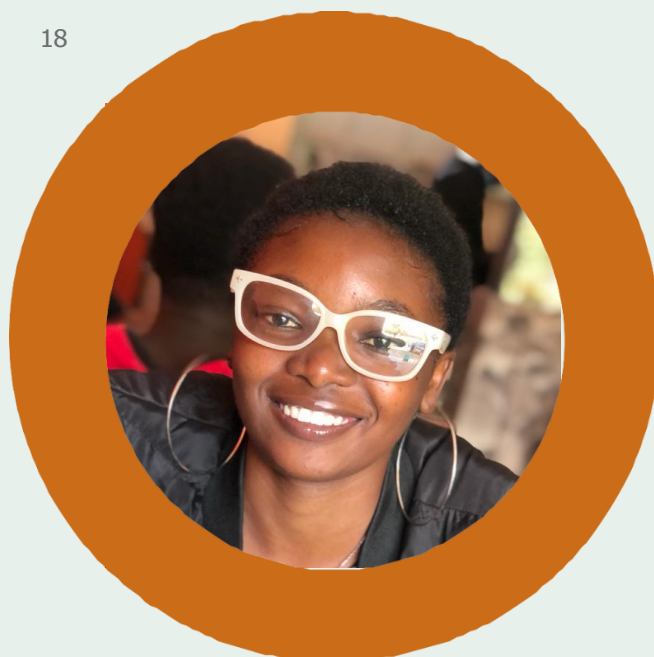




**Annual Report 2021**  
**Friends for Life Foundation**  
**& Stichting Friends for Life**

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# 1.0 FRIENDS FOR LIFE

**Friends for Life Foundation contributes to the sustainable development of Kenya by providing scholarships to students with a lack of financial means. With a scholarship these adolescents are able to graduate and eventually find a job in Kenya. The long term aim is to generate more income through employment, which results in a more stable economy and welfare.**

**The foundation in The Netherlands focuses mainly on fundraising. It cooperates in Kenya with partner organization 'Friends for Life Foundation'.**

**This Non-Governmental Organisation spends the funds on the goals and objectives within the framework of their agreed procedures with regard to application, selection, guidance and financial support of students.**

**WITH A SCHOLARSHIP  
THESE ADOLESCENTS  
ARE ABLE TO GRADUATE  
AND FIND  
EMPLOYMENT IN  
KENYA**



# 1.1 OUR MISSION

**The Friends for Life Foundation provides scholarships to girls and boys from poor families in Kenya in order to further their education after secondary school.**

With a scholarship these adolescents will be able to graduate and eventually find a job within Kenya. The aim on the long term is to generate more income through employment, which results in a more stable economy and welfare within the country.

**THE GOAL IS  
TO CONTRIBUTE  
TO SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT IN  
KENYA BY  
PROVIDING  
SCHOLARSHIPS**

## 1

# 1.2 OUR VISION

**Contribute to sustainable development within Kenya by sponsoring scholarships for as many students as possible who have a lack of financial means, assuming the following criteria:**

- Commitment of each student to sponsor another student after graduation;
- Commitment of the student to find employment in Kenya and perform activities in favour of the area in which they grew up.

Friends for Life stands for a world in which young people from the poorest areas in Kenya achieved a stronger economical position. This will give them pride, dignity, independence and self-confidence which will result in a better and more equal position.

## 1.3 OUR PROGRAMME

**The programme we offer to those students who have passed our intake procedure successfully, is unique in several ways:**

We keep in close contact with the students during the entire period of studies; this means that we:

- Follow up on receiving detailed progress reports of the students twice a year. Based on the progress report in depth discussions take place in order to know the academic progress of the student as well as their personal wellbeing. All possible changes in the course programme as well as on personal level that could have an impact on the progress of studies should be known by the foundation in order to anticipate in time.
- Keep in touch with a student representative who is appointed by the student and knows about the whereabouts of the student. This is preferably a close relative such as a parent or sibling. In case we are unable to reach the student we always contact the representative to make sure we know the status of the student and his or her course progress.
- Build up a relationship with the educational institutions our students go to and in particular with the deans who know the student personally. In case there is something unclear concerning progress, results or a change in programme we contact the dean for clarification.
- Stimulate the usage of social media and WhatsApp groups by students and alumni. The students are facilitated as much as possible in order to find each other online and share their thoughts, common interests, training- and job opportunities.

