

# Annual Report 2024



**DOING IT TOGETHER**  
[www.internationalbluecross.org](http://www.internationalbluecross.org)

*Committed Peer Educators in Arusha, Tanzania*

# Message from the President and General Secretary

Dear Reader,

We hope this report gives you a small glimpse into the vibrant work of IBC around the world in 2024.

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Across communities, and guided by evidence, compassion, and a commitment to real change, we reach those who are most disadvantaged. This year, we launched a vocational skills project in Tanzania and Togo, inspired by European Blue Crosses, where adopted employment schemes for vulnerable people highlight the importance of work for a healthy life. Self-help groups meet in 26 Blue Cross countries, IBC Academy continues to equip staff for greater impact, and comprehensive prevention efforts offer new perspectives to youth in seven countries, including Ukrainian refugees in Romania and Poland.

Meanwhile, developments in cannabis legalisation and the ongoing lack of commitment to effective alcohol policies make strong advocacy more urgent than ever. The growing evidence linking alcohol to cancer, rising mental health challenges, increasing loneliness and online addictions demand our attention.

At the same time, there are cuts in development funding in many countries, pushing us to be more innovative in reaching those who need us most.

In a world where many struggle for a second chance, our Christian values remind us that hope, dignity, and support must be extended to all. Your dedication makes this possible.

To our members, donors, supporters, board, and staff – thank you. Your commitment and generosity make this work a reality. Together, we continue to serve with love.



**Reinhard Jahn**  
President



**Anne Babb**  
General Secretary

## ***IBC at a Glance***

### **Who We Are**

IBC is a Christian value-based, politically independent non-governmental organisation. The roots of today's organisation lie with the Blue Cross Movement founded in 1877. The international umbrella organisation was founded in 1886, currently comprising 37 national Blue Cross organisations in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. This vast organisational network tackles alcohol- and other drug-related health-, social-, and development issues through advocacy, prevention, treatment, and aftercare programmes. IBC promotes this approach through a joint global voice and enables exchange and learning between Blue Cross Organisations around the world.

### **Our Vision**

People live dignified and healthy lives in a world where societal structures and services enable a life free from addiction as well as alcohol- and other drug-related harm.

### **Our Mission**

Prevent and reduce the harmful use and dependency of alcohol- and other drug-related harm, especially among the most vulnerable people. Engage Blue Cross Organisations worldwide to promote the mission, with a holistic view of the human being as a state of complete physical, mental, spiritual, and social wellbeing.

### **Our Values**

Love • Solidarity • Excellence  
Respect • Empowerment  
Inclusiveness  
Good governance

### **Key Strategic Focus 2021- 2028**

- Promoting a life free from alcohol and other drugs
- Strong member organisations
- Christian value-based approach

## Project Milestones We've Reached Together

### Project phase 2021–2024

2024 marked the end of the 2021–2024 „Prevention through Life Skills Development“ project phase. Over four years, the initiative reached over 79,000 children, youth, and community members across Chad, Congo, Tanzania, and Togo. Through structured Life Skills activities, participants built resilience and reduced risks linked to alcohol and other drug use. A 2024 external evaluation in Chad showed measurable improvements in participants' interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, decision-making, and attitudes toward gender equality.



### Expanding Horizons in 2024

In 2024, IBC expanded its focus to address participants' broader socio-economic realities. New initiatives in Togo and Tanzania introduced vocational training and income-generating activities, complementing our established

Life Skills work. This integrated approach supports participants in developing practical skills while reinforcing protective factors that promote sustained behavioural change and healthy, self-determined futures.



*Blessing Moya participates in a Life Skills session at school, Blue Cross Togo*

## ***“The Blue Cross gave me support, purpose, and identity.”***

“My name is Raoul and I’m 25.

I was born into a poor farming family in a southern province. My father sent me to the city to study, but family difficulties during secondary school led me to leave home. I moved in with a friend and because I didn’t want to be a burden, I ran telephone kiosks and small shops to support myself and stay in school. Life wasn’t easy, and I went through dark moments, even considering taking my own life. But I pulled myself together and, at 19, became a motorbike taxi driver.

I had already been involved with the Blue Cross and kept coming back to their activities. I became a peer educator and club leader, and over time, the other young people in the club became my family. *Through the Blue Cross, I learned to set goals, make responsible choices, and avoid the pitfalls many others fall into.* After a few years as a communications and community ma-

nager at another company, I came back to the Blue Cross as a Life Skills facilitator.

