



Let's listen

ANNUAL REPORT | 2021



**Four billion people
can't connect because
there's nothing or little
available in their
language.**

Let's talk. Let's listen.



Opening message

By the middle of 2020, we recognized that the direction we were taking - and the ambition of the organization - had evolved significantly. Translators without Borders no longer reflected the breadth of what we do. Not only did this mean we needed to evolve the brand; we also needed to evolve our strategy and structure. By the end of 2021, not only had we achieve most of what we set out to in our three-five year strategy, we also knew that we had to lay the groundwork for the next period. Sadly, this meant closing TWB Kenya.

What better time than the second year of a global pandemic to consolidate gains and invest in a foundation for the future of the organization?

We changed almost everything, restructuring teams, embedding new processes and platforms, updating many of our policies, and investing more in developing our technology portfolio. Most importantly, we developed a new aspiration for the organization: 4 Billion Conversations.

Four billion people speak power languages - English, French, Russian, Arabic, Chinese. And four billion people do not. It's no coincidence that the 4 billion who don't speak power languages are often the most marginalized and vulnerable with the least power, struggling to get information about health care, voter rights, education in a language and format they can understand.

CLEAR Global's new ambition is to flip that power dynamic, helping to make the world more equitable and just. We help people get information and be heard, whatever language they speak.

In this annual report, we outline what we achieved in 2021 to set the organization up for the new direction. In 2022, you'll hear more about our adventures as we embark on this journey.

Throughout this, we've had incredible support from our supporters, sponsors, and the tens of thousands of community members. None of this is possible without all of you. Thank you for your support and confidence.

Thank you,
Aimee Ansari, CEO and Andrew Bredenkamp, CEO

Achieving our objectives 2019-2021

Over the past three years, TWB/CLEAR Global sought to demonstrate that language and language technology could be leveraged to support people who speak marginalized languages to get information in a language and format they could understand. We knew that this would be difficult and it has been.

Now, however, there is more funding for developing language technology, more people building data sets, and a much greater recognition of the need to ensure that people can get information in their language. The COVID-19 pandemic has helped up - suddenly language and language technology were recognized as critical components in the effort to get people vaccinated.

The goals that we set for ourselves in 2018 - to build awareness of the need for information and two-way communications in the right language and format; to demonstrate that it's possible to build systems for this; and to build our own systems and team - have largely been achieved. We now have an incredible team that can (and has!) build machine translation and ASR. Our language services team manages projects and communities in 149 countries. Local language data networks have been set up and some major foundations (Rockefeller, Google, GIZ) have taken some tentative steps toward funding language technology initiatives.

In 2021 alone, we had incredible outputs:

- We produced 90 language maps and are the leader in openly available language maps
- We developed and applied language technology in Tigrinya, Congolese Swahili, Bangla, Lingala, Nande, Hausa, Kanuri.
- Our community grew to 80,000 people, translating information in 3000 language pairs.

- We translated over 30 million words of content, in every major humanitarian crisis, reaching approximately 100 million people, about 50% of people who needed humanitarian assistance.
- We continued work in our three country programs in Bangladesh, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, supporting people in-country through translations, glossaries, research, training, pictorial design and much more
- We strengthened our partnerships with the World Food Programme (WFP), Social Development Direct, Fair Trade USA, Learning Equality, CISCO, the International Organization for Migration, the UN Mine Action Service, USAID, iNERDE, Ushahidi, Pram Depot, and UNICEF, to name a few.

We have also diversified our income sources and strengthened the Boards, making the organization more sustainable.





Highlight: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey of Team members

The DEI working group conducted a survey of all team members. Eighty people participated. The findings are interesting and were helpful in understanding where we need to focus our efforts - both at maintaining good things we are doing and pointing to where we can improve.

