

The F2F Fundraising Evolution

Embracing transformation & innovation to secure the future of face-to-face fundraising

- Daniel McDonnell – Founder DMac Alliance for Change
- Elsbeth de Ridder – Global F2F & IG Fundraising Specialist



Danny – Intro

18 years in Face-to-Face (F2F) Fundraising & IG + another 10 prior in direct marketing & Sales. Started my fundraising career on the streets of Manchester (the birthplace of F2F)

Worked with many orgs and UN agencies over the years. Spent 2.5 years as an international consultant based out of Thailand

The last 8+ years I have been Global F2F Lead at UNICEF overseeing the largest F2F campaign on earth recruiting over 500k regular donors in 2024 alone

Launched my new global direct dialogue consultancy in 2026 - DMAC and about to launch a brand new leadership development and coaching system SaaS

Father of 3, lover of: music, authentic human connection and making a positive impact in the world



Elsbeth – Intro

16+ years' experience in Face-to-Face and Individual Giving.

Started as national F2F Manager with **World Vision** Australia and later the UK, leading F2F Inhouse programs.

Spent 10 years with **Save the Children**, of which 7 years as Global F2F Specialist with **Save the Children International**, overseeing F2F agency, in-house and hybrid programs globally.

Working as an independent consultant from early 2025:

- Working with the **World Food Programme** launch its first ever global F2F program
- Built **WWF** Croatia's first F2F and IG program in 2025
- Proud member of the **Dmac Alliance**

=>[Elsbeth.deridder@outlook.com/](mailto:Elsbeth.deridder@outlook.com) [linkedin.com/in/elsbethderidder](https://www.linkedin.com/in/elsbethderidder)

Passionate about making the world a little bit better for all, travelling, hiking, living life to the fullest, and working with brilliant fundraisers.

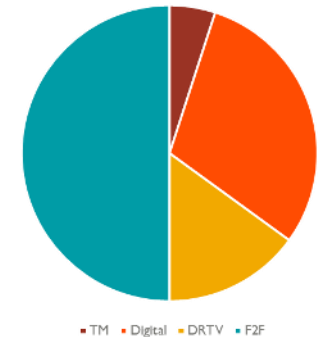


The Power of Face-to-Face

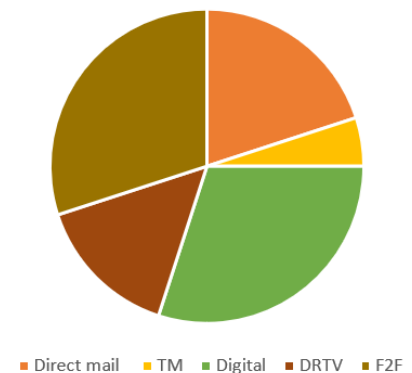
- F2F is still one of the most powerful fundraising channels globally.
- Even whilst all NGO diversified their channels mix post pandemic.
- It drives the majority of regular giving income, builds long-term donor relationships, and creates real human connection every single day.
- Today is about **celebrating that impact** - and equipping you with the tools, ideas, and inspiration to **future-proof F2F together**.
- We'll explore what's changing, what's coming next, and how strong fundamentals, innovation, and technology can strengthen F2F - so fundraisers can thrive, grow, and continue to lead the way.