*One of the biggest impacts on my life was becoming a father.* Many young men in my situation choose to run away or pressure the mother into an abortion. But for me, that was never an option. I’m fully involved in raising my son. Every morning, I take him to school before starting my day, and I feel pride and joy knowing that I’m providing for him. I’m committed to giving him the childhood I never had, making sure he never feels the instability and struggles that I went through. I don’t want my son to grow up with those same feelings of lack and uncertainty. Instead, I guide him, teach him, and provide for him in ways my own parents never could.

Even though my contract ends with the project phase-out, I’ll always remain connected with the Blue Cross because it gave me support, purpose, and identity that shaped my life.

*As a father and a mentor, I’m now committed to being a role model for my son and for other young people in my community.”*



*Raoul, 2024 N'Djamena, Blue Cross Chad*

# Stronger Together!

## Global Impact of IBC's 37 Member Organisations



## YOUTH CONNECT – Together for change!

Youth Connect is more than just a network – it is a movement! As the name suggests, it brings together young people from all over the world and empowers them to initiate social change through local action.

Youth and young adults from Blue Cross organisations exchange ideas on diverse topics related to alcohol and other drug prevention through Youth Connect's digital discussion forums, learning from and inspiring each other for more than two years now.

IBC is delighted with the continued success of this dynamic network. Teenagers and young adults meet 3-4 times a year online and network via social media such as Facebook or WhatsApp, with more people showing interest by joining the Youth Connect network! During the online sessions, participants lead intense discussions, exchange ideas, and motivate each other to take positive action against alcohol and other drugs.

One major topic of discussion is the marketing of alcohol. The network has scrutinised how the alcohol industry designs its messages to appeal to young people, with the aim of exposing the narrative of the alcohol industry and combatting the harmful commercial marketing toward youth. But that is not all!

The group also discusses concrete, creative measures and effective strategies that can be implemented locally to raise awareness among young people and encourage them to act.

*„Youth Connect is a platform for learning for me and my fellow youth. I observe how both facilitators and participants engage with the discussion topics creatively. It is also a great networking platform for me, connecting me with many new colleagues, which is truly exciting.“*  
Gloria, Youth Connect participant from Tanzania

It is incredibly inspiring to see the creativity and drive of these young people, including the use of music, theatre, and other creative means to develop innovative and sustainable solutions for fear prevention that are tailored to meet the precise needs of their age group. This allows them to motivate their own generation while also encouraging others to participate.

IBC wants to give young people the courage and hope that they can be ambassadors of change and can make a positive difference – both in their own lives and in the lives of their families and communities. Together they are shaping a future where alcohol and drug prevention is no longer taboo!

## Prevention through Life Skills in Poland and Romania

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and the ongoing war have displaced 10 million people inside and outside Ukraine, with 6 million having fled to neighbouring or Western European countries. In response to the resulting mental health needs, IBC in collaboration with our Polish and Romanian Blue Cross partners implemented a comprehensive Life Skills-based prevention project in 2024–2025 for Ukrainian refugee youth and their local peers in Bielsko-Biała, Poland and Sibiu, Romania.

Funded by GlobalGiving and delivered in a trauma-sensitive manner, the project addressed the psychological challenges faced by vulnerable young people affected by war, supporting their mental well-being and healthy decision-making. Simultaneously, it responded to the risks related to the harmful use of alcohol and other drugs among local youth – prevention needs that were found to be high in both Poland and Romania.



*Project participants during a Life Skills session at School 13 in Sibiu*

The facilitation teams, including local and Ukrainian refugee professionals, underwent comprehensive training from Blue Cross Tanzania and IBC experts. They learned to use IBC's multi-layered intervention model and participatory facilitation methods essential for motivating youth to actively participate in Life Skills education for positive behaviour change.

Life Skills sessions in schools reached 318 youth, and a total of 887 individuals directly benefited from the project across both countries. The Life Skills sessions were the foundation of the project whilst the summer camps undoubtedly stood out as the most memorable experience for participants. The camps provided an environment where primarily Ukrainian children and teenagers could deepen and practice the skills they had learned.

The Romanian project team further extended its outreach through public community events, organizing Halloween- and Christmas-themed Life Skills parties for children.

