

# The Friendly Haven



## ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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The Hope Foster Home

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and Syria



# The Hope Foster Home



The main objectives of The Friendly Haven are based on the following six lines :

1. To support vulnerable children, especially orphans and children who have been exposed to various forms of abuse,
2. To propose sponsorship programmes to support children in difficulty,
3. To build, create and open reception centres for orphans and children in difficulty,
4. To promote, support and practice Non-violence and Peace, especially regarding children,
5. To fight inequalities and poverty, which trigger violence in any country in the world,
6. To promote human rights.

Our crown jewel, The Hope Foster Home orphanage, the key element of our action, is located in Togo in the Amou prefecture (in yellow on the map), at some 10 miles from Atakpamé between the villages of Aveté and Avedjé.

The centre had been operational since 2014. It welcomed about 30 orphaned children and was organized with an agricultural and breeding programme to aim at self-sufficiency. It had been recognized as **the best performing one of the highland region and ranked among the five best ones in the whole of Togo**, according to a report of the ENEIS research unit commissioned by the Ministry of Social Action, family and

Literacy Promotion, as well as UNICEF (April 2016).

Although, because of the vain corruption attempts by our local partner, our Centre has had to be temporarily closed since 2017, now is the time for The Hope Foster Home to turn a new page full of hope. **The year 2021 was indeed a victorious one with the Courts decision to heavily condemn our former local partner.** Once a Court assessment is performed, we will at last recover our Centre in 2022 : it is our dearest wish.

**We have anyway continued since 2017 to ceaselessly support our beneficiaries by renting another building and providing a multiform support to the most vulnerable children.**



Every year we take care to weed the orphanage field to protect it as well as we can before the orphanage reopening (so as to avoid the risk of fire). However, it is obvious that, following important deteriorations, the orphanage will require a major renovation to be ready for again welcoming children in good conditions.

We also wish to undertake an active search for partners to go along with us in the process of renovation and management. We are thinking first of all of well-established structures such as UNICEF and UNESCO...

## Our activities in Togo in 2021



### 1. SOCIAL SAFETY NETS

*Assistance to, and protection of, children and their families during economic turmoil*

#### Results

● In 2021, your donations made it possible to support 22 vulnerable households (159 persons), including children who were street urchins before.

Every month, The Friendly Haven supports the children through a regular direct subsidy given to the foster families. This economic support constitutes a relevant tool enabling to cover basic needs while helping the local economy at the same time.

The Friendly Haven regularly organizes meetings in its Atakpamé office. These are meetings with children and families ensuring very valuable moments for sharing and exchanging.

2021 was a particularly difficult year for households in Togo: the COVID pandemic and its related economic consequences and, at the same time, erratic rainfalls brought about **inflation** in the whole country. Our economic support to the families contributed to their provision of basic essentials and proved valuable for water, housing, and the education and health of our children.



*Meals distribution*



## 2. EDUCATION

*Assisting disadvantaged children for the beginning of the 2021/2022 school year*

### Results

**The Friendly Haven was able in 2021 to bring its schooling support** to 22 children previously sheltered at The Hope Foster Home, as well as to dozens of others in the area where our current office is located.

The beginning of the school year takes place in the context of a creeping economic crisis, and requires quite a lot of purchases: new school supplies, schoolbag, school uniforms, etc.

Every year, the distribution of school supplies by The Friendly Haven comes at



*Distribution of school supplies*

the right time to support the foster families who are facing such expenses, which constitute a conundrum for most people in the Atakpamé area.

The Friendly Haven supported not only the usual foster families but also a number of particularly vulnerable households living in the neighbourhood of our office.



*Children in the neighbourhood of our office*





### 3. FOOD PRECARIOUSNESS

*Reinforcing the resilience of impoverished families in times of food crisis*

#### Results

Your help in 2021 made it possible to contribute to strengthening the ability of 22 households who benefited (159 persons) to cope with soaring prices for basic essentials, and also to assist 5 further impoverished and vulnerable families (32 persons) in the immediate neighbourhood of our office.

The effect of the restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic (however of limited prevalence in Togo) together with the climate imbalance detrimental to agriculture had an impact on the social, economic and financial situation of the country's population. Prices of some basic food products has doubled or tripled, and even quadrupled in some cases.

Children and families with low income being the most vulnerable, The Friendly Haven decided to help the families of the centre and the people living near our office through the distribution of

food and hygiene kits containing bags of rice, tomato sauce, oil, sugar, soap and detergent.

Such kits, which were distributed several times during the year, brought a real relief to the families having to cope with food precariousness.