Over reliance F2F pre pandemic

Average channel income as % of total IG income



Diversification post pandemic



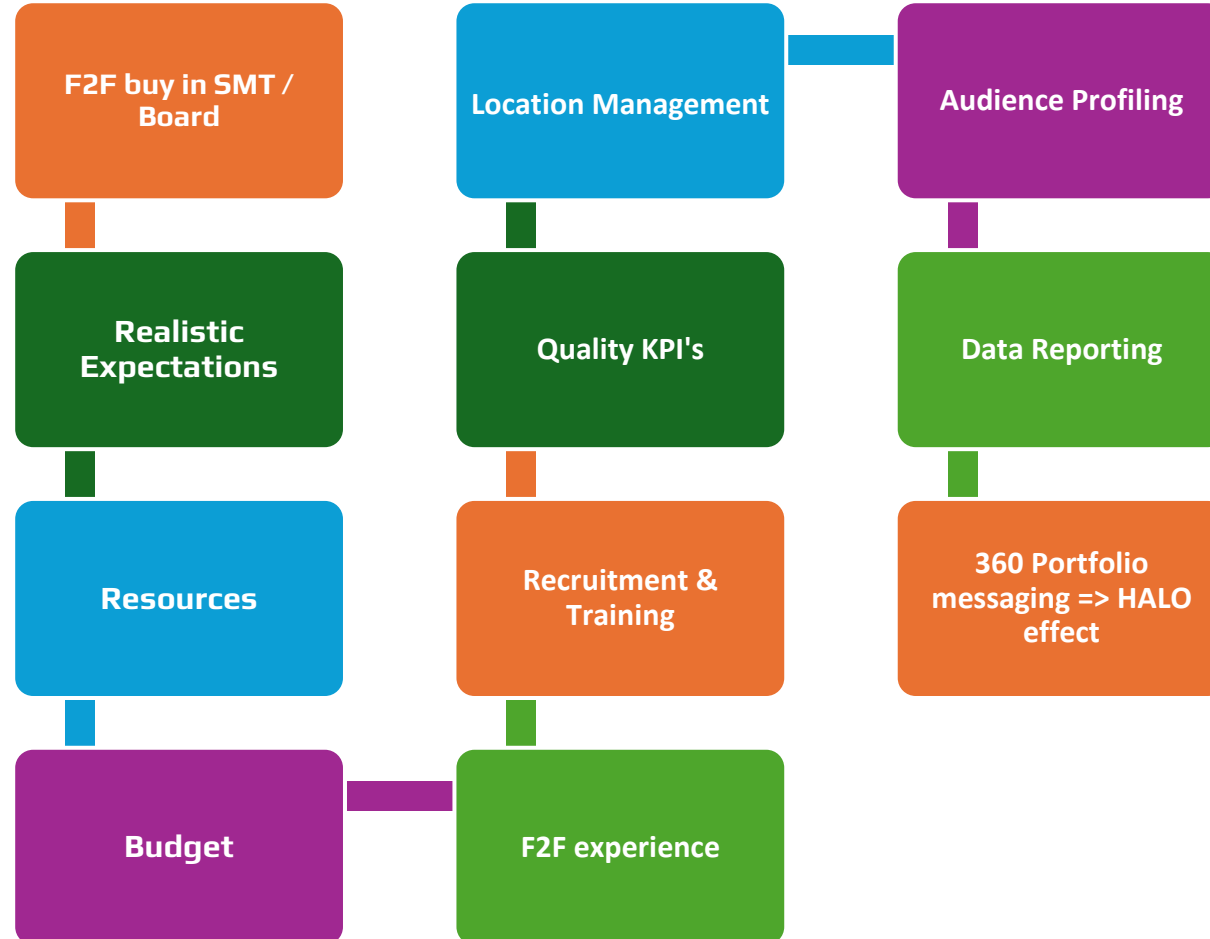
The
importance
of getting
the basics
right

“Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”

— Albert Einstein



So what are the basics? - The corner stone of all successful programs



Getting the basics right

A case study – Save the Children



The Situation

- FRD asked for an audit, believing the market wasn't right for F2F.
- Goal: provide official conclusion so SLT could cancel the channel.

Audit Findings

- Channel overseen by a DRTV manager with **no F2F experience**.
- F2F manager with **minimal expertise**.
- Agencies **not managed at all** – no contact throughout the year.
Agencies: *"If you don't manage us, why should we deliver quality?"*
- Data & finance reporting inaccurate and misleading.
- No support nor buy in from SLT/CEO/Board.

KPI's **far** below market values:

- No-show 10–15% higher/ 12-month attrition +10% higher
- 48% donors <25 years
- ROI: 0.43 (5yr) / 0.74 (10yr) (!!!)

What we did:

- **Paused** all activities (painful but necessary).
- **Recruited** a senior, experienced F2F manager.
- **Implemented** adequate data & finance reporting.
- **Selected** agencies based on quality recruitment
- Weekly **performance reviews** with agencies to drive improvements.
- We **stopped** accepting donors < 25 and capped 25–29 yrs.

Results:

Within 2 years:

- ▼ No-Show -15%
- ↑ Older, Higher-Value Donors (60% aged 40+)
- 📈 Retention +10% at 12 Months

With stronger management **all agencies began delivering better quality donors**.

SLT recognised F2F is a valuable part of the channel mix and **released budget and resources** to grow it.

