

# Annual Report 2024

 **LOUVAIN**  
COOPERATION

 **UCLouvain**



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# A well-established NGO in an unpredictable context

Dear friends of Louvain Coopération,

The Louvain Coopération team is particularly proud of the year 2024, which we have just completed. Indeed, after moving into a new working environment, designed primarily with circular economy principles, we collaboratively developed our new Strategic Plan for 2025–2036.

This document outlines, among other things, two fundamental elements: our specific approach and our methodology. The latter is intended to be systemic and is particularly focused on the interaction between four specific systems in which we wish to anchor our work: Sustainable Food Systems, Inclusive Entrepreneurial Systems, Resilient Health Systems, and Inclusive and Equitable Education Systems.

All of this takes place in clearly defined geographic areas where we aim to have a significant global impact.

Moreover, Louvain Coopération remained open to the world in 2024, integrating two organisations that chose to join us: the Brussels-based NGO Rotary Clubs for Development and the Louvain-la-Neuve-based NGO Geomoun. Each of them enriches our expertise, extends our areas of activity (Batéké Plateau in the DRC and Haiti), and diversifies our methods of intervention. These operations, quite innovative within the sector, also enable Louvain Coopération to

grow and to strengthen our societal foundation and our impact on vulnerable populations.

In a world that, let’s be honest, feels upside down, we need your support now more than ever to best navigate the necessary changes and transformations ahead. With your help, we wish to continue supporting students in search of purpose at our universities, co-creating real opportunities for entrepreneurs, promoting access for vulnerable populations—especially young women—to mental health services, and developing efficient, profitable, and biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices.

Wholeheartedly, thank you for your interest, and enjoy this time of reading.

**Jean-Michel Pochet**  
General Director



## Our Vision

We aim to consciously and critically co-construct a sustainable, fair, and inclusive world founded on solidarity.

## Our mission

Louvain Coopération works in collaboration with a diverse range of actors, including civil society and university communities. Together, we co-create innovative and replicable solutions that respect human dignity, improve lives, and strengthen the resilience of individuals and communities.

By adopting an integrated and critical approach, we influence practices and policies to support structural change, while enhancing the reach and sustainability of our impact.

## Our valeurs

### Solidarity

Solidarity is at the heart of our commitment. We join forces and work with our different partners for a sustainable and fair world.

### Impact

In everything we do, we seek to achieve tangible, sustainable and equitable results.

### Partnership

The multi-actor partnership is at the heart of our action. Actors of change who meet, learn from each other, co-build solutions with the objective of amplifying them.

### Learning

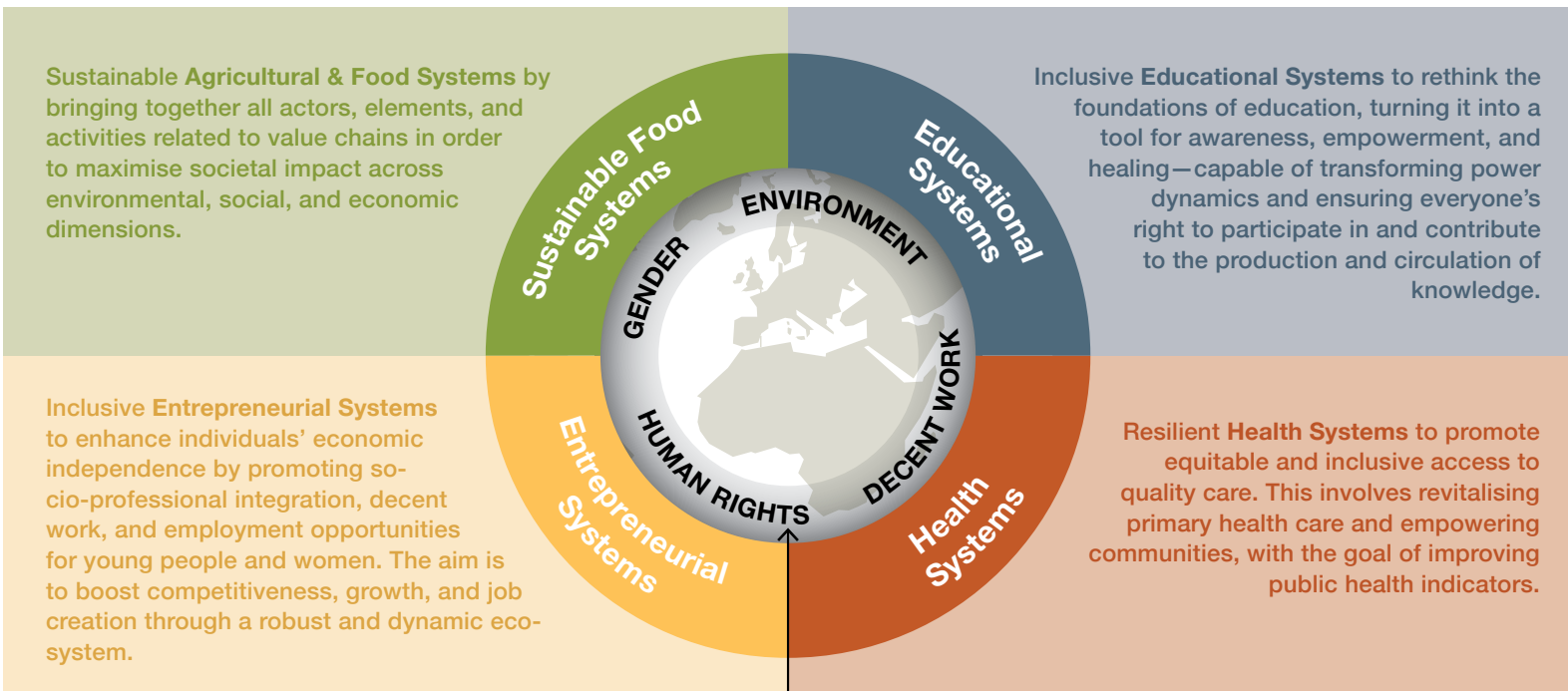
Our actions are part of a critical and experimental approach. To do so, our collaborators and partners are encouraged to show humility and to regularly question themselves in order to remain in a continuous learning process.

### Innovation

Innovation is a daily ally and is at the heart of our learning process. We open our horizons and look at problems and solutions from an innovative perspective.

