risk management

There are three categories of risk that the Network must manage: reputational risk, governance risk and financial risk.

The Network is at the forefront of discussions in the cocoa and coffee sector. This brings the risk of publications that might be incorrect or incomplete. To this end, we use several principles when releasing publications.

- All data that our publications are based on is made publicly available where legally possible.
- Caveats are always made when dealing with insufficient or incomplete data.
- The Network is always willing to adjust positions based on better or more factual data.
- Publications are released with the consensus of VOICE/VOCAL members, ensuring all members have had the opportunity to provide input in any publication.

- Positions held by VOICE/VOCAL staff must be in line with VOICE/VOCAL publications.

For risk management on governance and operations, we have internal communication and transparency.

- The staff provides monthly updates on activities to the members.
- The Board has full access to online financial systems.
- Payments above €1,000 are subject to Board approval.
- Reimbursements to staff must always be approved by a second–party, Board or staff member.

For financial risk management, the Network works to maintain

- Financial reserves sufficient to provide a buffer in times of lower financial income,
- Diverse income streams,
- A wide member base to spread the risk of individual members' contribution reductions.

Accountability

- Our Treasurer has full access to our online accounting system, Quickbooks, which we started implementing in 2023.
- An audit review was performed in April 2026 by A.R.E Audit & Advisory B.V.

Forecast 2026 budget and activities

The Network is projecting 394,02€ EUR for operational costs in 2026. We are projecting our confirmed income for 2026 to be around 410,11€ EUR.

This report was published on July 7, 2026.

Signed:

Vereniging VOICE Network

A. Aliyu	E. Bahn	K. Goossenaarts	W. Arenas	B. Traoré
Abdulahi Aliyu		Kris Goossenaerts	Wendy Arenas	Bakary Traoré
Chair	Secretary	Treasurer	Board	Board

Contact
Antonie Fountain (Managing Director): antonie@voicenetwork.cc
Abdulahi Aliyu (Chair of the Board): abdulahi.aliyu@rikolto.org

Financial Statements

Balance sheets as of 31 December 2025

		31/12/2025 (€)	31/12/2024 (€)
Assets			
Current assets			
Intangible fixed assets	1	15,441	0
Property, plant and equipment	2	1,829	2,395
Receivables			
Debtors	3	28,799	38,916
Other receivables and accruals	4	11,133	7,564
Cash and cash equivalents	5	65,842	88,805
		123,045	**137,680**

		31/12/2025 (€)	31/12/2024 (€)
Liabilities			
Association capital	6	74,854	72,632
Current liabilities and accruals			
Trade payables	7	915	5,353
Taxes and social security	8	5,452	2,927
Other liabilities and accruals	9	41,824	56,768
		123,045	**137,680**

Statement of activities for the year 2025

		Budget 2025 (€)	Actual 2025 (€)	Actual 2024 (€)
Income	10			
Income from project benefits		245,797	238,111	178,538
Income from membership fees		142,479	119,691	76,364
Income from donations		65,520	65,520	65,102
Other income				
Total income		453,796	423,322	320,004
Expenses spend on the objective				
Barometer	11	87,000	88,235	50,864
Coordination and network building	12	71,052	54,632	58,745
Consultation of southern partners	13	9,000	9,189	31,866
Advocacy	14	67,288	66,676	55,007
ISCO Coordination	15	46,800	33,379	51,307
Coffee	16	145,000	145,283	55,342
Total expenses on the objective		426,140	397,394	303,131
General expenses	17	23,399	23,707	18,677
Total expenses		449,539	421,100	321,808
Balance of income and expenses		**4,257**	**2,222**	**-1,804**
Appropriation of result				
General reserve		**4,257**	**2,222**	**-1,804**

If you would like a complete overview of the financial reporting for 2025, please reach out to kiki@voicenetwork.cc.

voice
COCOA NETWORK

vocal
COFFEE ALLIANCE