# 1.4 OUR STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

The students within our programme come from various backgrounds, geographical areas and engage in many different religions and cultures.

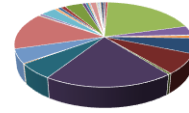
Additionally, the students and alumni pursue their course in various sectors, at all levels (certificate, diploma and degree level) at various educational institutions in Kenya.

The students have one important factor in common though, which is their strong motivation to continue their education after secondary school and their lack of financial means to accomplish this. The students come from urban areas such as the slums of Nairobi but in many cases, they come from very rural areas. Communities in both areas face enormous challenges for adolescents when there is a lack of financial means. In the cities, where unemployment within the slums is often very high and places are overcrowded, the living standards are very poor.

The people have to deal with poor infrastructure, overcrowding, few resources and poor sanitation facilities which is exacerbated further by a high disease and morbidity burden, characterized by high levels of malnutrition among children and the aged and high rate of communicable diseases like typhoid, malaria, dysentery and tuberculosis, with most families being unable to afford medical care. Crime and domestic violence are also features of the community, where the majority of households are single-headed, often by women. Health facilities are poor and HIV and AIDS are a challenge to families, leading, in turn, to a rising number of orphans.

In summary, youth in slum dwellings in Nairobi and Kibera face numerous challenges as they transit from adolescence into adulthood. They find themselves in a rather hostile slum environment characterized by unemployment, poor housing, large family sizes, violence, crime, drug and alcohol abuse, poor education facilities and lack of recreational activities. This situation subjects adolescents in the slums in Nairobi to early sexual activities three years earlier and twice more likely to have multiple partners than adolescents who live in non-slum parts of Nairobi.

32 different tribes represented by our students and alumni



■ Bukusu	■ Chonyi	■ Digo
■ Duruma	■ Duruma/ Kamba	■ Embu
■ Giriama	■ Kamba	■ Kauma
■ Kikuyu	■ Kisii	■ Kuria
■ Luhya	■ Luo	■ Luo/ Kamba
■ Maragoli	■ Meru	■ Samia

Our students have all gone through a thorough intake process in which they have been interviewed about their life story, their motivation, their previous results and achievements. Only those are selected who fully fit the programme criteria and are able to contribute to the goals of Friends for Life in the near future. We can therefore say that the students within our programme are a highly diverse group of young adolescents who are extremely motivated to escape the hardship they have faced so far. One of their strengths is that due to the fact that they have learned how to survive in life, they share a common strength which is an endless perseverance. They will not give up until they reach their end goal and will do anything to get to the next level in life. Finally, the students know exactly how hard life can be without any assistance and are therefore often willing to give back to society wherever they can to help others.

## 1.5 OUR TEAM



### Operational team

Our operational team is small and our communication lines therefore direct and short. Two highly committed employees in Kenya work on a daily basis for the Friends for Life NGO. They coach, guide and talk with our students and alumni on a daily basis. They keep in touch with the educational institutions, partner NGO's and government institutions when necessary. They organise fundraising events, student panel meetings, community services activities and the entire intake process. Finally, they make sure all our activities and financial transactions are being administrated and reported in an adequate manner. In the Netherlands one employee supports and monitors all activities from the Kenyan NGO as well as the 'stichting' in the Netherlands. She maintains the relations with the current donors and is responsible for fundraising activities in the Netherlands.



### Board members

Our board members in both Kenya and the Netherlands work completely voluntarily. They are involved in the strategy development, they open doors for new fundraising initiatives, they approve the budget and keep track of the overall performance of the Dutch 'stichting' and Kenyan foundation.



### Founding father

The founding father, Lammert Braaksma, started both entities together with his wife Kitty Braaksma in 2002. Many years they have put a lot of effort into Friends for Life to lay the foundations and to let it grow continuously. Even after they stepped down in their roles some years ago, they still contribute to Friends for Life whenever they can.