Systems and approach

Because today's challenges are global, complex, and interconnected, Louvain Coop ration adopts a systemic approach. We work across **four systems**: **health, entrepreneurship, agrifood, and education**, in order to strengthen the resilience of change agents and to develop cross-cutting, coherent responses. Through this systemic approach, Louvain Coop ration promotes:



Cross-cutting themes

Louvain Coop ration integrates several cross-cutting themes that influence and are taken into account across all its interventions. These include: **Gender, Environment, Human Rights and Decent Work.**



= results improved compared to 2023



BENIN

In Benin, only 8% of the population benefits from health insurance. The vast majority of Beninese families are therefore exposed to high costs in the event of accidents or illness, which can plunge them into extreme poverty. In 2024, Louvain Coopération, the Union of Social Mutuals of the Pendjari (UMUSOP) and the If! Foundation developed an important project in the north of the country aimed at strengthening health and economic inclusion for an impactful and resilient mutualist movement (RISE). Brice Titipo, Health Systems Manager for West Africa at Louvain Coopération, explains more.

## Strengthening health and economic inclusion for an impactful and resilient mutualist movement

With the project Strengthening Health and Economic Inclusion for an Impactful and Resilient Mutualist Movement – RISE, we are pursuing three main objectives: to expand the population covered by health insurance, improve the quality of care in health centres partnered with mutual health organisations, and strengthen the financial capacity of Social and Solidarity Economy Initiatives (SSEIs) to enable their collective membership in mutual schemes. For the latter, the aim is to support cooperatives, businesses, and other associations operating within the mutuals’ areas of activity so that they can increase their income and afford to contribute collectively.

Our partner in this project is the Union of Social Mutuals of the Pendjari (UMUSOP). It has now been just over ten months since the first actions were implemented, and already we can report a 184% increase in the number of members of mutual health organisations (from 3,026 in December 2024 to 8,587 beneficiaries in March 2025). The number of SSEIs making collective contributions rose from 16 to 60 over the same period. In addition, 27 accredited health centres received medical equipment. Finally, the founding General Assembly of the ALAFIA mutual health organisation in the city of Tanguiéta was held in February 2025. This is the very first urban mutual in the Atacora region.

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN BENIN:

7,780  
CASES OF ILLNESS  
COVERED BY HEALTH  
MUTUALS.

1,261  
FARMERS RECEIVING  
TRAINING IN AGROECOLOGICAL  
TECHNIQUES.

146  
SMALL BUSINESSES  
DEVELOPING THEIR ACTIVITIES.

15<sup>HA</sup>  
OF MANGROVES RESTORED  
TO HELP PRESERVE  
NATURAL RESOURCES.



BENIN

In Benin, several thousand unaccompanied migrant children pass through the country and are particularly vulnerable. The Transit House, formerly supported by Geomoun and now integrated into our projects since our merger, offers a shelter for these children in difficult situations in the town of Comé.

## Providing a safe haven for vulnerable children

The Transit House “Le Sourire de Cécilia”, managed by EDI-NGO with the support of Louvain Coopération, works to protect human rights, particularly those of vulnerable children. This facility welcomes, listens to, guides, and supports unaccompanied migrant minors and children in distress: victims of gender-based violence, economic exploitation in quarries, markets, bars and restaurants, as well as street children.

In 2024, 35 migrant minors and 21 children in distress were supported. Those in the first category, who represent 70% of the Transit House’s residents, are often intercepted while attempt-

ing to reach Nigeria, and are then protected and cared for in a safe environment. Psycho-social, medical, and educational support is provided, facilitating their reintegration into family and society.

On 16 December 2024, the House received its official accreditation, recognising its legal legitimacy and strengthening its impact. Through this initiative, EDI-NGO contributes to supporting the Beninese state in matters of social governance and the protection of fundamental rights.

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN BENIN:

6,183  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
TOOK PART IN VARIOUS  
EXTRACURRICULAR AND  
SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL  
ACTIVITIES OFFERED.

15,123  
PEOPLE MADE AWARE  
OF ISSUES RELATING  
TO CHILDREN’S AND  
WOMEN’S RIGHTS.

6,000  
PEOPLE REACHED  
THROUGH THE MARCH  
FOR THE RESPECT  
OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN.

56  
CHILDREN RECEIVED  
AT THE TRANSIT HOUSE.





In the Savanes region of Togo, Louvain Coop ration supports the rollout of an alternative system for guaranteeing the quality of agricultural and livestock products, addressing the lack of a national or regional label dedicated to agroecology. Bernard Sewonou is Programme Manager for Sustainable Food Systems at the NGO RA-FIA, our partner in Togo. He explains his work.

## Certifying and promoting agroecological products

In the absence of a label dedicated to agroecology, we have established a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) in the Savanes region of Togo. This system, developed with producers and in collaboration with our local partners, aims to certify healthy, sustainable agricultural products while strengthening consumer trust.

Together, we developed a set of specifications defining environmentally friendly production standards. We then support the producers in implementing and monitoring these commitments. Certified products are marketed under the PGS AE-SAVANES label and benefit from tangible

sales channels: a retail outlet in town provided by the local council, and a dedicated digital platform to enhance their visibility.

This model is working well and has generated strong interest. It enables producers to better promote the value of their work and provides consumers with access to high-quality local products. Building on this successful experience, we are now working on deploying the model in Benin to extend the benefits of this approach to other regions engaged in agroecological transition.

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN TOGO:

158

FARMERS ARE USING AN ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION SYSTEM FOR AGROECOLOGICAL PRODUCTS.

64%

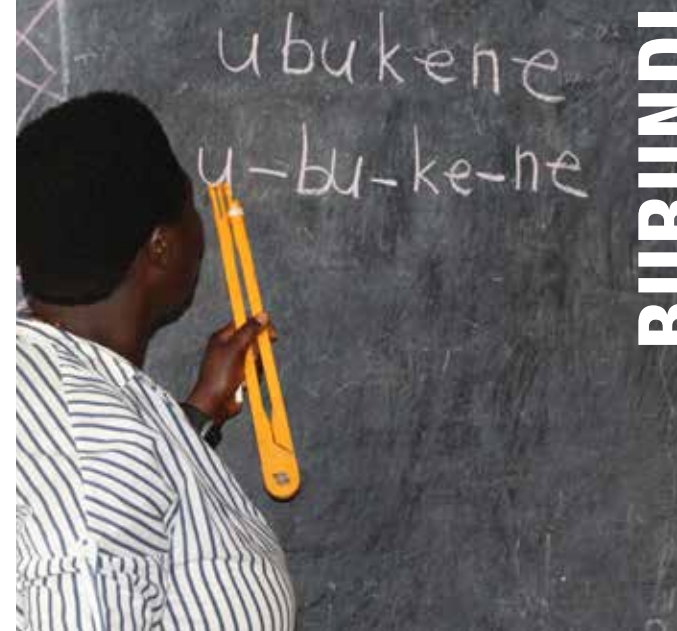
OF ILLNESSES COVERED BY MUTUAL HEALTH SCHEMES INVOLVE WOMEN.