The project team in Sibiu was further able to successfully engage the Roma community – an ethnic minority that has long faced systemic discrimination and marginalization. These challenges persist to this day, leaving Roma children particularly vulnerable and exposed to heightened risks, which makes prevention work in this context all the more critical.

As IBC's first Life Skills prevention intervention in a European and refugee context, this project revealed considerable needs in the field of prevention in both countries and made key stakeholders more aware of the interventions needed. Although project activities conclude in May 2025, we remain hopeful to return in the future, pending additional funding.



*Children take part in a creative exercise as part of the summer camp in Sibiu*

## Meet IBC Member Organisations



*Training for indigenous families on substance dependency, Velho/Rondônia (Cruz Azul)*

### Brazil, South America

The Blue Cross Brazil (Cruz Azul) team provides support through age-appropriate support groups to children and adolescents who are socially vulnerable due to their parents' use of alcohol and other drugs. These groups are located in different regions of the country and facilitated by trained volunteers.

In 2024, the team also hosted weekly self-help groups for people suffering from harm caused by alcohol dependence as well as for their families, held in churches and community centres.

Additionally, Cruz Azul launched an initiative focused on indigenous communities, particularly those in the northern region of the country, delivering prevention, support, monitoring, and treatment of alcohol and other drug use.

In addition to these efforts, Cruz Azul conducts prevention work in schools with a dedicated team of over 15 staff members, along with continuous training for those working in the care and treatment of people suffering from addiction.

### Ivory Coast, West Africa

As part of its 2024 addiction prevention training, Blue Cross Ivory Coast partnered with the local treatment centre to conduct three training sessions for educators and NGOs. The goal was to equip them with addiction prevention tools to strengthen their communities and help at-risk youth achieve their educational goals.

While the April training session covered addiction trends, transnational drug trafficking and future outlooks for Africa, the one in July covered hard drugs, which are widely used in Ivory Coast.

The training session also emphasised the importance of recognising early signs of adolescent drug use, effective communication strategies and holistic addiction management. The October session focused on student cannabis use, its academic impact, and prevention strategies.



*Training on Addiction Prevention, Blue Cross Côte d'Ivoire*

## Volunteer Engagement Worldwide



I've been a proud volunteer at IBC since May 2024. I value creativity, helpfulness, and openness, which is why I was drawn to this organisation – our values were a match! Volunteering with IBC has been a fulfilling experience and I've met great people. Most importantly, I can contribute to a cause that is critical in today's world.

### Lucie

I'm glad I can volunteer for IBC, as it is a great opportunity to make a difference. I have achieved tangible results in the fields I value the most, and learned much about addiction prevention. Recently, I facilitated IBC's training sessions across linguistic barriers by providing live translations. This is an area I'm skilled in, as previously worked as a multilingual teacher in China.

### Vincenzo



Alongside my passion for sports, helping others has always been close to my heart. I joined IBC to support a cause I truly believe in and to give back to the community. Volunteering with IBC's incredible team is a true joy, and I'm grateful for the chance to contribute to such impactful work. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of something that truly makes a difference worldwide!

### Sandro

I've been living in Switzerland since 2021, and I'm passionate about exploring new opportunities. I joined IBC because I believe in the power of prevention and education. Together, we can make a meaningful impact by addressing the root causes of addiction and supporting healthier lifestyles. I'm proud to be a part of this change! Working with IBC also provides a unique cultural and educational exchange.

### Nancy

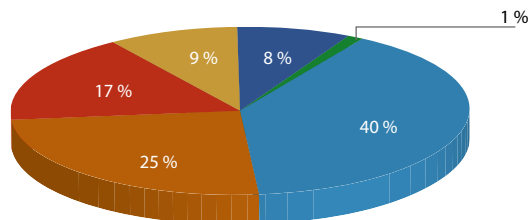


# Abridged Version of the Financial Statements based on Swiss GAAP FER 21

Assets	2024 CHF	2023 CHF
Cash and Cash Equivalents	661,575.52	484,943.34
Short-term Receivables	157,646.29	26,595.57
Accrued Assets	31,858.12	35,190.85
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>851,079.93</b>	<b>546,729.76</b>
Financial Assets	420,265.55	398,244.39
Furniture and Equipment	1,397.68	2,256.08
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>421,663.23</b>	<b>400,500.47</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>1,272,743.16</b>	<b>947,230.23</b>

