

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE (MR) - MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE 11.11.11 INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

Type evaluatie	Mid-term
Onderwerp evaluatie	Internationaal programma 11.11.11
Datum	Op 08/09/2025 werd het MR bekrachtigd door het Directieteam
Van	Thijs Van Laer (Directeur Internationaal)
Voor	Directieteam 11.11.11

ACTIES & OPVOLGING

<p>Actie 1: Meaningful participation leading to more contextualized and specific country-level Theory of Change (ToC) documents</p> <p>The evaluation concludes that our ToCs are strong and well-researched, but overly general and broad, making it difficult to monitor any changes that occur as a result of our strategies. The evaluation also notes that our partners were insufficiently involved in the elaboration of these ToCs. We agree with this conclusion and will, in the elaboration of the new multi-year program (2027-2031), build in more autonomy for each region and country to elaborate ToCs. These ToCs that will remain consistent with 11.11.11's general ToC and the strategic orientations of 11.11.11's international program, but will be more aligned with local realities and more specifically formulated to be able to track progress. These country-level ToCs will be elaborated through a process of meaningful participation of our international partners and other stakeholders, which will make them more grounded in local realities and ensure more buy-in and awareness amongst partners of our ToCs. We will consider including scenario building exercises in the participatory process. Creating more decision-making authority by actors in the regions where we operate is part of an ongoing shift-the-power process within 11.11.11.</p> <p>Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 4, 5, 17</p> <p>Wie volgt op: International departement, coordination by director (Thijs)</p> <p>Timing: Meaningful participation process in late 2025 and early 2026, updated ToCs available by mid-2026.</p>
<p>Actie 2: Elaborate guidelines on differentiated approach</p> <p>We acknowledge the need to make progress in developing our policies and approaches with regards to gender and other forms of inclusions. However, our starting point—and, in many ways, our critical lens—is that we do not claim to hold all the expertise required to meaningfully operationalize these frameworks. Instead of rushing to produce isolated strategies or tools, we believe it is essential to pause and critically examine the underlying assumptions behind categories such as gender, race, ethnicity, and age, and how their intersections sustain structural inequalities in our context.</p> <p>From this place of reflection, we are committed to opening an internal process that allows us to explore which frameworks, methodologies, and political commitments genuinely resonate with who we are as an organization. Only from there can we build strategies and tools that are not only technically sound, but rooted in purpose, values, and regional realities.</p> <p>Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 12</p> <p>Wie volgt op: focal point on differentiated approach (Carla)</p> <p>Timing: end of 2026</p>
<p>Actie 4: More deliberate pathways for change beyond national state institutions and legislation</p> <p>In our overall strategy and regional/national ToCs, we will move away from our current overly strong focus on national-level, institutional change, and broaden it to changes we want to pursue, at different levels (local, regional,</p>

international) and with different actors (more on private sector, internal movement building and broader communities). Rather than primarily focusing on the adoption of legal and policy frameworks, we will put more attention on the implementation of existing laws or policies, or other forms of action. We will also seek to identify some specific pathways for desired change for the different actors (civil society, decision makers, broad public, private sector) that we are trying to influence with our programs and monitor these pathways more closely.
Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 5, 7, 17
Wie volgt op: International Department, coordination by director (Thijs).
Timing: Mid-2026.
Actie 5: Easier-to-use and better adapted outcome harvesting systems
We are further simplifying and standardizing our outcome harvesting and mapping system, the key MEAL approach of 11.11.11. We are aiming to make it easier for our teams and partners to use the tools, using less complicated templates and a clear user guide. In the longer term, we will switch to a digital tool.
Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 16, 17, 18
Wie volgt op: MEAL focal point ID (Ine) with MEAL ID steering group.
Timing: More simplified current tools in September 2025, digital tools in January 2027
Actie 6: More innovative and collaborative advocacy work
We are continuing to seek ways to reinforce the links between the advocacy priorities and strategies of our partners on the one hand, and our own advocacy work, at the Belgian level and (indirectly) at the EU/multilateral level, on the other hand. We will also stimulate the reflection around and the use of more innovative advocacy approaches, both internally and within our networks, and reinforce the involvement of partners in the global south in our international networks.
Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 3, 9
Wie volgt op: Directors international (Thijs) & advocacy department (Naima)
Timing: 2027
Actie 7: More deliberate dialogue between partners and regions on strategic issues and innovation
We will stimulate more debates with and between our partners (within countries, regions, and worldwide, including with other 11.11.11 departments) on strategic issues, such as engagement with the broad public, communication, power dynamics, youth and litigation, among other topics. A first questionnaire will be sent to our partners in September 2025, based on which the international department will come up with a work agenda and methodology for these 'innovation labs'. We will also explore the possibility, for the next multi-year program, to provide more flexible funding for innovative approaches, including ideas that are generated during such exchanges between partners.
Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 2, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 17, 18
Wie volgt op: ID working group on dialogue, overseen by Director International Department (Thijs)
Timing: First plan of action by end of 2025, innovation funding in 2027.
Actie 8: Assessments on how to strengthen (links with) grassroots organizers
We acknowledge the need to continue improving engagement with community organizers and local activists and to be more deliberate about results we want to achieve at the local or regional level. Rather than shifting our support to more local groups, we will deepen our assessment of and dialogue with our partners on their links with such grassroots actors and communities. We will also increase our ability to use flexible funds to respond to needs that might arise, among our partners and other (grassroots) actors. We will conduct two internal exercise to operationalise this: first, a review of our partner selection criteria (including our partners' links to communities), and another is to assess how we use our flexible funding, including to support grassroots communities and activists. Both exercises can result in updated guidelines that will find their way to the new multi-year program.
Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 7
Wie volgt op: ID working group on flexible funding (Thijs, Credo, Carla) and on partner selection criteria (Ine, Jana), overseen by Director International Department (Thijs).
Timing: December 2026
Actie 9: More structured dialogue with partners on the basis of outcome harvesting