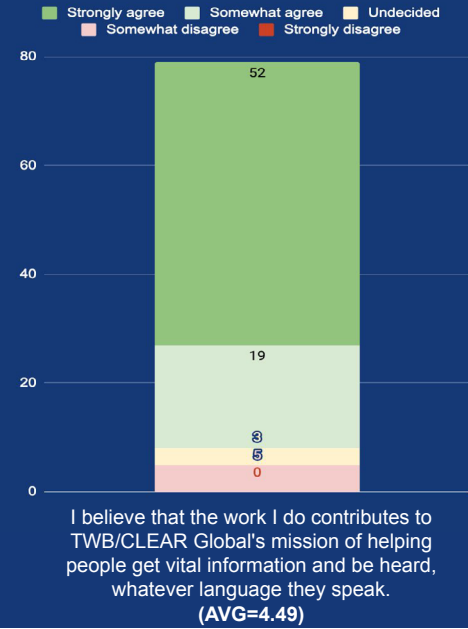
Our strong points:

- Overwhelming majority feels that they can voice their opinions and believe that they matter
- Almost all (90%) see how their work contributes to our mission
- Strong overall stance and action against discrimination and harassment

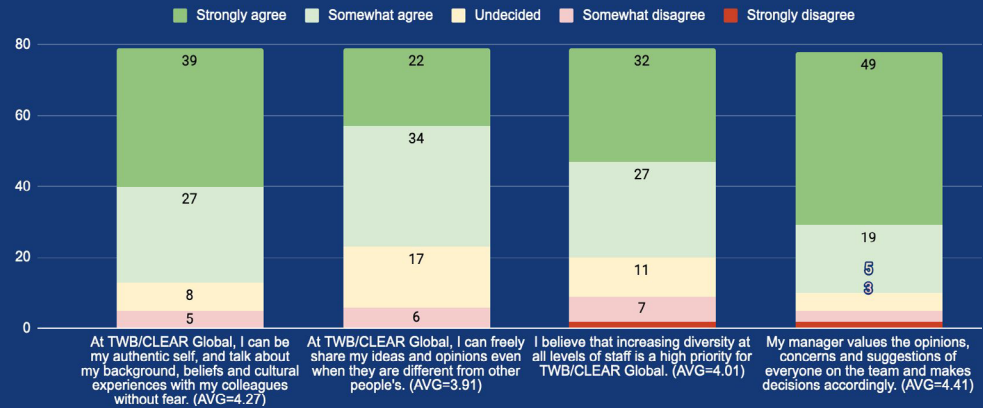
We need to improve:

- Focus on the experience of different groups in the organization, particularly people with disabilities
- Create different listening channels/mechanisms
- Ensure everybody feels heard and safe when voicing issues around DEI

Contribution to CLEAR Global's mission



Diversity





Join us.
Donate today!

Research and technology

People have a right to be heard and to get information. Our research and technology programs help us and others to do that – at scale. Our 2021 research focused on mapping the languages that people facing crises speak, and working with NGO partners to conduct multilingual research. For example, we worked with the World Food Programme, the largest humanitarian agency, to understand how they manage language by developing a baseline and providing them with tools to improve reach, accountability and effectiveness of WFP community engagement.

What we did:

- Conducted a survey and got over 900 responses from 60 countries
- Produced 11 language maps
- In person assessments conducted in Malawi and Sri Lanka

In total, across all programs, TWB produced 90 language maps and are recognized as the leaders in language mapping. The language maps and datasets developed and/ or made available were shared through OCHA's data portal for humanitarian and development- related data. The maps had over 230,000 views and the data behind them were downloaded 7,300 times.

Why is this important:

- The information is in demand - we are filling a information gap that aid workers appreciate and need
- The information is being used. The data is downloaded and is a part of humanitarian organization's assessments.
- By producing one map, we can help millions of people to get information in the right language and format.

In 2021, with our program technology projects, we started to “listen” to people. Over 5,000 people have used our chatbots, giving us invaluable insights into their issues and concerns. We developed 3 conversational AI chatbots:

- **Shehu:** Working with Mercy Corps, Shehu provides COVID-19 content in Hausa, Kanuri, and English. Over 3000 users
- **Planeta Azul:** Working with the International Organization for Migration, Planeta Azul was developed for migrants in South America. It had 185 Ecuador, 181 Peru, 33 Mexico
- **Kenya:** With Think, a Kenyan org, building a bot for financial inclusion.