112

WOMEN ACTIVE IN LOCAL RICE PRODUCTION ARE PARTICIPATING IN A LITERACY PROGRAMME TO STRENGTHEN THEIR LEADERSHIP AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE.

162

BUSINESSES HAVE BENEFITED FROM SAVINGS OR CREDIT SERVICES.



In Burundi, 30% of adult women are illiterate. This illiteracy is a major barrier to women's social and financial independence. To address this, Louvain Coop ration organises adult literacy classes in the south of the country.

## Breaking the cycle of poverty through literacy

Literacy is a key driver of women's empowerment, sustainable development, and social justice. It transforms their daily lives by providing economic independence, better resource management, and protection against abuse.

Marcelline Nijimbere is a literacy trainer in Makamba province. She explains: *"I am extremely proud of my role as a literacy trainer. Seeing the learners' joy and hearing their stories about the benefits of the literacy classes is a tremendous source of satisfaction for me.*

*When women master reading and writing, they*

*gain access to credit and can start their own businesses. The literacy classes also teach them how to manage accounts and understand measurements. This improves their social status and self-esteem, while opening up opportunities for community leadership. Literacy also has a positive impact on their children's education and future, thereby helping to break the cycle of poverty."*

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN BURUNDI:

3,714

PEOPLE ARE TAKING PART IN ONE OR MORE HEALTH PREVENTION WORKSHOPS.

254

PEOPLE, INCLUDING 212 WOMEN, ARE PARTICIPATING IN A LITERACY PROGRAMME.

1,748

FARMERS ARE DEVELOPING THEIR FARMS AND USING AGROECOLOGICAL PRACTICES.

802

ENTREPRENEURS ARE GROWING THEIR ACTIVITIES AND BUSINESSES.



Launched in June 2024 in Bukavu (South Kivu), the «Pour Elles» project aims to improve entrepreneurial skills, profitability, and job creation for women entrepreneurs.

## Creating a springboard for women entrepreneurs

Initially, 311 women entrepreneurs applied to benefit from this support. Of these, 129 were pre-selected to present their projects, and ultimately, 46 are currently being supported by our teams in Bukavu. Active in sectors such as staple food trading, agro-processing, crafts, transport, and services, these women are eager to grow their businesses and generate employment in the region.

They have received various training sessions in entrepreneurship, as well as in administration and finance. Through Louvain Coopération's Environmental Integration Tool (EIT), they can strengthen the positive environmental impacts

of their activities. They are also made aware of legal aspects, environmental concerns, gender issues, and climate change, and they conduct gender-related organisational assessments.

The context in South Kivu is particularly difficult for women. That's why we decided to add the creation of a Safe Space to this project. This facility includes a training area, a support zone offering psychological services and childcare, as well as emergency and comfort equipment.

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN DRC:



687

HOMELESS YOUNG PEOPLE  
TOOK PART IN  
PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT  
SESSIONS.



54

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS  
ACTIVE IN GOVERNANCE,  
DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY  
SUPPORTED.



1,479

PRODUCERS TRAINED IN  
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL  
TECHNIQUES,  
INCLUDING 69% WOMEN.

140

MICRO-ENTREPRENEURS  
SUPPORTED.



In the Menabe region of Madagascar, Louvain Coopération is working to prevent overfishing in mangrove areas. This project mainly aims to deepen knowledge of the dynamics of fisheries resource exploitation in the Menabe region (monitoring catches, pressures, and threats to ecosystems) in order to propose regulatory adaptations and management tools suited to local realities, while developing pilot alternative activities to reduce pressure on natural resources.

## Combating overfishing and generating decent incomes

Today, in the Menabe region, over 40% of the adult population depend on fishing as their main source of income or protein. Fishing is therefore crucial for the survival of many households. Yet, these key actors are still largely excluded from the production of regulations and management policies for fishing zones.

In partnership with the consulting firm MAGNI-RIKE and the Fisheries and Marine Sciences Institute, Louvain Coopération has focused its efforts on two specific objectives: improving knowledge and understanding of the use of fisheries resources in the Menabe mangroves, and strengthening protection and sustainable management efforts for these ecosystems. Our interventions have targeted both mangrove fishery actors and local communities, with the ultimate beneficiaries being small-scale fishers, fish traders (bulk buyers who resell to small retailers), collectors, and exporters. Fishers, in

particular, remain the most economically vulnerable in the crab, fish, and shrimp sectors. Our knowledge-sharing and environmental awareness activities aim to promote decent incomes, enabling local fishery actors to continue their activities while meeting their essential needs.

This project has also strengthened our collaboration with the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), which entrusted us with coordinating activities in Menabe, including the protection of the coastline of Morondava and the revitalisation of the Menabe Regional Committee for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (CR-GIZC). A great vote of confidence.

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN MADAGASCAR:



45,4<sub>HA</sub>

OF MANGROVES RESTORED  
TO PRESERVE NATURAL  
RESOURCES.



300

FAMILIES HAVE INCREASED  
THEIR AGRICULTURAL  
INCOME.



425

PEOPLE ACTIVE IN THE FISHING  
SECTOR SUPPORTED IN THE  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THEIR ACTIVITY.



217

ADULTS, INCLUDING 155 WOMEN,  
ARE PARTICIPATING IN A LITERACY  
PROGRAMME.





BOLIVIA

In Bolivia, gender-based violence remains a scourge: nearly 52,000 cases were recorded in 2022. In Oruro, Louvain Coopération is taking action through awareness-raising with authorities, youth education, and women's empowerment.

### Supporting women's autonomy against gender inequalities

Since 2019, Louvain Coopération, in partnership with the Talitha Koum Foundation, has been running a project in Oruro focused on empowering women to reduce gender inequalities. This initiative is structured around three main pillars.

**Economic development:** Women in vulnerable situations, often survivors of violence, take part in entrepreneurial training programmes tailored to local realities. They also benefit from support provided by Local Economy Desks, which offer non-financial services (management training) and facilitate access to microcredits.

**Mental health:** Specific support is offered to women who are victims of violence, including prevention sessions, listening, and emotional support. Participants strengthen their resilience and build networks of mutual aid.

**Leadership and advocacy:** Actions aim to boost women's active participation in decision-making spaces, whether within their community, their organisation, or local governments. The training also addresses stereotypes linked to gender roles, encouraging a shift in mindset among both women and men.

#### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN BOLIVIA:

395  
WOMEN HAVE COMPLETED AN ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING CYCLE.

84%  
OF SUPPORTED ENTREPRENEURS HAVE IMPROVED THEIR PRODUCTION AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.