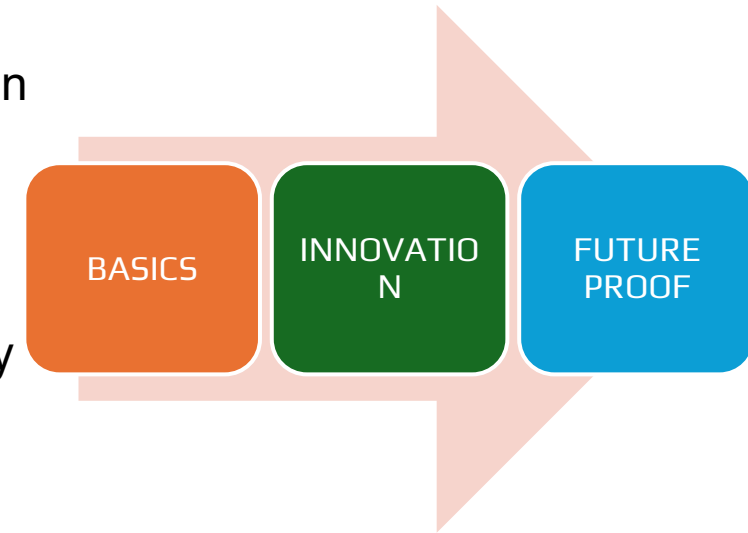
Future-Proofing F2F: From Strong Basics to Innovation

F2F is evolving rapidly. New products, technologies, and donor expectations are shaping the way we engage.

To future-proof the channel, we must embrace these changes- while maintaining strong foundations. The winning formula: get the basics right, then innovate to stay ahead.

Basics → **Innovation** → **Future-Proof Channel**

- **Basics:** Clear processes, strong management, adequate resources, quality data, and compliance.
- **Innovation:** New products, payment methods, digital integration, and AI tools.
- **Future-Proof:** A sustainable, adaptable channel that grows with donor needs.



Diversity of offer – Subscription products

A subscription product is a regular monthly donation where supporters receive ongoing updates or content, helping them stay connected to the cause over time.

A great example is **UNICEF's Paddington subscription**, designed for parents and their children, combining regular giving with child-friendly, mission-led content.

- Why: Access: New audiences & locations
- How: Fundraisers: Offering standard and subscription
- What: Monthly value: 22 F2F & 15 digital in Euros
- Results: 24m retention: 40% F2F vs 51% digital & 12m ROI: 1.31 F2F & 1.26 Digital



Diversity of offer – SG/ OTG & Lead Gen

Public Outreach Canada case study



Many F2F agencies and charities don't accept one-time gifts:

- It dilutes the success of the monthly ask
- It cannibalizes existing products
- It is confusing and hard to manage for fundraising teams.

What did Public Outreach do:

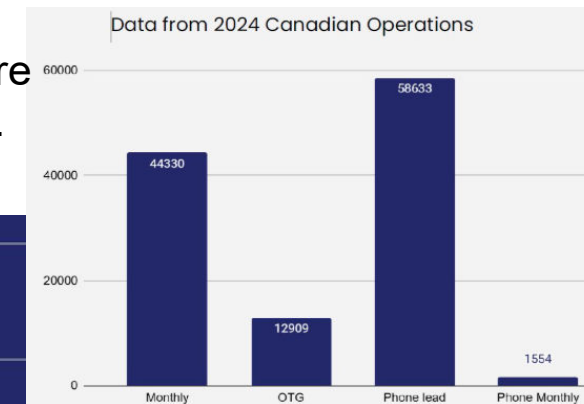
- Ran a 'Normal' RG campaign
- Drop down ask to SG/ OTG
- Further drop down to Lead Gen

By allowing one-time gifts we ensure donors can:

- *Sign up for the right amount, the right gift type, and at the right time.*
- *Review additional info online in their own time*
- *Talk further to a spouse about the cause*

2024 Campaign results:

- Half a million CAD income from SG/ OTG
- 13,000 donors otherwise 'lost'
- Additional 50,000 new leads who can be cultivated for future appeals and converted to RG.



Diversity of offer- UNICEF QR sticker / lead gen



First SMS with link to donation page



2nd SMS after 10min with link to complete QR code details



UNICEF's QR sticker for (lost) property is a two-step F2F campaign for people who don't want to commit on the spot:

Fundraisers start the conversation on site, then offer a QR for the donor to scan so they can register their device.