## 2.0 ACTIVITIES IN 2021

As the pandemic remained having a great impact in the Netherlands as well as in Kenya on many levels, our programme remained different as well. The students were almost all studying again, either in an online way or physically in their classrooms. The government released several measures though during the year and 'normal life' started to come back again. However, the course schedules of many of our students were still disturbed, the students faced delays therefore and there was a lot of uncertainty about the continuation of courses as the corona virus numbers were still growing.

### 2.1 Opening up of institutions

When 2020 was closed, there was still a lot of uncertainty in Kenya about how the pandemic would further impact the live of our students in Kenya. At the beginning of 2021 many students were able to continue with their programme again though. Several universities and colleges had to remain closed though for some more weeks as five major districts in Kenya were still declared to stay in a lockdown status. Luckily, several of these institutions offered online lessons and training and students were able to catch up some of the delay they faced as a result from the long lockdown in the year before.

Around spring 2021 Kenya faced a third wave of corona infections and several institutions had to close their doors again to guarantee safety for their staff and students. In the meantime, the vaccination programme was started but the numbers of vaccinated Kenyans only increased very slowly.

Several of our students studying in health care related fields were asked to assist in the vaccination process or at the testing units as well as informing other Kenyans about the corona virus and how to prevent spreading the disease.

## **2.2 Impact of corona on alumni**

Many alumni of our programme reported to us about the challenges they were facing within their jobs as a result of corona virus. Especially those working in the hotel and tourism- and the transport industry. Other alumni were faced with even more pressure from their family members and relatives to assist in their upkeep as they had lost jobs or were struggling with decreasing income coming from their businesses.

Remarkably enough, we did not see this impact in the repayments of the students, these even grew slightly compared to previous years.

## **2.3 Fundraising during the pandemic**

As the impact of the corona virus remained to be large in Kenya but for sure also in the Netherlands, fundraising opportunities were minimal in this period. Luckily some existing donors remained donating in this year but there were no new large donors found. Also the water jug programme in the Netherlands was still on hold for the entire year due to closure of the restaurants for a large part of that year again. Also fundraising events were not organised in 2021 due to the restrictions and the risk of spreading corona virus even further.

As in the previous year, the government in the Netherlands offered a compensation to all organisations in the Netherlands who faced more than 20% profit loss in a part of 2021 due to the impact of the pandemic. Friends for Life also received a compensation as the income decreased more than 20% in these particular months.

## 2.4 Activities during the pandemic

As fundraising was still a challenge in several ways due to the corona virus and the restrictions in Kenya remained for some time in 2021, it was decided that the activities for students in Kenya would remain at a minimum as they were in 2020. We received several requests from students and alumni to organise job coaching trainings again as they felt that developing themselves to prepare for the competitive job market was even more important in times of a crisis. We therefore explored the option for organising a job coaching training with the limited funds available and decided to offer a full online training at the end of the year. Together with alumni Rosemary Kahiga who was involved in this programme before, we developed an online version of the training in order to be able to offer the same to the students. The training was a success although the students and the trainer eventually explained in their evaluation that a face-to-face training would have had a lot bigger impact. Students are challenged with connection problems and the teacher found it much more difficult to keep students interested, motivated and getting the message across in the right way.

Students and alumni continued with their own personal activities in order to contribute to the society and give back in turn. We received many positive stories and pictures of the students' community service activities which they are supposed to take part in every year during their scholarship involvement. We were pleased to see that, on a small scale and where possible, taking restrictions into account, students tried to continue giving back to the community in 2021.

## 2.5 Success stories in 2021

Even though 2021 was another challenging year, the NGO was able to accept 16 new students into the programme.

Most of these students were able to start or continue their courses right after acceptance. Only some had to wait for re-opening of their institutions.

We celebrated a great success of 40 students who managed to finish their course in 2021 and proudly presented themselves as one of the graduates at the official ceremonies at their universities and colleges. A large number of these graduates are students who finished a health care related course and were absorbed into the health care system of Kenya immediately after graduation or even already before. We are proud that with that, the Kenyan Health care system has now several well trained staff members in place, especially during times when they are needed the most.