We will deepen and further structure our dialogue with partners on strategic matters (including engagement with the broad public, communication, power dynamics, youth engagement, amongst others) and on the conclusions of our outcome harvesting analysis. This should result in a more regular and structured monitoring and learning loop that can generate more learnings and deepen discussions with our partners, in turn leading to better adapted interventions and, eventually, more impact. This dialogue will also allow us to discuss the evolution of civic space, including which scenarios could develop in the future. We will also use these dialogues to identify certain ‘pathways of change’ that will be identified as crucial by our partners and which we want to understand and monitor better.
Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 4, 5, 6, 14, 17, 18
Wie volgt op: MEAL focal point ID (Ine) and MEAL ID steering group (Thijs, Serge, Cathleen, Ine, Jana, Kris, Louise)
Timing: First proposal in August 2025, continuous review.
Actie 10: Deepen knowledge and evaluate strategic partnerships on HRD protection
A review of available internal knowledge on human rights defenders protection will be conducted, drawing on the experiences of the DRC team and other regional experts (including members). Based on this, discussion spaces will be proposed to reflect on the lessons we can draw from such past experiences and strategies, and the role we should play in the context of the increasing, systematic repression. We will also decide whether we should engage with new partners or strengthen relationships with those already focused on these areas, so they can better support our partners and members.
Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 9
Wie volgt op: protection working group within International Department (Carla, Credo & Thijs)
Timing: December 2025
Actie 11: Consolidate mix between long-term structural funding and flexibility
The consultants appreciated the long-term support that we provide to partners but also created more awareness about the ‘radical uncertainty’ that is ahead of us. To respond to this, we will ensure that, in our next multi-year program, we maintain the right mix between continuing long-term, strategic partnerships, but also expand our ability to support emerging, less formal initiatives to respond to arising challenges. We will use the aforementioned assessment of our flexible funding to consider developing guidelines.
Reactie op aanbeveling(en): 4
Wie volgt op: International Department, coordination by director (Thijs)
Timing: January 2027

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AANBEVELINGEN

Aanbeveling : Use “systematic repression” and “attacks against popular power and organization” in narratives.
In the narratives 11.11.11 elaborates on this issue, the general concepts of systemic repression and attacks against popular power and organizing could be included.
Management Response