194  
WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED.

155  
PRODUCERS TRAINED AND SUPPORTED IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE.



In Peru, Louvain Coopération promotes sustainable food systems, notably through the implementation of agroecological practices. Our local partner, El Taller, is testing microbial biofertilisers on local crops to contribute to the development of sustainable agricultural practices in the Andes. Jean and Igor, young bioengineers recently graduated, took part in these field tests. They tell us about their work.

### Innovating to develop sustainable agricultural practices

Upon our arrival in Peru, we worked with El Taller to improve local farming methods. Our mission was to test two microbial biofertilisers on crops such as garlic and lettuce. The first was already in use, but its effectiveness remained to be proven. The second, based on Trichoderma, promotes plant growth and disease resistance.

Our experiments followed a strict protocol: preparing the solutions, applying them to the crops, and monitoring the effects. Within the first few weeks, we observed promising results.

Plants treated with Trichoderma grew better and showed greater resistance to diseases.

Beyond the tests, we shared our knowledge with the farmers. We developed a practical guide and an experimental protocol to ensure the project's continuity after our departure. This experience enriched us both personally and scientifically. Thanks to Louvain Coopération, we have contributed to a more sustainable and supportive agriculture.

#### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN PERU:

107<sub>HA</sub>  
DEDICATED TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES.

113  
WOMEN HAVE STRENGTHENED THEIR PHYSICAL, ECONOMIC, AND DECISION-MAKING AUTONOMY.

62  
SMALL AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES HAVE IMPROVED THEIR PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, AND MARKETING.

580  
PRODUCERS SUPPORTED IN THEIR AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSITION.





Did you know that over 20% of young people aged 5 to 14 in Haiti are involved in child labour? Following its merger with Geomoun, Louvain Coopération is working in this country to improve the rights of women and children.



## Defending the rights of vulnerable women

In Haiti, Louvain Coopération works with its partner RESEDH to protect and promote the rights of highly vulnerable women and girls. These are mostly young mothers who have had at least one child before the age of 18, and women raising at least one child alone. Very often, they have no sustainable economic activity, no qualifications, or even basic education. Thanks to the project, they come together in women's associations spread across the nine communities where the project operates.

In 2024, they took part in numerous activities promoting advocacy and training on women's rights, covering issues such as violence against women and girls, equity and gender, advocacy techniques, and peaceful conflict management. Twenty women members acquired strong skills in project design and management. They are now able to define a project, identify its objectives, prepare a detailed budget, and present their project according to standards. The same year also saw many awareness-raising and feedback sessions on early pregnancies and HIV/AIDS.

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN HAITI:

593

PEOPLE (YOUNG PEOPLE, PUPILS, PARENTS AND LEADERS) REACHED BY AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN 6 SCHOOLS.

276

CHILDREN HAVE HAD ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE.

167

CHILDREN HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED BY SOCIAL WORKERS.

80

TEACHERS TRAINED ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND CHILD PARTICIPATION.



In Cambodia, Louvain Coopération works to promote sustainable farming practices within agricultural cooperatives. Veasna Theang, a farmer and teacher in the Raing Kesey commune, Battambang province, has become a key driver of change in her community. As part of the PARtNER project, she was trained to promote agroecological practices, especially in vegetable production, and plays a vital role in peer-to-peer learning.

## Organising knowledge sharing among farmers

*"I'm happy to be a specialised trainer for farmers," Veasna shares. "I learned new agroecological practices thanks to the project, and I pass on what I've learned to other farmers in my cooperative and beyond."*

Veasna uses various methods to share her expertise, including informal trainings and field visits to provide technical support. Another essential part of her work is identifying innovations suited to local realities. She collaborates with other farmers to test these innovations, aiming to improve existing farming practices or develop new ones. The trial plots become learning spaces for other local farmers who come to discover new ideas.

When the results are positive, Veasna organises field days to showcase the findings and encourage the adoption of these innovations.

Thanks to her commitment, Veasna enables other farmers to adopt environmentally friendly farming methods. She demonstrates that young farmers can have a significant impact on the future of sustainable agriculture in the country.

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT IN CAMBODIA:

585

NEW PATIENTS TREATED FOR MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS.

637

DIABETIC PATIENTS SCREENED FOR DEPRESSION, OF WHICH 197 RECEIVED PSYCHOTHERAPY.

3/5

OF THE SUPPORTED AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES ARE MANAGED BY WOMEN.



73

FARMERS PROVIDED TRAINING TO 1,822 OTHER FARMERS, INCLUDING 1,082 WOMEN.



Louvain Coopération actively works with students from UCLouvain to strengthen their individual and collective capacity to take action within society. The main themes addressed carry strong and transformative values: feminism, ecology, anti-racism, and decolonisation. In 2024, our team for Global Citizenship and Solidarity Education (GCSE) was particularly active and creative. Here are some of their achievements.

## Workshops on “Decolonial Ecology and Food Sovereignty”

En octobre 2024, dans le cadre de la journée In October 2024, as part of the welcome day for ARES scholarship holders titled “The Academic World and Global Environmental Challenges,” Louvain Coopération led two workshops focused on decolonial ecology, bringing together 30 students from the Global South. These workshops aimed to create a space for dialogue to question ecological inequalities and highlight the differing impacts of climate change.

The discussions revealed a major gap between perceptions from the Global North and the Global South: where the North speaks of ecological transition, participants spoke of survival challenges. The effects of the climate crisis are more severe in their contexts, often worsened by lack of infrastructure, inadequate policies, and failure to respect international commitments.

Food sovereignty served as a guiding theme to explore the links between ecology, social justice, and global economic systems. While the responsibility of the Global North is widely acknowledged, participants also emphasised the need for engagement from Southern governments despite structural constraints.

Highly appreciated by participants (average rating: 8/10), these workshops were seen as effective levers to generate collective action towards a fairer and more sustainable society.

## Theatre of the Oppressed: a training tool

Theatre of the Oppressed is an interactive method developed by Augusto Boal, where participants act out situations of oppression to collectively explore solutions. It places audiences at the centre, making them agents of change.

In 2024, Louvain Coopération expanded the use of Theatre of the Oppressed as a tool for training and social transformation. In partnership with ULB-Coopération and Eclasio, a new module was launched at the gynaecology clinic of CHU Saint-Pierre: Intercultural Communication in the Medical Sector.

This module, aimed at healthcare staff, seeks to improve the quality of care in multicultural settings. It combines theoretical inputs (cultural perceptions of the body, gender dynamics, relationship with authority) with practical workshops based on forum theatre. Scenes inspired by real cases (linguistic misunderstandings, cultural misinterpretations, refusal of care) were performed and analysed to collectively experiment with adapted communication strategies.