## Income

Foundations	40 %	Blue Cross Organisations/ Societies	9 %
Public Institutions	25 %	Churches	8 %
Membership Fees	17 %	Private Donors & Companies	1 %



Liabilities and Equity	2024 CHF	2023 CHF
Trade Accounts Payable	26,603.98	20,614.41
Deferrals	219,496.83	99,190.64
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>246,100.81</b>	<b>119,805.05</b>
Provisions	60,000.00	40,000.00
<b>Total long-term Liabilities</b>	<b>60,000.00</b>	<b>40,000.00</b>
Chad	24,354.39	0.00
Congo Brazzaville	42,205.40	0.00
Brasil	721.44	0.00
Togo	25,635.80	0.00
Eastern Europe	55,518.79	2,243.58
Denmark, Finland, Greenland	462.07	188.37
Life Skills Programme	5,879.65	5,879.65
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>154,777.54</b>	<b>8,311.60</b>
Paid-In Capital	433.25	433.25
General Reserve	10,000.00	10,000.00
Organisation Reserve	315,249.67	315,249.67
Solidarité	331,300.66	331,300.66
Organisational Development	154,881.23	122,130.00
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>811,864.81</b>	<b>779,113.58</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>	<b>1,272,743.16</b>	<b>947,230.23</b>

	2024 CHF	2023 CHF
<b>Income</b>		
Membership Contributions	205,245.17	209,959.20
Donations and Contributions	713,336.99	287,337.21
Government Grants	314,181.24	253,291.18
Other Income	4,561.40	4,725.14
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,237,324.80</b>	<b>755,312.73</b>

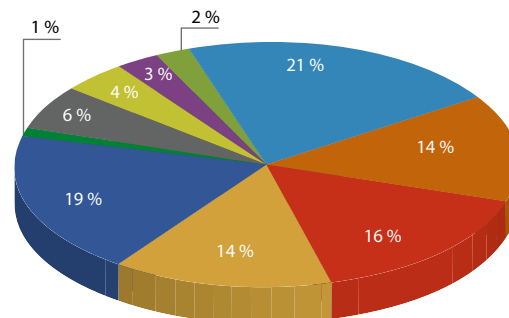
## Expenses

Project Expenses	-870,217.48	-719,253.80
Fundraising Expenses	-67,036.02	-58,698.00
Administrative Expenses	-148,124.65	-159,669.33
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>-1,085,378.15</b>	<b>-937,621.13</b>

<b>Operating Result</b>	<b>151,946.65</b>	<b>-182,308.40</b>
Financial Income Incl. Foreign Exchange Profit	32,333.93	24,449.00
Financial Cost Incl. Foreign Exchange Loss	-5,063.41	-25,017.85
<b>Financial Result</b>	<b>27,270.52</b>	<b>-568.85</b>
<b>Operating Result Before Changes in Funds</b>	<b>179,217.17</b>	<b>-182,877.25</b>
Allocation to Project Funds	-990,386.04	-509,021.06
Withdrawal from Project Funds	843,920.10	680,322.47
<b>Funds Result</b>	<b>-146,465.94</b>	<b>171,301.41</b>
<b>Result Before Allocation</b>	<b>32,751.23</b>	<b>-11,575.84</b>
Withdrawal from Organ. Development Fund	0.00	11,575.84
Allocation to Organ. Development Fund	-32,751.23	0.00
<b>Result for the Year</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

## Project Expenses

CHAD – Life Skills	21 %	Knowledge transfer / Sensibilisation MO's	6 %
CONGO – Life Skills	14 %	Alcohol Policy	4 %
TOGO – Life Skills	16 %	Selfhelp Uganda, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Nigeria, Ghana, Madagascar, Rep. Congo	3 %
TANZANIA – Life Skills	14 %	General sensibilisation	2 %
POLAND / ROMANIA – Life Skills	19 %		
GHANA – Life Skills	1 %		



## Audit Report 2024

The 2024 Financial Statements have been prepared according to Swiss GAAP FER, in particular standard 21 regarding "Accounting for charitable non-profit organisations". BDO AG, as statutory auditor, has examined the Financial Statements of International Blue Cross. The examination was conducted in accordance with the Swiss Standard on Limited Statutory Examination. This standard requires that the examination is planned and performed to identify material misstatements in the Financial Statements. Based on the limited statutory examination, nothing has come to the statutory auditor's attention that causes him to believe that the Financial Statements of International Blue Cross do not give a true and fair view of the financial position, the results of operations, and the cash flows in accordance with Swiss GAAP FER or do not comply with Swiss law and the association's article of incorporation.