<p>We will continue to integrate a broader conception of civic space in our new strategic priorities and multi-year program, and further integrate this broader approach to civic space into our advocacy work, where relevant.</p>
<p>Aanbeveling : Maintain a broad dialogue with different sectors in partner countries to preserve appropriate terms and concepts</p>
<p>At the same time, from a decolonial point of view, it is important to keep a broad dialogue with different sectors in the countries to understand and respect the appropriate terms and concepts used in each different context.</p>
<p>Management Response</p>
<p>Agreed. There is already an ongoing dialogue with partners and other stakeholders to stay abreast with ongoing debates and contextual evolutions. At the same time, we work more closely with a number of selected partners to achieve impact in our different country programmes.</p>
<p>Aanbeveling : Broaden policy and communication work from a narrow focus on human rights defenders to a broader approach encompassing collective rights and cultural and socioeconomic conditions.</p>
<p>In international communications and advocacy strategies, especially in spaces focused on civic space issues, we recommend being aware of not reducing the demands only to the protection of individual Human Rights Defenders and liberal democratic values, but instead promote proposals and practices that aim to protect collective rights and guarantee the social, cultural, and economic conditions for communities to organize.</p>
<p>Management Response</p>
<p>Agreed. This is already part of our agenda, but can be explored further, taking into account the political and communication agenda in Belgium.</p>
<p>Aanbeveling : Develop scenarios around emerging and future threats.</p>
<p>The diagnostics and hypothesis underlying the 11.11.11 program should be adjusted, and incorporate multiple scenarios that consider emerging threats, some of them already visible (SLAPP suit strategies, anti-NGO legislation, increasing direct violence from criminal networks against defenders), others not visible yet but with possible radical effects on the program and its key actors. Overall 11.11.11 and its partners should prepare for future scenarios of radical uncertainty and increasing physical insecurity.</p>
<p>Management Response</p>
<p>Agreed, we will include this as part of our consultation process in the run-up to our new multi-year program (2027-2031) and in ongoing dialogues with partners.</p>
<p>Aanbeveling : Desired outcomes’ should be more closely aligned with concrete ‘pathways of change’ and focus more on the local and regional levels and implementation.</p>
<p>This means opening a strategic discussion on the types of “desired changes” the program tries to achieve. We recommend to formulate desired outcomes that are closer to the concrete pathways of change that key actors are prioritizing. This could include decentering from the central state to local and regional levels, and at the same time, focus more on the implementation of policies, than primarily on the adoption of policies. The programs could additionally identify specific national policies where in a collaborative way, partners can accompany the proposal, adoption and implementation of these policies on the ground</p>
<p>Management Response</p>
<p>Largely agreed: we will examine in the new program how we can strengthen links with local and regional dynamics and place greater emphasis on implementation, while continuing to cooperate with national organizations and platforms and targeting national actors (where still possible and relevant).</p>
<p>Aanbeveling : More investment in communication to the general public</p>
<p>If the program maintains the ambitious objective of engaging the broad public with human rights and positioning justice narratives in society, this should be backed with sufficient investment in resources and capacities, and in bold and creative communication strategies. Partially this will depend on partners revising and strengthening their own communication strategies, but it will also require incorporating other types of actors, like investigative journalism, influencers, campaign, researchers, hackers, and/or potentially progressive marketing agencies. Partners also see potential in leveraging 11.11.11.’s in-house expertise to improve public outreach, communications work, and fundraising approaches. For instance, youth organizing in Belgium—especially as volunteer</p>

demographics shift—offers fresh perspectives that could inform innovative organizing methods in the Philippines or Peru.
Management Response
Agreed, we will include this in our dialogue with partners and in the new program, look at how we can support other actors with flexible funding and seek more links with our communication and mobilization work in Belgium. The latter can reinforce both the work of partners as well as of 11.11.11 itself, through exchanges on innovative and impactful practices.
Aanbeveling : Explore more direct engagement with local or grassroots organizations.
As the evaluation shows the centrality of grassroots struggles, and local territories, it is recommended to assess in what ways the program can be most effective in supporting community organizers and local activists, exploring new tools and methods to directly engage with grassroots levels. This discussion should include critically examining 11.11.11.'s strategy of supporting “national” networks, the way they relate to local actors and how to contribute to shifting power relations within civil society. Other strategies and mechanisms to more directly support local struggles can be explored, like micro-projects for local struggles (as happened in Perú), or including a more territorial lense to the program by concentrating some resources on certain territories. As an alternative strategy, 11.11.11 focus on national networks and wide organizations should be concretely related to its members' strategies with explicit complementarity between local, national and international struggles.
Management Response
Agreed to investigate this further. Even if our focus will remain on national (and regional) organizations and networks, we will seek how to assess and strengthen their links with grassroots and local organizations. Our focus on national-level but well-connected organizations makes us complementary to other organizations (including some of our member organizations) that work more at the grassroots level.
Aanbeveling : Encourage reflection and dialogue on power relations within countries and civil society.
An example where 11.11.11 could fruitfully contribute to more solid and coherent movements is in enabling reflections about power relations inspired in decolonial approach. In all countries, this approach would be interesting to question the power balances and tensions between different actors within civil society (relations national platforms - local organizations, relations NGO - root-based organizations, men-women, etc.) which undermine the results of the 11.11.11 program in several countries. In Congo, the decolonial approach is a way to reflect critically on the paradigms and analytical frameworks of development and formal democracy. In this aspect, contributions from partners' experiences in the Philippines or Peru - well prepared to take into account the cultural difference - would be very meaningful.
Management Response
We will further our reflections on this topic, and assess how we can integrate this in our dialogue with partners and in the drafting of new programs, taking into account the unequal power relations between 11.11.11 and its partners (which restricts our ability and legitimacy to challenge our partners on these topics).
Aanbeveling : More innovation and collaboration with partners on advocacy
The collapse of the international human rights system makes “business as usual” impossible in international advocacy work, networks and campaigning. In this area there is an urgent need to work on new ideas and creative strategies, which could begin with a fruitful dialogue between 11.11.11. and its partners working in international advocacy and campaigning, promoting profound changes to adapt to the changing global scenario and to help moving beyond the South-North paradigm towards shared strategies and linked more closely to the advocacy work carried out on the ground, both by the local 11.11.11 team and by partners. Some non-institutional recent initiatives of solidarity with Palestine could inspire reflection on what to do outside the state and governments framework.
Management Response
Agreed, we also want to give advocacy more prominence in our dialogue with partners and find ways to better align our advocacy work in Belgium and (indirectly) at European and international level with partner’s priorities and approaches. We also want to initiate dialogues with our partners, networks and colleagues on more innovative and inclusive advocacy approaches.
Aanbeveling : Networking on the protection of human rights defenders