The approach enabled participants to develop their intercultural intelligence and strengthen team dynamics. This initiative continues actions started back in 2015, notably within the university course by An Ansoms (Natural Resources and Sustainable Development), where students used forum theatre to explore issues related to access to natural resources.

## Literary encounter with Gaël Faye

In August 2024, our colleague Fiona Nziza, head of the Citizenship Education service, hosted a discussion with Gaël Faye on the release of his new book, Jacaranda, winner of the 2024 Renaudot Prize. The aim of this meeting was to discuss the key themes of the book.

More than 200 people attended. The discussion explored the multiple dimensions of this powerful work, which delves into transitional justice in Rwanda while highlighting the essential role of women in the country’s reconstruction after the 1994 genocide.

With a poetic and committed voice, Gaël Faye weaves an intergenerational narrative mixing intimate wounds, silent legacies, and hopes for reconciliation. Following on from Petit Pays, he continues his work of memory and transmission, giving voice to those often unheard, starting with women who are frequently sidelined in of-

ficial narratives. Between Kigali, Bujumbura, and Paris, Jacaranda paints a moving fresco on the traces of the past and the possibility of a peaceful future.

The exchanges with the audience, rich and sincere, confirmed the novel’s impact, which resonates far beyond its immediate context. It was an intense evening where literature, history, and emotions intertwined to captivate the room, demonstrating the power of storytelling as a tool for memory and resilience.

## Double-Sens: immersion in otherness

Double Sens is a South-North mobility project led by Chaloupe AMO and Carrefour Jeunesse Afrique in Benin, in partnership with Louvain Coopération, since 2024. Its aim is to foster encounters between young Belgians and Beninese through intercultural stays based on reciprocity, social diversity, and knowledge exchange. The project offers much more than a simple trip: it is an immersion into otherness, grounded in the critical pedagogies of Paulo Freire and bell hooks.

Before their departure, participants underwent training to challenge stereotypes, particularly the impoverished portrayals of Africa. In March 2024, the Belgian youth met their Beninese counterparts in Benin, visited symbolic sites such as

the Slave Route in Ouidah, engaged with local NGOs, and discovered the country’s cultural and social richness.

A few months later, the Beninese youth were welcomed in Belgium. They in turn explored Belgian realities, interacted with students, met the African diaspora, and participated in discussions on decolonisation and social issues.

The project enables each young person to deconstruct their imaginaries, broaden their worldview, and engage as critical citizens. Ultimately, Double Sens aims to create an international network of young people committed to issues of gender, ecology, and the decolonisation of mentalities.







In October 2024, Geomoun and Louvain Coopération merged. The projects previously led by Geomoun continue to exist, but now under the Louvain Coopération banner. Together, we work for the rights of children and young people, both in Belgium and abroad. We support them to become agents of change through educational, civic, and intercultural projects that promote international solidarity, social justice, and engagement.



## The Sound of Children

This project enabled children from Belgium, Benin, Togo, Senegal, and Haiti to learn about, reflect on, and take action around societal issues. Together, they tackled topics such as discrimination in sport, deforestation, peace and non-violence, abuse, and children's rights. They carried out concrete actions: slam poetry, theatre performances, inclusive sketches, debate conferences, charters, and poster campaigns... Local initiatives developed with a global awareness. **Discover all the project details at [www.lesondenfants.be](http://www.lesondenfants.be).**

## Geomove – youth network

The Geomove network supports the civic engagement of under-26s and promotes exchanges between young people from Belgium and beyond. In 2024, we organised training sessions in Togo (digital skills, civic animation), Benin (group dynamics), Belgium (game on Sustainable Development Goals, theatre-action), as well as an online meeting between youth from four countries. Our Instagram community grew significantly (+112% young followers) and the Youth Forum even mentioned us in a podcast! **Listen to the Youth Forum podcast.**



## The Sound of Youth – Our podcast channel

Through this channel, young people committed to dismantling infantilising perceptions make their voices heard. We notably collaborated with students from École Active (Uccle) on an episode dedicated to their Eco-School project. In parallel, as part of “Messages from Youth”, we produced six videos on SDG 12 (Responsible Production and Consumption) featuring children from Benin, Togo, and Belgium. These will be added to our channel.

## Educational toolkit Meeting the Other

Our team delivered five training sessions via IFPC (the Inter-network Institute for Continuing Professional Education): two on student participation and three on stereotypes and prejudices. Feedback highlighted the relevance of the tools shared and their direct usefulness in the classroom. We also presented the toolkit to future teachers at Haute École Léonard De Vinci and conducted a training on the Right to Participation in international cooperation within the Children's Rights Platform [www.plateformedroitsdelfant.be](http://www.plateformedroitsdelfant.be).



UNI4COOP

## Uni4Coop at the heart of campuses

Uni4Coop, the alliance of French-speaking university NGOs in Belgium, strengthens students' civic engagement on global issues. In 2024, several projects brought campuses to life: the Half-Days of Exchange on Food Sovereignty (DJESA) gathered over 400 students around the theme of food sovereignty, linked to their courses. The “Campus in Action” weekend, focused on the connections between racism and capitalism, encouraged debates among students from various universities. The Global Citizenship and Solidarity Education (GCSE) module, developed in collaboration with BeGlobal, reached more than 370 future teachers, confirming the lasting impact of these educational tools.

At the same time, Uni4Coop supported student mobility by welcoming over 300 students from the Global South, training 224 Belgian students before their academic departures, and supporting around ten micro-projects led by over 50 students with partners, mainly in Africa.

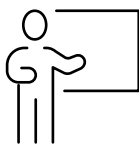
The mid-term evaluation of the DGD programme, running until mid-2025, is based on an innovative horizontal approach combining self-evaluation and peer reviews. This participatory method is already praised for the dynamism and collective learning it generates.

## Dialogue between knowledges

Within the Inclusive Knowledge Management programme, two case studies highlight the importance of dialogue between knowledges to address development challenges. One explores the impact of farmer field schools integrating local knowledge; the other analyses the “triple perspective” system in Kinshasa, bringing together users, providers, and regulators of the health system. These studies underline the essential role of facilitation, rooted in human skills such as listening, neutrality, and co-construction.

## Uniting to build

At the end of December 2024, Vincent Slypen, Uni4Coop's facilitator since the consortium's beginnings, retired. He reflected on his experience at the centre of the four French-speaking Belgian university NGOs: *“The democratic society we know is in peril, and it is especially with young people that we will be able to defend it. Having a stronger NGO, close to the academic environment, with common messages, is crucial—especially in today's context. That, for me, is what Uni4Coop stands for.”*



Our academic specificity is expressed through a critical, reflective approach, continuous learning, and the involvement of academic communities from both the Global South and North. Our Research and Development team plays a key role in ensuring these objectives are met. Here are some of its achievements in 2024.