Our team also started to develop automatic speech recognition and machine translation, working in Tigrinya, Congolese Swahili, Bangla, Lingala, Nande, Hausa, Kanuri. By the end of the year, the data had 345 downloads and the machine translation was accessed 282 times.

With these tools, we will be able to get information out more quickly across more languages, reaching more people.

“Wow what a trajectory for Translators without Borders! Your work is such a valuable contribution to the humanitarian sector and couldn't be more pertinent in light of recently flared up debates about “racism in aid”. Keep up the great work!

- Marisa Althaus-Jojta,

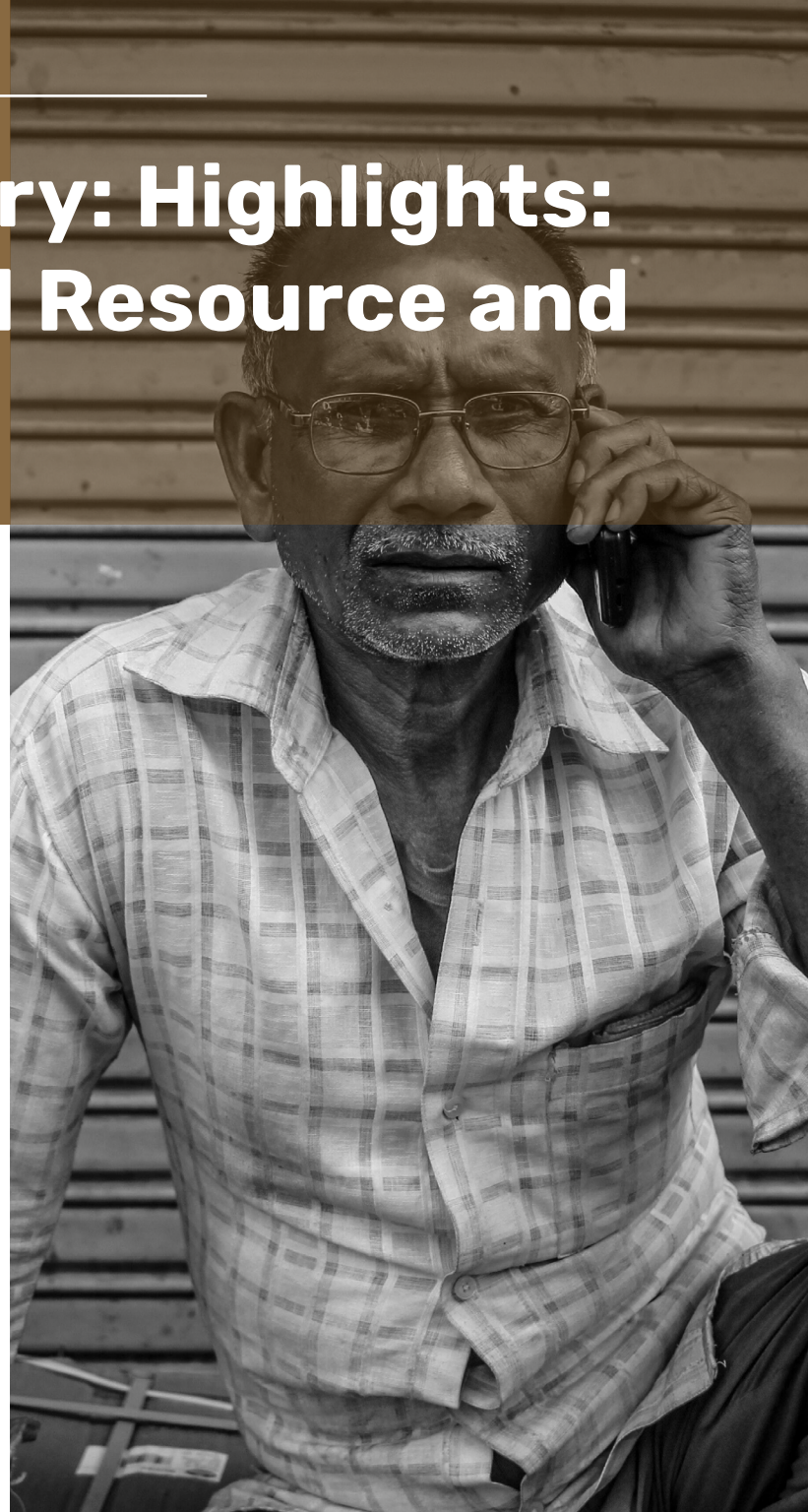
Head of Grant Acquisition and Partnerships at HEKS/EPER (Swiss Church Aid) on Twitter