### Grace Happiness Kakai, graduate of BSc. 'International Relations'



*Grace came to the office of Friends for Life in May 2018 as she was desperately looking for help. She grew up in the coastal area of Kenya, Kwale County in a family with three children. When Grace was still very young, she lost her mother. Her father, who was working in the hotel industry decided not to remarry but took care of his children alone. His work in the hotel industry was unfortunately not constant and depending on the tourists visiting Kenya. Grace was determined though to persevere and work hard to achieve her dreams. With the help of Friends for Life she was able to finish her Bachelor course 'International Relations', where she majored in Development Studies. Grace managed to find employment at a Kenyan NGO called 'Haart Kenya', dedicated to fighting human trafficking in Eastern Africa and is now contributing to the future of the next student studying as a sponsor of Friends for Life.*

### Phillister: Asset to the health care sector in Kenya as a nurse

*Phillister grew up now knowing her parents. They abandoned her when she was just a little girl. Luckily her grandparents took care of her but even though they tried their best, they could not support Phillister enough in her education after finishing secondary school. She asked for help at our foundation in Kenya and she convinced us about her passion for the health care sector. After several years of hard working she managed to graduate for her course as a nurse. She has been working now for some time, contributing to the community as a nurse in the local clinic. She is able to take care of her self and her daughter whom she recently gave birth to. On top of that, she supports another student by contributing to the foundation in order for another student to get the same chances she had!*



# 3.0 In memorial



From April 2017, Mr. Evans Monari, partner at Bowmans Law Ltd. In Nairobi, acted as the chairman of the Friends for Life Foundation NGO. He attended each board meeting and advised the Friends for Life team on many different topics during these meetings. Mr. Monari enjoyed to attend activities which involved the beneficiaries of the programme and assisted Friends for Life in any legal matter on a pro bono basis. Mr. Monari also infected his associate Agnes Akal with his enthusiasm for the Friends for Life fraternity and he allowed and stimulated her to become more and more involved in the NGO as well. This was of great help to the foundation not only relating to the advisory work on legal matters that was done for the NGO but also during their presence at activities and events.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2021, Evans passed away at the very young age of 58 after a few weeks on the ICU in a hospital in Nairobi. We are very sad that we had to say goodbye to a respectable and professional Kenyan who committed himself to his role as a chairman within our foundation. For the remaining part of the year, the two other board members in Kenya, Jaap van Luijk (treasurer) and Ann Gatonye (secretary) remained in their positions but started their search for a replacement of Mr. Monari.



# 4.0 Preview 2022



## 4.1 Change of officials

In 2021 both in the Netherlands as well as in Kenya changes on the board positions have been announced. The discussions about the change of board members has been on the agenda during several board meetings in 2021 and will be implemented in 2022.

In Kenya, one of our board members of the NGO Board in Kenya, Jaap van Luijk, treasurer, announced his wish for resignation for his role as a board member after his contributions to the NGO for nearly five years. Also our secretary, Ann Gatonye, served in her role for the foundation for the same period and thought it would be good to be replaced in 2022. As Mr. Monari suddenly deceased the foundation is now challenged with the change of all three officials. Before the end of the year however, several discussions with candidate board members took place and three new board members will be registered at the NGO Coordination Board in Nairobi in 2022. With a lot of enthusiasm and fresh new ideas about the future of Friends for Life they will work together with the Dutch board members to make sure that the continuity of Friends for Life is guaranteed.

In the Netherlands all board members have been active for Friends for Life for at least five consecutive years as well. Also all board members have announced that they prefer to be replaced for their duties from 2022 onwards. After several discussions between the chairman of the board and the founder of the foundation, Lammert Braaksma, it was decided that the chairman ship would be handed over to the founder again after many years. The founder has formed his new team as well before the year ended and the new board members will be introduced in the new year.

## 4.2 Cooperation with Dutch African Finance

As there will be a complete new board in Kenya as well as in the Netherlands, new ideas and opportunities will be implemented which are in line with the objective of the foundation. An important focus of the new board members is the repayment of the student loans.

The founder of the NGO, Lammert Braaksma, who will become a chairman of the board in 2022, is also connected to Microfinance organisation Dutch African Finance Ltd. (DAF) located at the south coast of Kenya. DAF has been operating in Kenya for many years and provided thousands of business loans to small scale business ladies and men in the south coast of Kenya. Together with DAF, Friends for Life will set up a new type of student loan. This loan is specifically for funding education on tertiary level but has the condition that the students and/ or his or her parents already start repaying the loan while the student is studying. The loan will be recovered much quicker than the traditional student loan issued by Friends for Life and will therefore be circulating much more often over a set period of time. As immediate repayment is not for all students an option, this loan is specifically for those students with parents/ relatives who can afford to repay an amount every month but not the entire semester fee at once. Friends for Life will be involved in the selection and monitoring process

of the new type of loans.