## Diagnosis of Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural Value Chains

At the end of 2024, our teams in Burundi and the DRC, along with their partners, took part in a workshop focused on the analysis and diagnosis of inclusive and sustainable agricultural value chains. Led by Doriane Desclée, Thematic Advisor on Sustainable Food Systems at Louvain Coopération, the workshop introduced participants to value chain analysis from a sustainable development perspective.

It addressed economic, social, and environmental challenges, strategies for sustainable value creation, responsible natural resource management (SDG 12), and links with agroecology and sustain-

nable food systems. This will enable our teams to develop a more holistic view of agricultural production and intervene across the various links in a value chain.

## Sustainable Management of Mangroves in Benin and Madagascar

For several years, we have been working to protect mangrove ecosystems. In 2024, in Benin, the design of the mobile application 'Alerte Biodiversité Bénin' (Benin Biodiversity Alert) began, in collaboration with the University of Parakou. The aim is to enable close monitoring of natural resources, report violations of mangrove ecosystems in the Mono department and gain a better understanding of community actions in relation to mangroves. In addition, action research on biomass energy has been introduced with the INSTI (Institut National Supérieur De Technologie Industrielle) in Lokossa. It aims to find alternatives to mangrove wood for the energy needed for various economic activities.

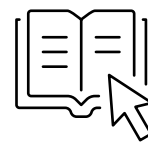
In Madagascar, we were already supporting the value chains of artisanal fishing, beekeeping and crab fishing. In 2024, we decided to also support people involved in shrimp and prawn fishing in

order to reach a larger number of small entrepreneurs. In addition, specific training is provided to women working in this sector, enabling them to manage collection sites efficiently and strengthen their active involvement in these economic activities.

## Partnerships in Transition

Partnership is one of LC's core values. During 2024-2025, we engaged in a collective reflection with our international partners on the quality of our relationships. Using a jointly developed questionnaire, this participatory approach aimed to identify the strengths, weaknesses and levers for improving the partnership. Far from being a simple audit, it laid the foundations for a strategic alliance based on trust, listening and mutual learning.

The questionnaire analyses reveal that cooperation is generally solid and well structured, although some tensions related to management requirements remain. This dynamic is giving rise to a shared vision of long-term social change and an ethic of mutually beneficial relationships.



Louvain Coopération pays particular attention to the learning and knowledge that exists and is produced during the actions implemented, to how this is taken into account in operations and to its dissemination. The latter takes the form of numerous documents that are accessible to all via our website. Here are a few examples of our publications from 2024.



### Democratising Knowledge for Sustainable Food Systems

In May 2024, the article *Knowledge Democratization Approaches for Food Systems Transformation* was published in the scientific journal Nature Food. Co-authored by our Research and Development team, the article highlights the importance of integrating traditional, Indigenous, and local knowledge as key resources in building sustainable and equitable food systems. As a committed actor in sustainable development, Louvain Coopération supports this vision and actively works to apply these principles across its projects.

### Study on the Link Between Psychological Vulnerability and Learning Difficulties in Burundian Schools



In Burundi, learning conditions in rural schools are particularly precarious and the school dropout rate is alarming. In the pilot schools where we work, it affects 24% of children aged between 7 and 13. Part of this dropout rate seemed to be rooted in the psychological vulnerabilities of certain pupils. To understand this issue, we conducted a research study to demonstrate the link between psychological vulnerabilities and learning difficulties. The results enabled us to develop a primary mental health prevention strategy in schools and reduce school dropout rates.

On the same topic, Louvain Coopération has worked alongside the Burundian Ministry of Public

Health and AIDS Control to develop a Teacher's Manual for the Promotion of Mental Health in Schools. It serves as a national reference for all mental health professionals for training and awareness-raising among teaching staff and for the psychosocial support of learners. It also aims to harmonise messages on mental health prevention and promotion in schools.

### Global Health in Higher Education: New Perspectives from a Trans-European University Alliance

This article was submitted for publication in The Lancet Global Health, one of the most prestigious peer-reviewed journals in the field. It is the product of collaboration between authors from various European universities within the Circle U alliance, including members of our Research and Development team. The article proposes a joint statement on the holistic health approach in higher education and the role of NGOs in non-traditional learning.



In 2024, our Communication, Marketing and Fundraising department undertook a large number of initiatives to promote Louvain Coopération’s mission and finance our projects. Here are a few examples.

## Encounter with Louvain Coopération

On 28 March 2024, Louvain Coopération organised an evening centred around sharing and discovery. This friendly event gave participants the opportunity to meet our teams from both the North and the South, in a warm and dynamic atmosphere.

Over a walking dinner, the discussions were rich and stimulating. Guests were able to explore Louvain Coopération’s eight main themes through interactive stands led by our colleagues active in numerous countries. From service learning to social protection, entrepreneurship, health, and



agroecology, the evening offered a lively and inspiring glimpse into our projects that contribute to transforming the world.

To add an artistic touch to the gathering, the artist Ben Kamuntu gave a vibrant slam performance that captivated and moved the audience.

## Strengthening the team

Jessica Vanlaer, our new digital communications officer, joined Louvain Coopération following our merger with Geomoun. A graduate in Public Relations from IHECS, she began her career as a Production Assistant before becoming a Project Manager. She quickly chose to diversify her activities by working part-time for Louvain Coopération while also developing a sports coaching business on the side. This versatile, youthful, and dynamic approach is reflected in her digital communications, which she aims to keep accessible and impactful. Today, Jessica manages Louvain Coopération’s social media, providing frequent, informative, and audience-friendly content.

## Digital marketing: a strategic lever for Louvain Coopération

In 2024, we decided to professionalise our digital marketing strategy further—an essential step to strengthen and increase the visibility of our impact.

It is based on three complementary pillars: improving marketing automation to create a smoother, more personalised donor journey; optimising our website and its SEO for better visibility; and creating campaigns on META (Facebook and Instagram) to increase awareness, engagement, and generate new quality contacts.

This approach enables us to boost our brand recognition, assert our position as a university NGO, and develop fundraising more effectively, supporting our solidarity actions.

## The Louvain Coopération Family Expands

The end of 2024 marked an important milestone in the evolution of our association. To strengthen our impact and optimise our resources to better serve the communities we work with, we decided to join forces with two other organisations: Geomoun and Rotary Clubs for Development.

On 22 October 2024, the Extraordinary General Assembly of Louvain Coopération approved the merger-absorption of these two organisations.

