

MdM News 19 April Follow-up Budget details and answers to questions

May 13, 2025



This document aims to answer questions that could not be addressed during the MdM News on 19th April and to provide additional details on the note regarding the financial elements of the budget revision exercise. As a reminder, you can access the replay of the MdM News on « La Boussole”.

QUESTION :

Catherine

In terms of expectations, which advocacy actions are there regarding French ODA and European ODA (EU and by country)?

ANSWER:

In connection with the MdM network, we have significantly participated in establishing a unified vocabulary and key talking points. This way, the network can speak with one voice on these funding cut issues and convey consistent messages.

These language elements particularly emphasise the impacts of cuts on the health of populations and the need to continue fighting against the instrumentalisation of aid at the expense of the values and struggles we uphold (for example, by highlighting the impacts on people, not organisations, and supporting narratives that emphasise the importance of international solidarity and humanitarian principles as opposed to those advocating a pragmatic approach defended by some governments that prioritise international aid as necessary for national security, etc.).

We regularly review this document to consider the rapid changes in context, including the global initiative to restructure the humanitarian sector led by OCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs).

We have set up an interdepartmental and inter-directorate coordination group to coordinate our positions, monitor various sector initiatives, and our investment in connection with the inter-organisation networks in which we are present, at the French level (CSUD, Global Health Collective...) and European level (VOICE).

Several collectives, including C-Sud, coordinate and advocate strongly on these issues. We have decided to support various initiatives rather than lead them and to voice our opinions whenever possible. For example, the following actions were implemented:

- Presence in the media to highlight the consequences of cuts and remind of solidarity values, including examples of MdM projects
- Participation in hearings at the National Assembly
- Addressing decision-makers through letters and meeting requests
- Dissemination of our messages in various spaces where we are present
- Participation in a die-in on 28 April to highlight the risk of a resurgence of the HIV epidemic

QUESTION :

Françoise:

I am picking up on Catherine's question with the French government's questioning through the creation of an ODA evaluation commission to determine if - according to the MoFA - it is "useful to the French people."

ANSWER:

The programming law on solidarity development and the fight against global inequalities (LOPDSLIM) of August 2021 provided for this commission, so it is not a recent creation although the members were only appointed recently (2025). The minister has indeed instrumentalised this commission in the current context, whereas it was rather intended to provide clarity and transparency on the deployment of ODA vis-à-vis the objectives set by the law.

Some political actors have actively undermined and discredited NGOs with various articles in the press to this effect.

Being present in the media, highlighting our fieldwork at all levels and reaffirming our values, remains the best way to counter these ideas even though the undermining work will continue.

We can also remind whenever possible that we demonstrate strict transparency through various means (annual report, financial report, evaluation of our activities...) but also that we are accountable to our donors who conduct regular evaluations and audits.

QUESTION:

Adem

Given the current challenges facing public funding, does MdM plan to revise its diversification strategy, particularly by increasing its private fundraising efforts? Are there any changes planned in the criteria for accepting certain private funds currently excluded, to expand our financial manoeuvring room while remaining aligned with our values?

ANSWER:

There is indeed a desire to increase and diversify private funding. This ambition has appeared in a multi-year private funding strategy with an action plan. The goal by 2030 is to triple the amount of private funding.

In terms of capacities:

- A fourth person has joined the private funding department.
- The network (MdM F, B, E) has funded a fundraiser position, which will operate out of MdM UK in London. Its scope will cover British private funding.

- We are actively working with Mdm Netherlands and Switzerland to access foundations. The US market remains a priority, and discussions are ongoing to refine the best approach to adopt.

The private funding department is currently working on implementing a due diligence tool to facilitate decision-making regarding opportunities (companies, foundations) in compliance with the funding charter.

Marc T @Adem:

There is a working group on funding strategy, which is indeed studying possible avenues for diversifying our funding sources, aiming for greater security and stability in the face of crises such as the one we are experiencing. We do not limit our imagination in any way, as we know that the relevant bodies (management, board, etc.) will ultimately evaluate and approve the proposed ideas.

QUESTION:

Adeline

The framework note of the France strategy states "We will need to integrate a level of transfer and project closure higher than that of new projects to coincide with the organisation's budgetary capacities". When can we expect clear elements on the programs and positions that will be closed? (not knowing is an anxiety-inducing situation generated by the organisation), what will be the means to support employees on their end of contract or for some internal reconversions?

ANSWER:

The perspectives on projects' evolution are set out in the operational implementation of the strategic plan. A forecast of end or handover is in place for each project, these elements are available and known to the project teams.

An update of these perspectives will be made in the framework of the revision of the France strategy and presented at the National Joint Commission (CPN) on November 14, 2025.

To provide assistance to employees, an operational/HR support plan has been implemented to address the initial implementation phase. This was developed following the positive opinion of the Works Council and can be revised in the framework of the new operational implementation.

Furthermore, management has anticipated these major issues and has already mentioned in the Works Council meetings its willingness to negotiate provisions allowing the implementation of measures dedicated to supporting employees who may be affected by reorientations/closures or transfers of our projects.

We are committed to continuing this collective reflection with the Works Council to identify all necessary measures for this support in advance of this new implementation.

QUESTION:

Mission Banlieue

(anonymous): regarding budget cuts in the France sector and the upcoming repercussions on the implementation of the France strategy, will there be any job losses among permanent staff members? If so, how will HR assist them?