Results so far

- Conversion rate to one-time: 30%
- Average donation: €16,50
- Opt-in email: 69%
- Opt-in mobile: 50%

Diversity of offer – Lotteries, A New Approach to Donor Loyalty

A cooperation between **Childfund** and **Zenterprize- US**

The Challenge:

- 🎯 **Strategic need** for more unrestricted givers and diversification of income
- 🛡️ **Need to protect existing products** – no cannibalization of existing Cspn program
- 🚀 **Innovation-** wanted to innovate
- ⚙️ **Constraints:** limited staff & IT capacity
- 🌱 **Prospect:** Wanted to start small and scale fast

The solution

- **Incentivised Giving:** Regular Giving + Weekly Prize Draw
- Delivered via **F2F**, using a proven **UK lottery model**, adapted for the US
- Designed to reach **new donor segments**

The impact

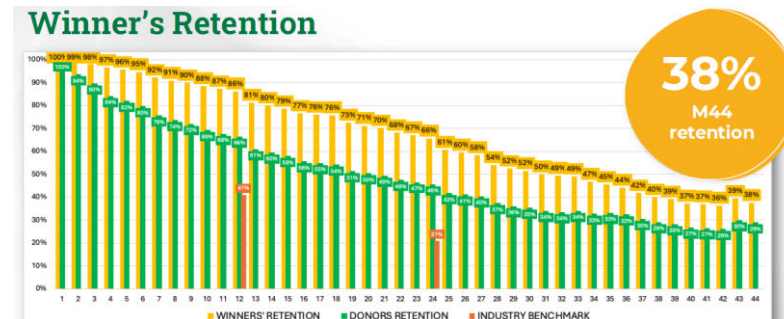
- **17,000+** new RG donors
- **65% 12-month retention** (vs sector 41%)
- **86% 12-month retention** (prize winners)
- Strong uptake from **35+ donors** (avg. age 49)

Key insight

- Loyalty driven by engagement & mission-led comms, not the prize itself
- Repeat wins = higher long-term retention

Outcome

- ✅ Board Buy-In
- 💰 Increased Funding Secured
- 📈 Now Part of Ongoing Fundraising Strategy



Diversity of offer- QR flyers for 'no' donors

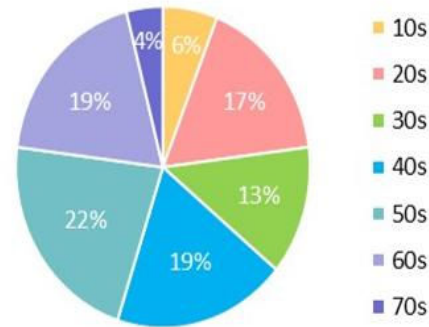
□ Handing Out of Flyers

- QR codes linking to the application LP
- Promotion of incentive items
- Explanation of the impact of each gift amount

□ Results (2025 Jan-Jul)

- # of flyers delivered : 148,853 (avg. 50)
- # of sign-ups thru QR codes : 236
- Total gift amount : JPY392,700
(avg. JPY1,660)
- Expense to make flyers : JPY1,283,700
- 1st year ROI : 3.67

□ # of Acquisition by Age



- Designed for “no” donors who don’t want to commit on site

- QR flyers handed out by fundraisers as a low-pressure follow-up option

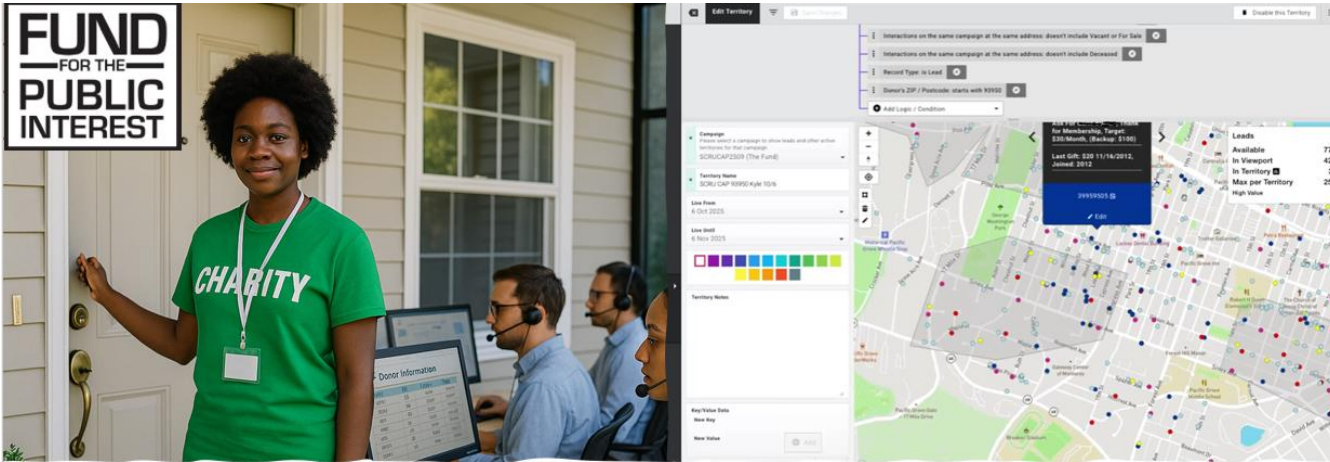
- Donors scan later to learn more and donate in their own time

