

Annual Report 2023

FAST – First aid support Team



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with a sense of both gratitude and urgency. 2023 has been a year of unprecedented challenges for the humanitarian community, particularly in Calais, where FAST has been providing vital first aid services to vulnerable populations.

The year began with a surge in evictions, cold and wet weather and the first very sad and unnecessary death on the Calais - UK border on the 3th of January.

The situation was further compounded by brutal border policies, which sought to deter people from seeking refuge in Europe. The state funded police evictions (sometimes on a 48-hour basis) aim to destroy shelter and remove belongings to make the different sites unliveable. The hope is that evictions and police won't come to the places displaced people are seeking shelter; however the police and the evictions always come. Freezing temperatures and countless storms without shelter left our volunteers without any answers to children sleeping in tents.

Many of the people we support suffer from wet foot related wounds, scabies, coughs, colds and burns. Often people will not seek hospital treatment because of discrimination, medical racism, limited access and a lack of trust for state authorities. This places real risks on health, and often 'easy' fixes by FAST volunteers can prevent worsening.

Our work has not been without its challenges. In March, the British government announced the Illegal Migration Bill. Against the backdrop of hostility and despair, FAST's volunteers have remained steadfast in their commitment to providing essential care to those in need.

As we look ahead to 2024, we are acutely aware of the daunting challenges that lie before us. The world is still reeling from the consequences of war, cruelty, and instability, and people continue to flee their homes in search of safety and a better life. Running low on funds due to other humanitarian disasters in the world and a lack of general funding of humanitarian aid.

However, FAST is drawing strength from the unwavering support of you; our donors, volunteers, and partners. Your generosity and support has enabled us to continue our work in Calais, providing hope and care to those who need it most.

We can stand in solidarity with those who have been forced to flee their homes, and we can work towards a world where everyone has the right to health care and safety.

We dedicate this annual report in part to all of our volunteers, but mostly to the people suffering at the borders trying to seek safety. Our thoughts are with everyone who has lost their lives, or a loved one.

In solidarity,

The FAST Board.



The Board

Nynke van Dijck

Mark Baker

Sabine van Hoften

Rosie Watts

Jackie Wood

Alice Beal

Marjon Middeljans

The Board is responsible for defining and agreeing the long-term vision, strategic planning and budgeting of the organisation. Our board members are volunteers and are not entitled to any financial compensation.

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Since 2008 the Dutch Tax Administration can designate an institution to be a “Public Benefit Organisation” (Dutch: *Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling*, ANBI). At least 90% of the efforts of an ANBI has to be focused on the general good.

In January 2019 the Dutch Tax Office recognized that FAST is a Public Benefit Organisation or Charitable Organisation (Dutch: ANBI).

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Despite financial challenges of the last year, we are grateful to have received continued support from individual donors, foundations and our volunteers. Many volunteers who already dedicated their time, also brought physical donations or fundraised among family and friends.

Our special thanks this year goes out to the Haella Foundation and Human Aid Now. Being supportive of our work for years, also in 2023 their support continued. Their contributions have been instrumental in allowing us to continue our work.

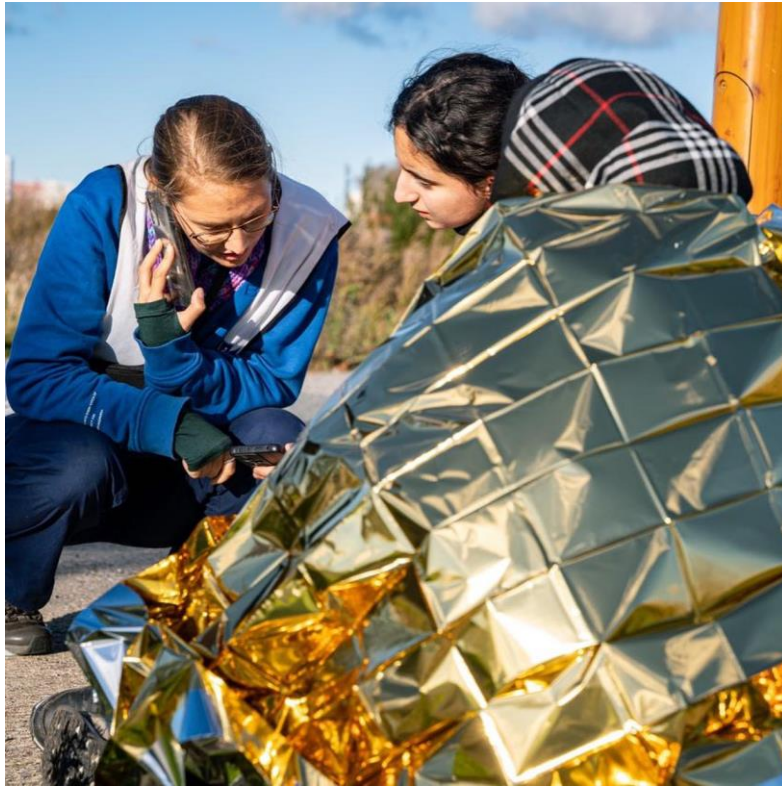
2023 was mostly challenging due to increasing prices of medical supplies, a break into the car which left the car unable to drive for a while, and foundations not being able to support anymore.