More than directing more resources and capacities, or developing specific strategies, to specific dimensions of shrinking space, like the protection of defenders, it is precisely the role of supporting movements, connecting advocacy strategies, and giving general support to key actors that represents 11.11.11s added value. In addition, increasing and structural collaboration with other specialized organizations, like Frontline Defenders, Protection International or Amnesty International is recommended to coordinate strategies, ensure sufficient funds and resources available for defenders work, protection strategies, shared campaigning and advocacy, etc.

Management Response

Agreed. As we work closely with human rights defenders in our program, we want to expand our ability to respond to threats and assist in preventing them, but we want to do so by deepening our current advocacy, support and facilitation strategies, and by strengthening links with specialised actors, such as those mentioned in the recommendation.

Aanbeveling : Strategic choices around budget reductions

Possible budget cuts imply making sharp choices, in order to provide sustainable support strategies to the partners and own activities. The scenarios identified in this study project complex decisions on how to prioritize financial and human resources. The shrinking civic space does not only mean difficult working conditions, but also a reduction in funding for the entire cooperation sector, and in particular for organizations that address rights and justice issues. Partners face several challenges to their sustainability: dwindling sources of funding, institutionalized structures that require constant resources, political and administrative pressure, and even lawsuits. The sustainability of these decisions will depend on well-defined priorities from 11.11.11 onwards, with the challenge that the actual broad format of the programs does not provide much of a tool for 11.11.11 prioritization and decision making when resources are reduced or needs become more complex.

Management Response

Agreed. In the light of the announced savings, we are already considering various scenarios based on strategic prioritization of regions, themes, and actors. This will be an ongoing exercise.

Aanbeveling : Cross-cutting approach through specific strategies, criteria, and projects.

11.11.11 should put more attention on the concrete implementation of its transversal approaches in the regional programs and supported projects, and develop strategies and tools to advance and assess their implementation. Particularly, the intersectionality and gender justice approaches need a specific strategy, and tools to be assessed their presence in the program, while the “leave no one behind” approach should be translated to concrete criteria that allow assessing its implementation.

Management Response

Agreed. We acknowledge the need to make progress in developing our policies and approaches with regards to gender and other forms of inclusions. However, our starting point – and, in many ways, our critical lens – is that we do not claim to hold all the expertise required to meaningfully operationalize these frameworks. Instead of rushing to produce isolated strategies or tools, we believe it is essential to pause and critically examine the underlying assumptions behind categories such as gender, race, ethnicity, and age, and how their intersections sustain structural inequalities in our context.

From this place of reflection, we are committed to opening an internal process that allows us to explore which frameworks, methodologies, and political commitments genuinely resonate with who we are as an organization. Only from there can we build strategies and tools that are not only technically sound, but rooted in purpose, values, and regional realities.