- Cost-effective with strong ROI, turning refusals into value

- Reaches a wide age range, expanding the donor base



Diversity of offer – ‘Warm’ F2F



- “Warm” F2F targets known supporters, not cold audiences
- Fundraisers visit doors where donors are existing, lapsed, or previously engaged
- Key insights are available (e.g. donor status, past giving, value)
- This allows fundraisers to tailor the conversation to each household
- Similar to a warm call in telemarketing - more relevant, respectful, and effective

New Innovation – AI The New Power Partner in F2F

“AI enhances fundraising, but F2F interaction keeps it human.”

“AI is not the future of F2F – it’s the tool helping us build it.”

“AI can predict a donor’s next move – but only a great fundraiser can inspire it.”

AI is rapidly transforming Face-to-Face fundraising, introducing smart tools and data-driven insights that are redefining how we **recruit, train, and retain both donors and fundraisers.**

AI is already being tested and used to:

- **Tailor training:** Analyse fundraiser pitches and adapt coaching to individual strengths, weaknesses, and donor outcomes. Using insights from tone of voice, keyword patterns, and language style.
- **AI-powered training** uses simulated donor personas to replicate real-life conversations, allowing fundraisers to practice and refine their pitch. Real-time feedback ensures continuous improvement before going on site, leading to more confident and consistent performance.
- **Predict retention:** Identify which donors are likely to stay or cancel using tone, language, and behavioural patterns during the actual pitch.
- **Enhance targeting:** Segment donor data into actionable audience insights for smarter acquisition.

👉 **AI doesn’t replace fundraisers — it empowers them to connect better, perform smarter, and deliver stronger results.**

Break-Even



PROGRESS AND MOMENTUM

My Progress

Track your coaching sessions and see how you're using the Four Foundations



Team Dashboard Available
Manage daniel.mcdonnellOT's Team



Team Dashboard

Search games by name, pu

Any Duration

Your Progress

Level 4

Showing 70 games

Spot the Difference

Energy 5 min 4

Wake up drained/stressed tea

How to play

Take What You Need

Team Bonding 10 min

New trainee introductions

How to play

65+

Daily Streak

1 days

Best streak: 3 days

2 more days to unlock the badge!

Your Level

885 XP

4

Level 4

285 / 400 XP

Earn 10 XP for every minute of coaching

Badges

5 / 43

All Streaks Time Levels C



1 / 5

Learning Journey

Level 4

Journey Progress

3/5 milestones



48

Quizzes

35

Sessions

1

Day Streak

Skill Refreshers

40 due

Ready for Review

rapport

Review #1 • 1 day interval

Practice

Done

Tomorrow

X



Fundraiser Recruitment & Engagement



*‘Treat F2F like a temp job and
you get temp level
commitment’*

Creating a value led culture


REAL's Paid Activist days

- We pay all REAL staff to volunteer up to 6 days per year.
- We pay our sub contractors to do the same.

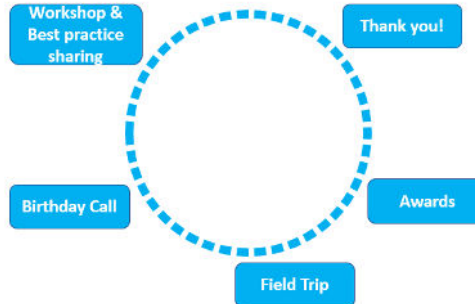
We know that creating and celebrating the right culture means that when no one is watching the fundraisers will still make the right choice.