The NGO Rotary Clubs for Development is active in Kinshasa, focusing on health mutuals, eye care, support for street children, and promoting income-generating activities. We have already been collaborating on the ground for many years.

Geomoun operates in Belgium, Benin, Haiti, Togo, and Senegal in the fields of Citizenship Education, community development, and the rights of women and children.

## Why is this merger important?

This decision stems from a shared commitment over the past two years to unite our strengths and expertise to respond more effectively to the challenges we face. By combining our experiences and networks, we can:

- Maximise the effectiveness of our projects on the ground.
- Better support the target audiences of our actions.
- Increase our capacity for innovation and rapid response.
- Ensure more efficient resource management.
- Expand our social base, activity volume, and operational capacity.



Discover the interview with Cécile Nuyt and Jean-Michel Pochet on this topic.



## Geomoun Seminar: The Right to Participation and the Community-Based Approach

A few months before our merger, in September 2024, the Geomoun team welcomed all its partners from Benin, Togo, Senegal, and Haiti. This gathering provided an opportunity for them to meet the Louvain Coopération team. Several workshops were held to rethink the projects carried out in these different countries. These focused on a variety of topics, such as the development of the “The Sound of Children” and “Geomove” projects, the community-based approach in Haiti and Benin, and the educational tools used to raise awareness among pupils about visual impairments.

The programme also included a conference-debate on the theme: “How can interculturality foster civic participation among children and young people?”, along with several themed evenings dedicated to the partner organisations’ countries. These were enriching and valuable moments for co-constructing our initiatives.

Here are some of the successful collaborations between UCLouvain and Louvain Coopération, its NGO, in 2024.

## LC, Associate Member of Circle U

Circle U – the European University Alliance – is a network of universities from nine European countries (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, the United Kingdom, and Serbia) that have joined forces to promote academic cooperation, student mobility, and interdisciplinary collaboration across Europe. Such alliances aim to strengthen ties between educational institutions and provide enriching opportunities for students, lecturers, and researchers alike.

In 2024, as part of its engagement in international academic networks, Louvain Coopération was named an Associate Member of Circle U. It contributed to drafting the alliance's 2025 action plan, which includes student mobility programmes, international internships and professional projects, academic events such as seminars, conferences and workshops, and collaborative research initiatives.

Louvain Coopération also took part in the Knowledge Hub in Global Health – Circle U Sum-

mer School, contributing to debates on topics such as decolonising global health practices, NGO perspectives in global health on the ground, the influence of socio-anthropological factors in mental health care pathways, and transdisciplinarity in research. The term “university-based NGO” takes on its full meaning here.



## Participation and contributions to classes

Our Research & Development team is actively involved in various UCLouvain programmes, offering guest lectures and providing real-life field-based case studies for students.

Since the 2022–23 academic year, Louvain Coopération has been contributing to the specialised Master's in the Water–Energy–Food Nexus, a joint programme between UCLouvain and ULiège. This course encourages participants to develop a holistic, sustainable approach to problems by

integrating water, energy, and food systems. In 2024, two students completed internships with our teams. One focused on water resource availability for agricultural micro-irrigation and access to drinking water in a climate change context in Madagascar. The other travelled to Burundi for a project aimed at improving current practices around water and renewable energy, with a view to promoting sustainable, diversified agricultural production capable of adapting to fluctuations in natural resources.

As part of the SPIN Master's in Public Health, our team supervised two dissertation topics: one on diabetes support in the DRC and the other on mental health in Burundi.



Finally, our team also contributed to the Transitions and Sustainable Development course (Faculty of Economics, Social and Political Sciences and Communication) by presenting a practical case study based on Louvain Coopération's programmes, which students used for group work supported by our team.

## Committed Students

In 2024, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of two of our flagship programmes for UCLouvain students wishing to contribute to a more sustainable, fair, and united world.

Solidarity Students offers year-round community-building events, workshops, and training opportunities for socially engaged students. Over the past 10 years, more than 16,000 Solidarity Students have positively impacted tens of thousands of lives in Belgium, Africa, and Asia. Thanks to their dedication, 12 Louvain Coopéra-

tion projects were supported and 29 student-led initiatives were launched.

The IngénieuxSud programme also began during the 2013–2014 academic year. Initially an innovative project where engineering students from UCLouvain and universities in the Global South co-developed technical solutions to address socio-economic challenges, it has since grown into a fully recognised university course involving several faculties.



## New UCLouvain Members Join Our Governing Bodies

During our General Assembly in June 2024, several busy academics from UCLouvain personally chose to join the LC family as members of the General Assembly. These include researchers and professors Marie Deridder, Dominique De Jaeger, Emmanuel Klimis, Andreia Lemaitre, Sylvie Sarolea, Sandy Tubeuf, and Marnik Vanclooster. In November 2024, Professor Hervé Jeanmart, Vice-Rector for International Affairs, joined our Board of Directors.





# 2024, a highly dynamic year

2024 was a very active year for Louvain Coopération. Our organisation was strengthened by the merger with Geomoun and Rotary Clubs for Development. These mergers enabled us to expand our activities (+€1.3M) into new areas and increase our impact on beneficiary populations. We are now present in Haiti and have extended our activities in Benin and the DRC.

Our equity was also reinforced by an additional €400,000, further improving our financial stability. The consolidated result for the year stands at €62,157, despite a challenging fundraising environment.

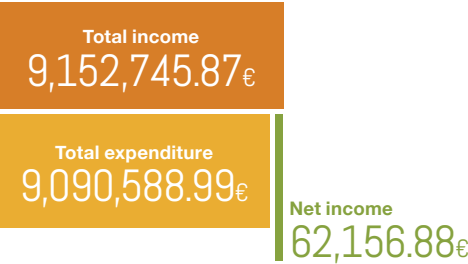
Louvain Coopération's operations continued to grow in 2024, particularly

in Burundi, with our EU-funded PASCALE B project on biodiversity and SESA project on the cassava value chain (+€0.7M). We were also fortunate to begin a collaboration with the Swiss IF! Foundation, which supports and enhances our work in northern Benin to improve access to healthcare.