Telling the story: Highlights: Glossaries and Resource and Support Hub

TWB started developing openly available glossaries in 2016 in response to refugees arriving in Greece. Since then, the demand for glossaries has skyrocketed – aid workers find the glossaries necessary so they can explain aid industry jargon and complex concepts in local languages.

In 2021, the glossaries

- had over 6,300 unique users in 2021, up almost 40% from 2020.
- included sign languages in 3 languages! Sign is included in the Tamil, Sinhala and Chewa glossaries [WFP – \(Arabic/Chewa/ French/Portuguese/Sinhala/ Spanish/ Congolese Swahili /Tamil/ English\)](#)
- A new language: [Tigray Response – \(Arabic/Amharic/Tigrinya/English\)](#)



In addition, we are working with the multi-agency project, the Resource and Support Hub (RSH). The RSH aims to support community organizations to improve their safeguarding from sexual exploitation and abuse. We've helped them to:

- get their materials into 10 languages (with more coming up).
- produce a tip sheet on language in research,
- Delivered in awareness-raising webinars, with over 1000 participants in total

In 2021, we worked within the consortium to launch a multilingual PSEA glossary in XX languages. Before we could do that, we had to agree on terms and definitions, a gargantuan process trying to get very large organizations and dozens of experts to agree.

Why it's important:

Through this consortium, we have pushed to ensure that the discourse on SEAH doesn't remain entirely anglophone-centric, including by searching for literature on SEAH written in languages other than English

Absolutely wonderful partner to have on strategic calls over the past year for her eye-opening views on the importance of languages" and to help them get a much more "profound understanding of why it's not "just" translation work" – Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Resource and Support Hub, talking about our cooperation.

Community

The Translators without Borders community is at the core of everything we do. In 2021, they went above and beyond, translating over 30 million words of information about health, rights, and global movements. They helped us and our partners ensure that hundreds of millions of people worldwide got information. We are grateful for these professionals who drive our innovative work.

In 2021, the community grew to over 80,000 people, working in more than 3,000 unique language combinations.

The community also includes 85 sign language translators in 30 languages, a stunning development that will help us to reach even more vulnerable and marginalized people.

To highlight the work and involve the community more, TWB hosted language weeks for Tigrinya, Hindi, French, Arabic Kinyarwanda, Rundi, Somali, and Swahili, Spanish, Dari. These were a fun and interactive way to raise awareness and engage the range of community members. They were enormously popular, with thousands of people participating from all over the world. And great engagement – a lot of sharing their milestones, training!

The 2021 community survey feedback shows that 86% of our community are either satisfied or very satisfied with their overall experience as a TWB volunteer; and we know that there's much more we can do to support them.



Axy Amelia Peña Mena • 3rd+

Traductora freelance en Upwork

2d • 🌐



I've been looking for a translation job for the past few days, I haven't had any luck so far so I've been focussing on courses and how I can use my skills to help. This course by [Translators without Borders](#) was eye-opening and the videos were incredibly inspiring. I will not forget the humanitarian principles (impartiality, humanity, neutrality, and independence) anytime soon.