## Tribute to Donors and Partners

Among our current partners and donors are:

### INSTITUTIONAL DONORS

- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- The Foreign Service of the Faroes – Government of the Faroe Islands

### FOUNDATIONS & SOCIETIES

- Foundation Widmer et Creux
- Foundation Solidarity with the World
- Global Giving Foundation
- Foundation Däster-Schild
- The Starr Foundation
- Foundation Flumini
- Interaction – StopPoverty
- KoGe Community of Cooperation
- Foundation Jugendsozialwerk Blue Cross Baselland
- Blue Cross Zurich
- Blue Cross St. Gallen - Appenzell
- Blue Cross Switzerland (You help, we help)
- Blue Cross Ostermündigen
- Blue Cross Germany
- Blue Cross Denmark
- Blue Cross Finland
- Blue Cross Association Winterthur

### CHURCHES

- Association of churches (Partnerwerke) Zurich
- Evang. Ref. Church of the Canton of St. Gallen
- Evang. Ref. Church of Uri
- Evang. Ref. Parish Köniz
- Evang. Ref. Parish Johannes Bern
- Evang. Ref. Parish Unteres Rheintal

- Evang. Ref. Parish Horw
- Evang. Ref. Parish Schwarzenburg
- Evang. Ref. Parish Rapperswil-Jona
- Evang. Ref. Parish Frieden Bern-Bethlehem
- Evang. Ref. Parish Kirchlindach
- Evang. Parish Schlatt
- Reformed Parish Winterthur-Seen
- Reformed Parish Kirchberg Küttingen
- Reformed Parish Bümpliz
- Reformed Parish Frieden Bern
- Reformed parish Rigi south side
- Reformed Church Vechigen
- Reformed Church Ittigen
- Reformed Church of the city of Lucerne
- Reformed Church Murgenthal
- Reformed Church Belp-Belpberg-Toffen
- Catholic Church Region Bern
- Roman Catholic Church Langenthal
- Catholic Church of the city of Zug
- Catholic Church Lausanne
- Catholic Church St. Felix and Regula Zurich
- Catholic Church St. Anton Zurich
- Catholic Denomination of the Canton of St. Gallen

### MUNICIPALITIES & CANTONS

- Lottery Fund Canton Bern
- Swisslos Fund Canton Glarus
- Swisslos Fund Canton Aargau
- City of Zug
- City of Büllach