Aanbeveling : More focus on youth

It is recommended to deepen the investment in youth as strategic actors in bridging local and national struggles and intentionally positioning young people not only as participants but as drivers of inter-scalar movement-building. Youth actors often bring fresh perspectives, digital fluency, however, they frequently remain under-supported in long-term organizing and decision-making spaces, and their ways of organizing require other strategies and methods to support them. The next program could address this by creating dedicated platforms for youth within partner organizations and coalitions, supporting intergenerational dialogue, and facilitating leadership pathways that link grassroots activism with national advocacy processes. It should be youth leaders and activists themselves that should shape and lead this strategy. A more open and flexible way of working which allows the cocreation of initiatives can make that happen.

Management Response
Agreed, we will include this in discussions with partners and in the new multi-year program.
Aanbeveling : Clear agenda for strategic innovation.
11.11.11 could develop a more intentional agenda to support and promote strategic innovation in the program, co-created with partners, and reserving specific resources for exchange and shared learning initiatives. Partners highlight a strong interest in learning from Indigenous Peoples' self-autonomy and self-governance practices elsewhere, as these experiences could inspire local movements. Similarly, exchanging strategies and innovations on strategic litigation, campaigning, advocacy actions, and community mobilizations across different Southern contexts can generate fresh ideas and solidarity ties. A crucial area for innovation is communication strategies.
Management Response
We will organize more exchanges between and with partners on innovation, and allocate a specific budget to stimulate innovation.
Aanbeveling : Raise awareness among others to adopt our approach.
We recommend 11.11.11 to advocate more proactively for their type of approach in spaces for funders, cooperation and international solidarity and push for more political, movement oriented, decolonial and trust based relations. This can include building and engaging in alliances and exchanges with other international solidarity platforms and initiatives, which share similar trustbased and movement-oriented approaches. Other funders like Thousand Currents, or funder spaces like the EDGE platform, can be interesting places for this.
Management Response
Agreed, we already do this in part as an umbrella organization.
Aanbeveling : Better shared and flexible approach to MEAL
We recommend to continue using the outcome harvesting as a monitoring method, and at the same time revise its planning, monitoring and evaluation tools and methodologies to assure a shared understanding internally and with partners on how to apply this approach. Some qualitative methods, narrative approaches and digital tools could be integrated and used on a flexible and voluntary basis by local teams and partners to better capture complex, relational, and less tangible changes, particularly in civic space, alliance-building, and political culture shifts. At the same time, for the second half of the program it is still possible to clearly specify and prioritize some desired outcomes and pathways of change in the program and allow a more directed monitoring of progress.
Management Response
Agreed, we will further deepen and expand our outcome harvesting methodology in our current and future programs.
Aanbeveling : More participatory approach to programming
In the second part of this program, the process of elaborating the new program can be a good opportunity to install a more participatory approach in the program and together with the partners formulate desired changes that allow monitoring progress in movement and coalition building, as well as for organization strengthening and transforming power relations within movements and networks, based on a common analysis of the main challenges faced in each context.
Management Response
Agreed, we will do this in the elaboration of the new program.
Aanbeveling : shared learning among partners and regions.
Qualitative steps for progress, for example in coalition building or shift in political culture within NGOs, could be established collectively and monitored on a regular basis with outcome harvesting discussion. Collective participatory spaces for strategic evaluation and learning are evaluated positively by most of the partners, and even with different approaches between regions, can be reinforced and given more added value in terms of defining shared priorities and promote innovation.
Management Response
Agreed, we will roll this out in the coming months.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE NIET-GEVOLGDE CONCLUSIES

Conclusie : (too) strong focus on actions or one-off events in outcome mapping/harvesting

The current use of outcome mapping and outcome harvesting tends to capture changes primarily at the level of action, outputs directly linked to them, or one-off facts rather than at the level of outcomes and results. For example, one-off decisions taken by an actor, or the realization of a certain event or meeting, often informed in the monitoring tools, are not always outcomes, but may be indicators or a marker of progress. Apart from some decisive political decisions (like the approval of the law on Human rights defenders in Congo), such actions may not imply a sustainable change. Of course, facts are relevant when they inform about a possible outcome but should be clearly informed as such and difference should be made among what is harvested in order to continuously analyze obstacles and conditions to make the change durable.

Management Response

We agree that our outcome harvesting still includes too many outputs instead of outcomes, but one-off decisions by an actor we are trying to influence are indeed relevant and necessary to include, even if they do not initially appear to lead to sustainable change.