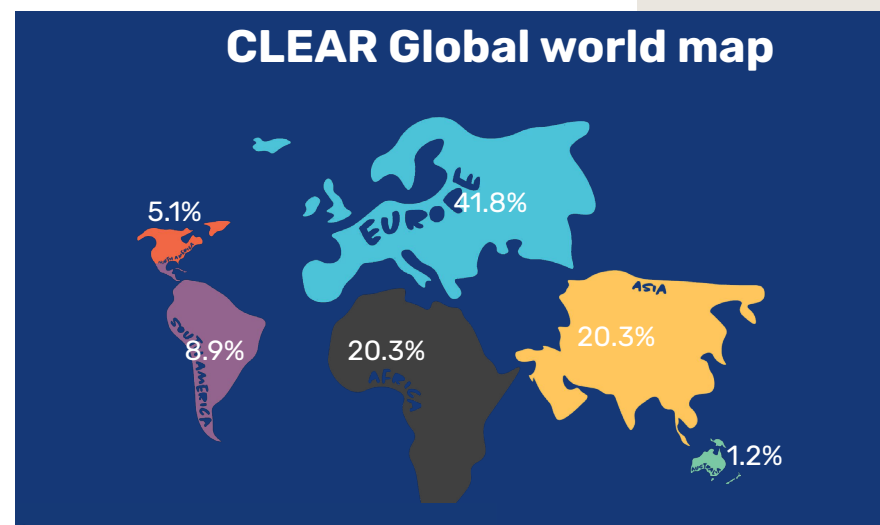
Our people and capacity

While COVID-19 restrictions eased over the year, 2021 was a year of reflection for many people. For CLEAR Global, not only did we reflect on our program strategy, we also redoubled our efforts to be an organization where everyone feels, and is, listened to and heard, respected and treated with dignity.

Our efforts to ensure that our team reflects the diversity of the languages in which we work were particularly fruitful. We still have a lot of work to do.

We are especially proud of:

- The DEI working group was formed
- Our Boards now include people from Nigeria, Bangladesh, and Sierra Leone and have better gender balance
- Not only is our team more diverse, but we are promoting from within and ensuring that we have more diverse voices in our decision making.
- 50% of the people we promoted are from Africa & Asia
- The number of managers from Africa and Asia increased by almost 10% (from 20% to 28%)
- Diverse interview panels (88% of interview panels included people from Africa and Asia) led to more diverse hiring.





Let's talk. Let's listen

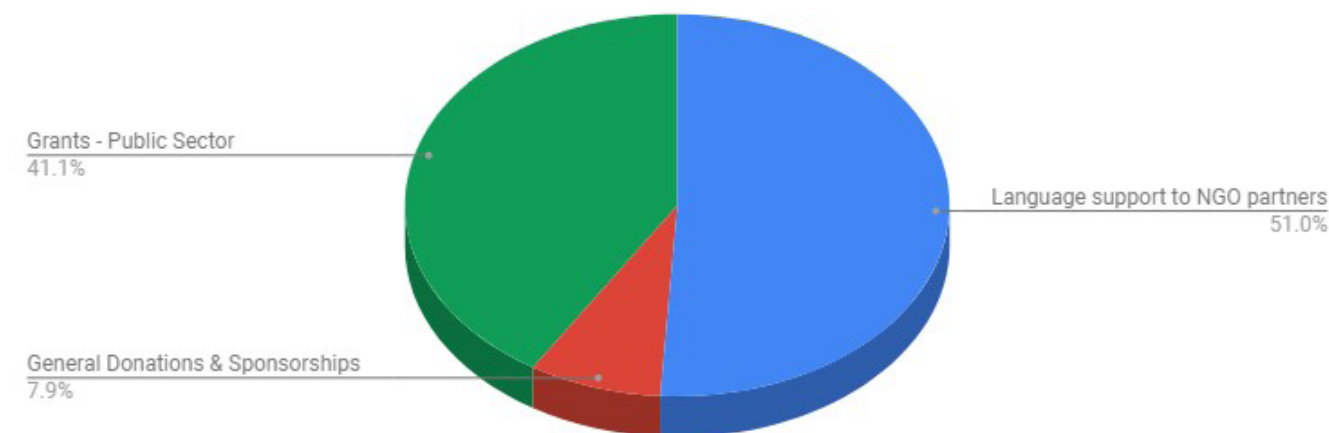
Mike Ryan, head of the WHO Emergencies Program, “Kudos and thank you to all of you...who have worked so hard to amplify and translate information to get it out there in languages and formats that everyone can access. It's a massive achievement. Now millions of people are included in COVID-19 learning that would not have otherwise been is something you should all take a bow for.” [19 Feb 2021](#) on the WHO e-learning course that TWB worked on.