### COMPANIES

- Black Gazelle

## Network Committee



**Reinhard Jahn, Germany**  
President IBC  
Managing Director at BC Germany  
Board member since 2008



**Hans Eglin, Switzerland**  
Vice President IBC  
Central Board BC Switzerland  
Board member since 2016



**Ingalill Söderberg, Sweden**  
Journalist and  
municipal commissioner  
Board member since 2012



**Lars Thidemann Jensen, Denmark**  
Vice General Secretary  
of Blue Cross Denmark  
Board member since 2021



**Holger Lux, Romania**  
MD, Director rehabilitation centre  
for addicted men  
Board member since 2008



**Ewa Duda, Poland**  
Addiction therapist, Blue Cross  
promotion coordinator  
Board member since 2021



**Rolf Hartmann, Brazil**  
President of  
Blue Cross Brazil  
Board member since 2008



**Revocatus Nginila, Tanzania**  
Project Coordinator Blue Cross  
Tanzania  
Board member since 2016\*



**Patrick Acheampong, Ghana**  
General Secretary of Blue Cross  
Ghana  
Board member since 2021\*

## Secretariat Staff



**Anne Babb**  
General Secretary



**Katrin Schmidt**  
Finance Officer



**Flavia Ganarin**  
Program Manager



**Julian Sterling**  
Program & PR/Fundraising Officer



**Anna Schwaller**  
Administration & Project Assistant



**Mirjam Schmitz**  
Program Officer



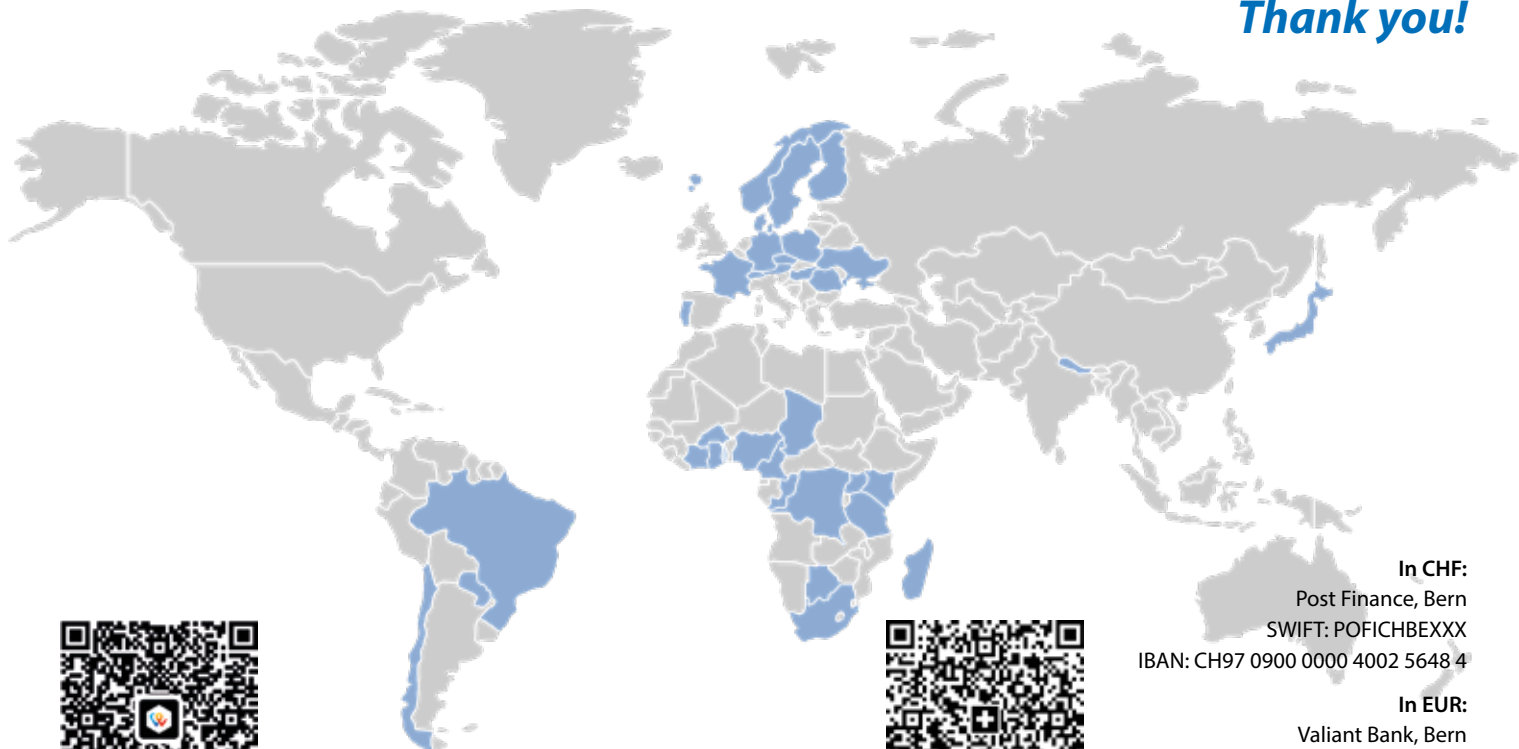
**Sonja Pönisch**  
Responsible Members



**Ediom Nelson**  
other Drug Policy Advocacy Officer

The Network Committee extends a warm Thank You to all supporters, partners and above all its volunteers who have dedicated in total 1,600 hours of their time to IBC in 2024.

*We greatly appreciate your support, making our work around the world possible.  
Thank you!*



**In CHF:**

Post Finance, Bern

SWIFT: POFICHBEXXX

IBAN: CH97 0900 0000 4002 5648 4

**In EUR:**

Valiant Bank, Bern

SWIFT: VABECH22

IBAN: CH09 0630 0016 9686 0960 0

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