The regular Friends for Life loan will still remain as well in order to remain helping those students who are among the poorest on Kenya. Whenever there is a possibility for repayment during the course though, even if it is a very small amount, this will be stimulated also within this type of student loan. The objective is that the repayment pattern is already set up during the course so that the student gets used to a repayment and is not confronted with a much higher repayment per month some time after signing a student agreement.

## **4.3 Modest and online programme**

As in previous years, when the corona pandemic had a great impact on our students as well as on fundraising, the programme of Friends for Life will continue in a modest and online manner in 2022. On the one hand the objective is to save costs and on the other hand it gives the staff members the opportunity to focus fully on the students and their progress. A lot of students were affected by the pandemic and faced delays, some were challenged with psychological issues and carried the burden of suffering family members. Due to the reduced programme activities, our student coordinator in Kenya was able to focus on these challenges and guide and coach the students where necessary in order to make sure that they were able to progress in their studies despite the effects of the pandemic.

In the year 2022 the NGO in Kenya will organise another online job coaching programme for those students who are in their final year or those who just graduated. This job coaching programme aims at teaching the students more about preparation for their entrée on the job market. The training includes topics related to preparing a professional CV, preparing yourself for interviews, general communication skills, networking and how and where to find job opportunities.

## **4.4 Fundraising in 2022**

Of course, fundraising will remain one of the most important subjects on the agenda in 2022. Now that organisations and institutions seem to have loosened their restrictions concerning donating to grass root organisations we expect the opportunities to grow in the coming year.

Besides submitting proposals to existing and new institutions to request for a contribution of funds, one of the main fundraising activities will be in the format of organising a new trip to Kenya with potential donors.

# 5.0

## REMUNERATION



Members of the board do not receive any remuneration for the activities they carry out for Friends for Life. The 'stichting' in the Netherlands employed one part-time employee (manager) from January until December 2020. The salary of this manager was financed for a large part with a donation specifically for that objective.

In Kenya there were two fulltime Kenyan employees at the start of the year. Due to the financial challenges faced by the NGO in Kenya, the board members in Kenya concluded that they had to let the project manager go from October 2021. From then onwards, only the student coordinator remained employed for the NGO in Kenya. This immediately reduced a large part of the overhead costs in Kenya. Although the board regretted the fact that it was unavoidable to let go of a valued employee, the programme was able to continue in a minimized format and the total costs were now more in line with the total income of the NGO during this challenging year.

# 6.0

## GOVERNANCE



### 6.1 ACTIVITIES OF GOVERNANCE

The board of the foundation in the Netherlands monitored in formal and informal ways in 2020. They worked closely together with the board members of the Kenyan NGO which gave the opportunity to continue the hand-over of activities related to policy and strategy gradually. The Dutch board will remain involved and informed in the decision making processes where necessary.

The financial transactions are being monitored through a web based software system that is accessible from any given location in the world. The Dutch manager remained in her position and carried out all necessary activities to ensure that the operational activities in Kenya were at all times in line with the agreed policy.

### 6.2 MEETINGS AND INTERNAL REPORTING

In 2021, three official board meetings took place in Kenya and in the Netherlands three as well.

In addition, several informal meetings took place between the manager, the general coordinator and the board members. Suggestions for changes in processes and procedures were proposed during board meetings after which the board decided formally to either accept or deny the changes. The manager was responsible for the implementation of the changes after the board decision and gave feedback to the board afterwards.

Internal reporting by the employees to the board members took place during the year by providing periodic updates during board meetings and ad hoc memo's through email.

## ORGANISATION

### The Netherlands

**Name:** Stichting Friends for Life  
**Location:** The Hague, The Netherlands  
**Legal entity:** Stichting

### Kenya

**Name:** Friends for Life Foundation  
**Location:** Mombasa, Kenya  
**Legal entity:** NGO