ANSWER:

There are no budget cuts, there is even a strengthening of unearmarked funds over 3 years to compensate for the predictable decline in public institutional funding.

The period is expected to see projects end. The affected teams will be supported by HR in internal or external transitions, depending on the choices of the individuals and the possibilities of the organisation.

QUESTION:

Léa L

Where are you in terms of a global organisational reflection to make MdM both more resilient and more attractive to donors? Is there a dedicated working group to review our model? In these challenging times, we should enhance our level of consultation on strategic decisions and arbitrations. This will help avoid frustration and promote unity, as we can better understand and support the choices together.

At the level of international operations - what adaptation of our strategies? Questioning the growth mandate? Should we maintain the investment in essential HR to have funds in the future or follow the instruction of "no additional RNA"?

How can we discuss again the constraints and donor rules that we impose on ourselves, without compromising our values? These rules sometimes make us less 'attractive' in a highly competitive context, or they exclude potential donors whose requirements do not suit ours (e.g. support/program ratio).

Possibility sometimes to accept certain "public service delegation" contracts, particularly with certain European donors, which allow us to cover our current expenses (coordination, headquarters, ...) and thus free up funds for projects we are taking to heart.

ANSWER:

In the context of our funding strategy, we constantly examine our internal structure (as well as our network) and go beyond institutional support.

Moreover, several positions are focused on better coordination of transversal funding;

Investments aimed at certain members of the MdM network have also allowed us to access new opportunities.

The fundraising department has established an innovation hub.

These developments have favoured our ability to adapt to the context and mitigate current shocks. By the end of 2025, we will submit new proposals, including donor issues.

The recent review of decision-making bodies has clarified their responsibilities in matters such as decision-making and strategic disputes. Consultative groups are also in place (e.g.,

France group, thematic groups...) where everyone can express themselves. The organisation, in general, takes the time for consultation and inclusion (numerous working groups and steering committees). Decisions, however, remain at the level of the relevant bodies. Internal communication will be improved once the new department is up and running.

Regarding donor constraints and rules, there was recently a debate on vetting. This topic will be discussed soon in the office. If other topics seem of interest to you, you also have the possibility to discuss them with your manager.

Moreover, we will continue the strategic dialogue with donors regarding the constraints and regulations they impose. If the need arises, we will challenge rules that seem inappropriate to us and if required, we will turn down opportunities. We will not compromise on our values and principles.

Our growth ambition perfectly matches the evolution of the humanitarian context and the increasing need for humanitarian assistance. The numerous cuts by institutional donors indeed represent a challenge, but this should not discourage us. On the contrary, we have a moral obligation to have more impact for vulnerable people. To achieve this goal, we will continue with our funding strategy and diversity of funding sources.

Regarding our intervention strategies, each year, you have the opportunity to adapt country strategies. Moreover, regular DOI workshops are organised, among others, for the development of the DOI strategy.

DETAILS ON THE NOTE OF FINANCIAL ELEMENTS OF THE REVISED BUDGET

In the instructions sent to department heads for the 2025 revised budget, particular attention should be paid to:

- **Level of unearmarked funds:**

It is important not to increase unearmarked funds requests compared to the overall envelopes per expense item decided during the initial budget, or even to reduce them.

- **HR:**

The revised budget should not be an opportunity to propose new positions at headquarters. Our goal is to at least maintain the same level of workforce between the initial budget and the revised budget.

Moreover, any departure from a department, a service (for reasons of retirement, contractual termination, resignation, various leaves, end of fixed-term contract) should be an opportunity to question the organisation. There will be no systematic replacement.

This questioning will also concern positions budgeted at the beginning of the year in the initial budget that have not been recruited.

A collective analysis of headquarters staff will be conducted by the CODIR after the budget revision commissions.

- **Headquarters procurement procedures: procurement of goods, services, and/or consultancies:**

New procurement procedures applicable to headquarters were presented at the beginning of 2025. Therefore, it is crucial to follow these new rules that apply to everyone and to put out a tender for any contract with a provider. This tendering of our providers often leads to price negotiations to our advantage.

To avoid duplication between headquarters HR and consultants, consultancies must be subject to a tender process and justified.

- **Travel for project support and collective travel for workshops, conferences...:**

In accordance with the quality principle mentioned above, travel for field support is not questioned following the usual procedures. However, it will be necessary to question whether a project/area has benefited from several supports over the past year.

Any collective travel to participate in a conference, workshop, or other event must be questioned, particularly with the number of people traveling for the same event, the objectives of our participation, etc. To date, a review of participation has been conducted for upcoming conferences jointly by the DOI, DOF, and DSP to ensure coherence. If other requests arise, a joint DOI, DOF, DSP decision will be made.

- **Unforeseen envelopes:**

At the time of the forecast, we had constituted an envelope for emergencies and unforeseen events, whether in the field internationally, in France, or at headquarters. This envelope of 1 million euros has already been used (freeze of US funding, earthquake in Myanmar, emergency in Goma, etc.). Since we are facing uncertain times in the coming months, it will be important to reconstitute this envelope (if possible at the same level as the initial budget) to respond to any emergencies or to deal with decisions regarding our funding.

We have already taken some decisions to reduce our expenses (No HR repositioning in 2025, cancellation of the festival des Gros Maux / Faire Corps planned for autumn 2025...) and we will surely have more to do when we revise the budget.