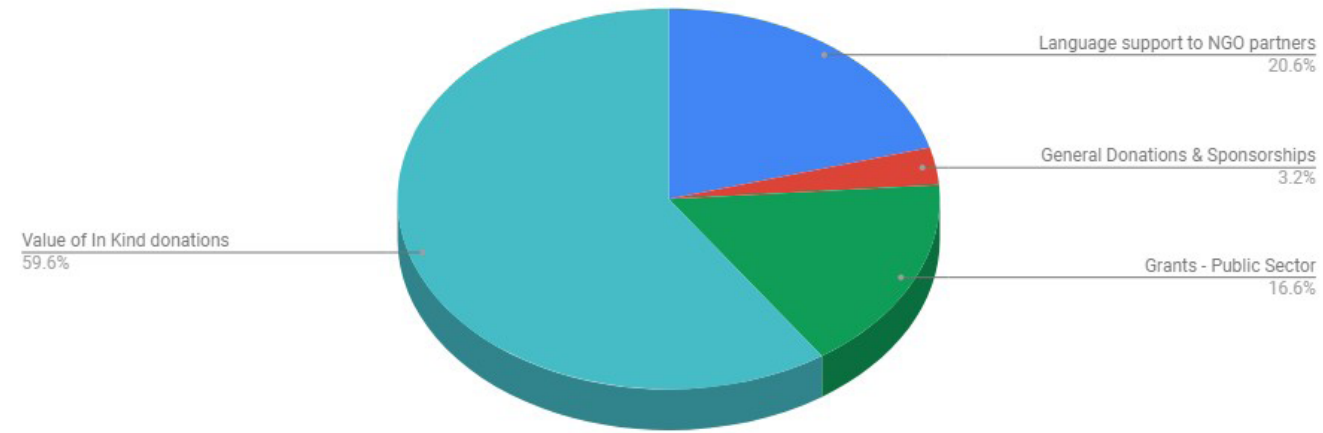
Financials

- 2021 was a year of investment for CLEAR Global. We expanded our language technology team and invested in new systems so that we could grow our impact in 2022 and into the future.
- Earned income from NGO partnerships more than doubled. It now represents 21% of our overall income (with in-kind donations).
- Grant revenue decreased by 19%, income from individual donors and sponsorships increased by 3%
- Our level of reserves decreased. This is planned to be a short-term decrease, gradually replenishing over the coming three years.

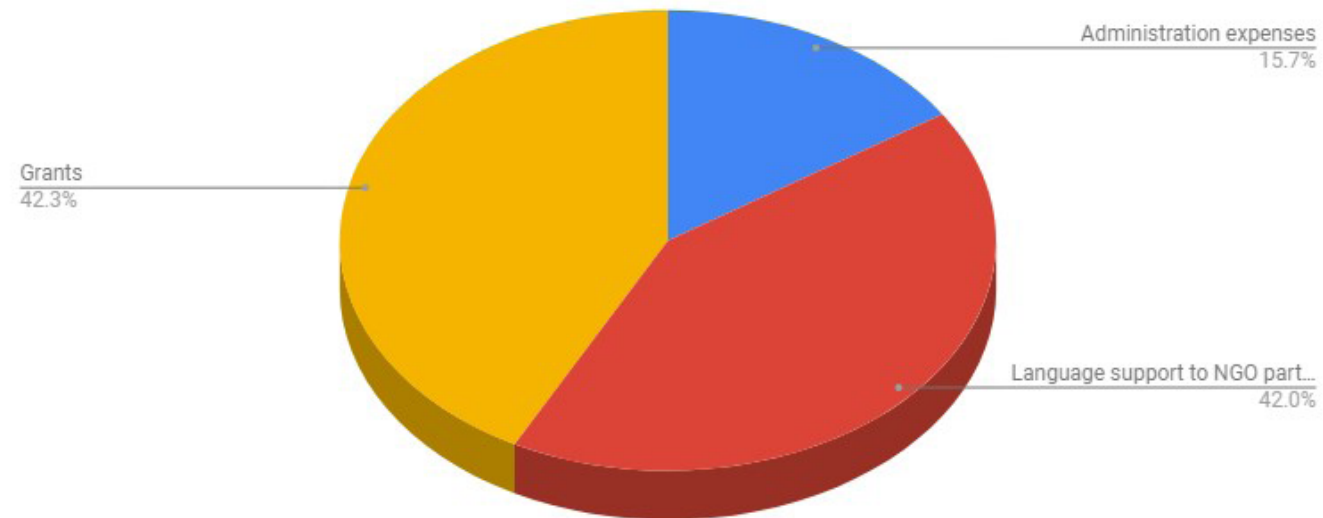
FY21 Income without in-kind donations \$5,024,447