However this did not stop FAST and different fundraising appeals were widely shared and supported by our network, such as our very successful 'Winter Appeal'.

Next to medical aid, FAST also distributes non-food items (NFIs) that are related to health and hygiene. This includes items such as hygiene kits, which may contain items like soap, tissues and dental care. These distributions are an important part of FAST's overall mission to provide essential support to those in need, and help improve the overall health and well-being of the refugee population in Calais. For our NFI distribution, FAST is trying to give the best and culturally appropriate options to people, such as Miswaks (traditional oral hygiene tools used particularly in the Middle East and Africa).

Our costs and income can be found [here](#);

Costs	Amount
Medical supplies	€ 6.506,70
NFI distribution (hygiene etc)	€ 3.061,56
Volunteer expenses	€ 625,61
Administration system volunteers	€ 254,73
Insurance FAST car	€ 828,71
Fuel FAST car	€ 2.624,64
Repairs FAST car	€ 1.229,74
Taxes FAST car	€ 500,00
Fundraising & PR	€ 306,70
Admin costs	€ 596,06
Supplies (storage, shipping)	€ 153,09
Total costs	€ 16.687,54



Income	Amount
Donations Paypal	€ 612,46
Donations Facebook	€ 1.430,41
Donations directly	€ 1.431,42
Donations through website	€ 4.592,77
Haella Foundation	€ 10.000,00
Total Income	€ 18.067,06

TREATMENTS



In the northern regions of France, the plight of refugees has reached a critical juncture, marked by a “perfect storm” of adversities such as harsh weather conditions, forcible evictions, and an ongoing battle for fundamental human rights by supporting organisations. Amidst this challenging landscape, FAST has actively engaged in providing essential medical assistance to those displaced from their homelands.

The statistics bear witness to the impact of FAST's work:

- Total Patients seen in 2023: 31,951
- Average Daily Patients: 114
- Total Referrals: 1,457
- Patients Treated: 16,718

These numbers underscore the urgent need for medical intervention among the displaced population. The reasons compelling individuals to seek assistance are as varied as they are pressing:

- Respiratory Illness: 5,890 cases
- Wound Care: 3,176 cases
- Skin Complaints: 2,072 cases

FAST's other achievements further illuminate the dedication to providing aid and support:

- Aid was administered across 280 days, with an average presence of three volunteers at any given time.
- A staggering 13,776 requests for basic hygiene and first aid products were fulfilled.
- A wide array of items crucial for maintaining health and well-being, ranging from vaseline and skin creams to multivitamins, tissues, and condoms, were distributed to those in need.
- Ongoing provision of free first aid training sessions for fellow NGOs and volunteers demonstrates a commitment to capacity building and empowerment within the humanitarian community.

Beyond the realm of direct assistance, FAST actively engages in advocacy and collaboration to amplify their impact:

- Efforts have been expanded through strategic partnerships with other NGOs, media outlets, and academic institutions, enhancing advocacy initiatives aimed at addressing the root causes of refugee displacement and advocating for policy change.
- Participation in conferences and knowledge-sharing platforms allows FAST to leverage their experiences and insights, contributing to a broader discourse on refugee rights and humanitarian response strategies.

In the face of adversity, FAST continues to stand as a steadfast ally to displaced people, always keeping in mind the principles of compassion, solidarity, and resilience in a tireless pursuit of a better tomorrow.



VOLUNTEERS

Our community of volunteers is growing! Over the past year we have had 4 field coordinators and 54 short term volunteers. The short term volunteers mostly volunteered for a period of over 2 weeks each. In addition, we now have an alumni of field coordinators who continue to support FAST by providing valuable support to our new field coordinators in post.

Our volunteers are global and come from as far away as Australia, Canada, Europe, UK and USA. The majority are registered health care professionals (doctors, nurses, paramedics) in their home countries, however, we also support final year medical and nursing students to volunteer and undertake their elective placement with us. This year, we presented at a medical electives conference to promote FAST's work as we recognise the importance of informing and influencing health care professionals at the start of their careers.

We also recruited four remote volunteers this year to support our recruitment and social media work and we partnered with Indigo Volunteers who support refugees by connecting ethical humanitarian projects with volunteers. We hope this will be a fruitful partnership and are now seeing volunteers introduced to our organisation via this route.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our volunteers for their selflessness and commitment to making a difference in the lives of refugees and displaced individuals.



THANK YOU

FAST extends heartfelt thanks to our funders whose generous support has enabled us to provide vital assistance and make a meaningful impact on the lives of those in need.

- Expanded advocacy efforts.
- Continued provision of first aid training to NGOs and volunteers.
- Fulfilment of 13,776 requests for hygiene and first aid products.

Thank you to Mattia, a humanitarian aid worker and professional photographer, who has taken many of the photos included in this report. Our thanks also to Sabine who is leaving the board after several years of service, we look forward to working with Marjon in her new role as treasurer.

As we look back on 2023, we recognize the pivotal role played by our funders in our success. We invite you to continue supporting our mission, ensuring that we can persist in our efforts to provide crucial aid to those facing adversity.