F2F Fundraiser Retention

 **AGENCY ENGAGEMENT ANNUAL PLAN** unicef | for every child

MONTH 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3	MONTH 4
Introduction to UNICEF globally	UNICEF & current emergencies	Q&A - what more do you want to know on UNICEF?	Invite to a wider UNICEF event e.g. public events
Introduction to Pledge	Emergency interactive task or other interactive exercises bringing programme work to life	Fundraiser thank you's - from the whole office	CS team briefing - how to help donors and common complaints
UNICEF in your country	Decorate the office	Handling Objections on the phone	
	First month rewards	The UNICEF Supporter Journey	
MONTH 5	MONTH 6	MONTH 7	MONTH 8
Programme talk	Emergency Simulation	Sit Rep - translated into meaningful material	Programme Talk
Job Shadowing - F2F	Fundraiser awards	6 month awards	
MONTH 9	MONTH 10	MONTH 11	
Fundraiser Thank You's	Senior PSFR Session	Team UNICEF get on the phones	
Agency led UNICEF Training			



- We focus heavily on donor retention — **fundraiser retention** matters just as much
- **Commitment** keeps fundraisers engaged long term
- **Inform**: timely, relevant knowledge builds confidence and expertise
- **Inspire**: stories and mission connection show fundraisers their role and value
- **Motivate**: recognition, rewards, and surprises — not just for top performers
- **Show impact & humanise** the role — turning F2F into a **career, not a stop-gap**

The Halo Effect of Face-to-Face Fundraising

- F2F remains the **largest source of Regular Giving** for most NGOs.
- We must embrace a **360° omnichannel/ HALO approach**.
- With new technology, **channel borders are blurring**.
- The future is **integration, not isolation**

Recent Study: Analysis of 12,000 Dutch neighborhoods over 10 years to explore whether F2F activity drives online donor sign-ups in the same month.

Findings: Online sign-ups were **almost 3× higher** in neighborhoods with F2F activity than expected by chance (13% vs 5%).

The **more F2F agreements** made, the **more online sign-ups** followed. Up to **20% of F2F volumes** & Effect consistent across profiles and regions.

Conclusion: F2F creates a **local awareness “halo”**, boosting digital engagement and brand trust. It’s not just acquisition, it’s amplification.

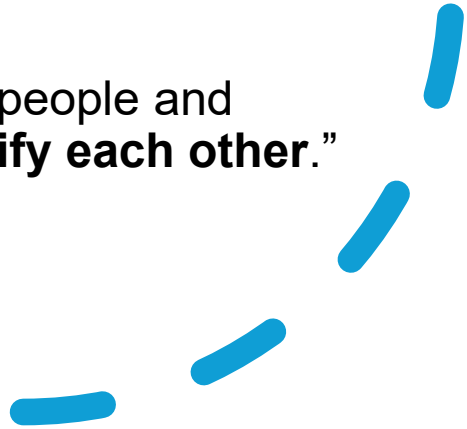


Bringing It All Together

- F2F remains the beating **heart of individual giving and main driver of RG**, but to stay strong, it – **and we!**- must evolve.
- Success comes from **getting the basics right, embracing innovation**, and **integrating across channels**.
- AI, digital tools, and new products are reshaping the way we connect - but the heart of F2F remains **human conversation**.
- To **future-proof F2F** - together we must build programs that inspire fundraisers, empower donors, and create lasting impact.

💡 Final Thought

“The future of F2F isn’t about choosing between people and technology — it’s about how the two can **amplify each other**.”



Questions

?

If this workshop inspired you and you would like to hear more, both Danny and Elsbeth are available as consultants to help you build, strengthen, and scale your fundraising programs.

We work with organizations worldwide to optimize, innovate, and future-proof fundraising operations, driving stronger results, higher retention, and sustainable growth.

👉 Please get in touch!

Want to hear more?



Elsbeth de Ridder
Global F2F and IG Fundraising Specialist

Elsbeth.deridder@outlook.com
[linkedin.com/in/elsbethderidder](https://www.linkedin.com/in/elsbethderidder)



Danny McDonnell
Founder DMac Alliance for Change

The Danny McDonnell Alliance for Change
www.Dannymcdonnell.com