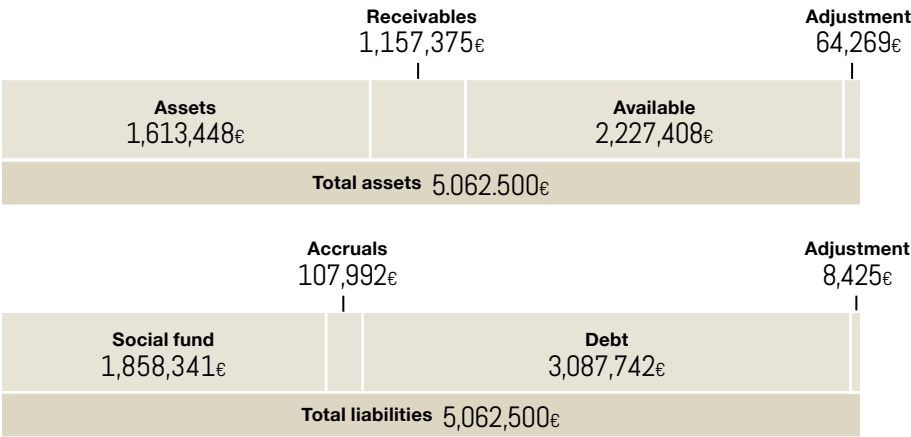
In line with the new regulations in OHADA countries where we operate (Benin, Togo, DRC), we worked on implementing the accounting standards required by the Accounting System for Not-for-Profit Entities (SYCEBNL).

In addition, we set up a new risk management system for our operations — a particularly important step given that we work in high-risk areas such as Haiti and eastern DRC.

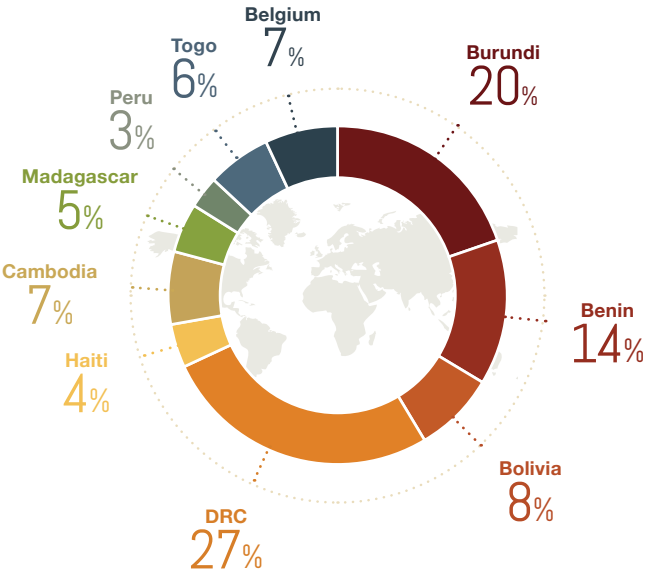
## Income statement



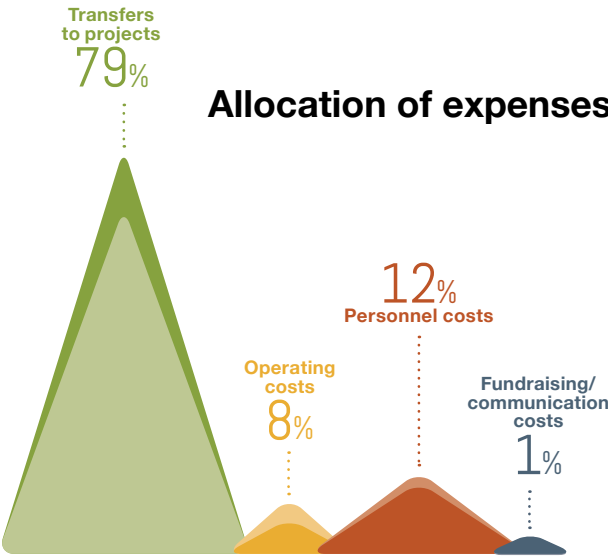
## Balance sheet 2024



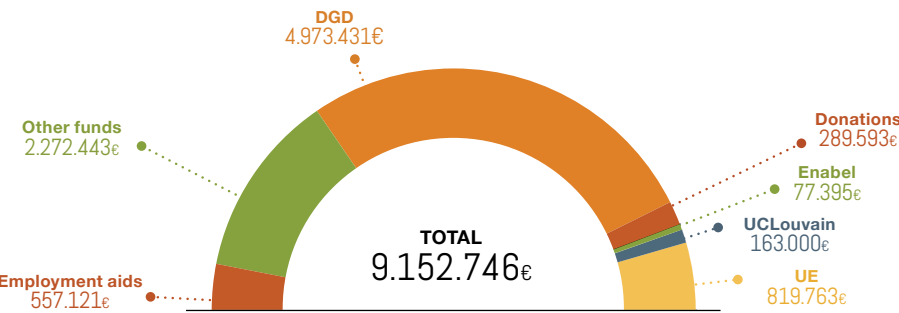
## Geographical allocation of projects



## Allocation of expenses 2024



## Sources of funding



## 2025: A year of evaluation, transformation, and future planning

The year 2025 promises to be a pivotal one for Louvain Coopération. Three major processes converge, each bringing its own set of challenges and opportunities for our organisation.

### DGD screening

Initiated in 2024, this process marks a crucial step towards the renewal of our accreditation. This rigorous evaluation, conducted by the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation, thoroughly examines our institutional capacities, governance and internal procedures, financial management, integrity mechanisms, as well as the quality of our work in the field. More than just a mandatory step, this screening drives us to further professionalise and strengthen our foundations to meet future challenges.

### Budgetary constraints

The announced budget cuts in Belgian public funding demand deep strategic reflection. Like many NGOs, we are confronted with a stark reality: public resources are shrinking while needs on the ground continue to grow. This situation compels us to rethink our economic model. How can we ensure the sustainability of our mission in such an uncertain context? It means diversifying our funding sources, enhancing our appeal to private donors, exploring new forms of partnerships, and daring to innovate. The year 2025 is therefore a call to creativity, resilience, and boldness.

### Identification of the new DGD programme

This year, we will also undertake the identification process for the new DGD programme, set to begin in 2027. This collective effort engages our teams both at headquarters and in the field to refine our strategic choices: areas of intervention, partners, priority themes, and alignment with Louvain Coopération's approach.

True to our identity, the future programme will be grounded in our systemic approach, which brings together the dynamics of four interconnected systems: entrepreneurship, health, sustainable food, and education. This integrated framework enables us to better understand the root causes of inequality and to act in a coherent, efficient, and sustainable way.

Amid the demands of evaluation, the urgency of transformation, and the ambition for renewal, Louvain Coopération moves forward—determined to adapt its means to best respond to the global challenges that affect us all.

Louvain Coopération complies with the ethical codes in force in the development cooperation and social economy sectors, guaranteeing respect for donors, beneficiary populations and fundraising ethics. Our accounts are audited annually by an independent auditor and are available free of charge at the National Bank's Central Balance Sheet Office or at [www.donorinfo.be](http://www.donorinfo.be)

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We live on a planet with limited resources. For this reason, all Louvain Coopération publications are printed on PEFC paper (European programme for sustainable forest management) using vegetable-based inks.





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