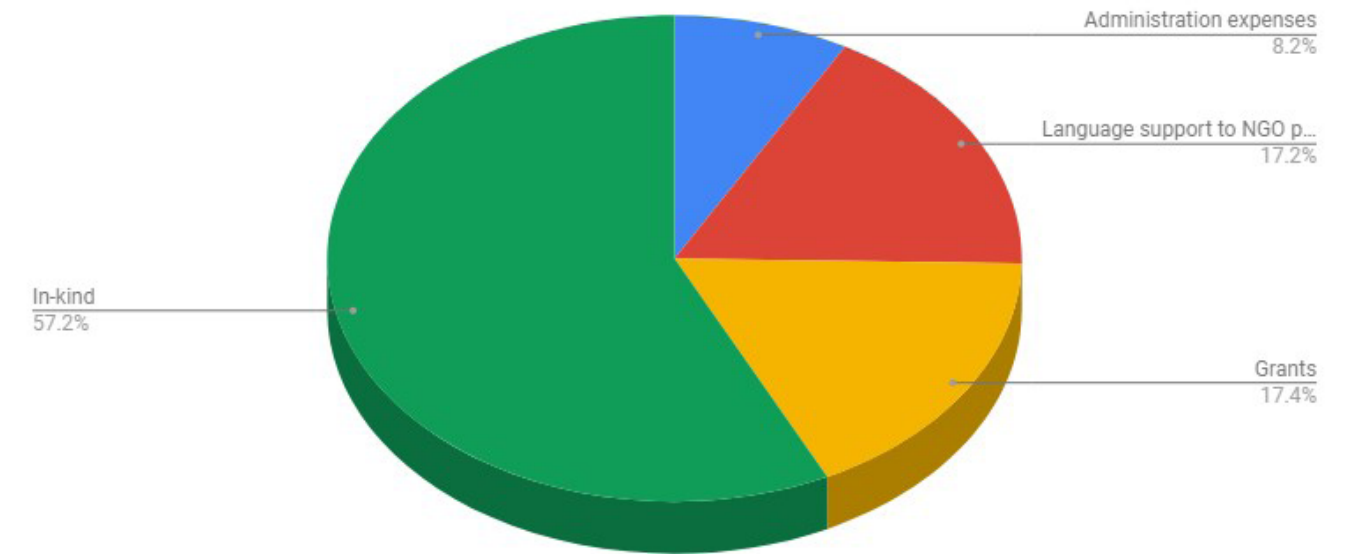
FY21 Income with in-kind donations \$12,412,682



FY21 Expenditure without in-kind donations \$5,520,424



FY21 Expenditure with In-kind donations \$12,908,659



Your ongoing support makes a difference:
Please support us personally or through your company at translatorswithoutborders.org/donate.

Many of our donors use their wills or living trusts to make their most generous gifts.
Please remember TWB when you create yours.

CLEAR Global

Is committed to adhering to relevant codes and standards of good practice, including:

- UN Global Compact
- Principles of Digital Development
- TAUS Dynamic Quality Framework
- Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief
- Common Humanitarian Standard
- DFID Supply Partner Code of Conduct.

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Business Park, Dublin 3.

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Let's talk



Let's listen



**Join us.
Donate today!**