*Food and hygiene kit*



*Distribution of the kits*





#### 4. RAISING AWARENESS OF NON- VIOLENCE

*« Non-violence is the answer to the crucial political and moral question of our time ». ~ Martin Luther King's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech (December 10, 1964)*

### Results

**Your help in 2021 made it possible to strengthen the capacity of the community (widows, the families of children of The Hope Foster Home, ...) regarding the need for non-violence on children.**

Nearly one hundred people attended our workshop on awareness of non-violence.

The definition of violence by UNICEF is the one provided by article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child”

To support children who are in a situation of vulnerability, especially orphans and children who have been victims of abuse in any form, by helping them to develop and blossom: such is The Friendly Haven's vision.



To put this vision into practice The Friendly Haven organized a workshop on raising awareness of non-violence among all communities in Atakpamé, with **the very valuable support of the Non-Violence XXI Foundation, to whom we once again express our gratitude.**

Participants in the workshop were briefed on non-violence and have received strategic and communication tools on non-violence for the daily life, and also for them to act as ambassadors of non-violence vis-à-vis people close to them.

As per our usual practice, we had recourse to the theatre-forum and songs to convey our message with humour and emotion, so as to make our message easily accessible, concrete and lively, showing how to put non-violence communication strategies into practice in various situations of daily life.



## 5. COMMUNICATION AND EXCHANGE



*Communication and exchange make it possible to establish a genuine climate of trust and bonds between the participants gathered around a common objective.*

### Results

**In 2021 your donations made it possible to provide a psychological support to all our beneficiaries, children and adults and to create a space for dialogue and solidarity.**

Regular meetings take place with children and parents in the office of the Friendly Haven: it is an opportunity for exchange and the opening of a dialogue between the different participants to our programmes, such as the monitoring of the school activities of the children, the socio-economic and healthcare situation in Atakpamé, the difficulties that the foster families are facing and the progress of our lawsuit regarding our orphanage. **These meetings generate solidarity and psychological support for our participants, assisted**

**with benevolence and attentiveness by our team and its leader, Mr. Jazi, to whom we are grateful for his work and commitment.**

Follow-up meetings take place on a regular basis with the beneficiaries of the project and with the group of widows whom The Friendly Haven has been supporting in their income-generating activities since 2013.



*Widows meeting*



## 6. CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

*A celebration highly enjoyed by the children*

### Résultats

- In 2021 your donations made it possible to bring a smile on the face of children and foster families, with a nice celebration and a friendly meal.

Christmas is the most magical time for children, the most longed for celebration for our children in Togo too. The Friendly Haven did not fail to take the opportunity to convey a message of hope to the orphans. On the programme: meal, gifts, songs and dance.

The objective of The Friendly Haven is to make it possible for these children and families to enjoy a moment of peace of mind and joy on the occasion

of the Christmas celebration on December 25 in a convivial spirit around a festive meal.



*Christmas celebration meal*



*Dance competition*





## 7. FORTHCOMING PROJECTS IN TOGO

### The current year

In 2022 your donations will enable us to continue our mission :

To support children who are in a vulnerable situation, orphans, and children victims of abuse, in the fields of education, health, food as well as in psychological terms.

- **Our overriding priority: to recover our orphanage.** During the year 2022 our orphanage will reopen and the children will return in our Hope Foster Home, following our overwhelming legal victory.

**We have to emphasize that, after 4 years of being closed, The Hope Foster Home will need major renovation**, especially as regards the electrical system, but also the buildings themselves, the dormitories, plumbing, furniture, painting... We also would like to progressively re-establish our agricultural and breeding programme attached to the orphanage.

- **To continue our multiform support to the orphans of the Hope Foster Home** in an economic context where the inflation rate reached 6,2% in June 2021 in Togo, according to the data of the Central Bank of Western Africa States (BCEAO). Such a rate had never been seen since 2013.

- **Widows are also part of our priorities.** Given the current economic and health situations, The Friendly Haven plans to give some help (especially in terms of means of subsistence) to these courageous women who bring up their children with difficulty.

- **Promotion of non-violence vis-à-vis children:** organization of sessions to raise awareness of non-violence targeting colleges and high schools and the Atakpamé community to reinforce the actions already undertaken over the last few years.

- **Trying to find new partners for the renovation and management of our orphanage.**

*In addition to our action in Togo, we are supporting the initiatives of the VIVERE association in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Syria, as we explain it in the next two pages.*

## Our actions in the Democratic Republic of Congo

### Results

In 2021 your donations helped us to support orphans and victims of rape and torture.

As we have done it since the creation of The Friendly Haven in 2008, we are continuing, within our abilities, to **support victims of rape and social torture in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo**, especially in Goma (where the Nyiragongo volcano erupted again in May 2021, causing evacuations and victims).

**We act in Congo at the side of our Swiss partner, the VIVERE association, to whom we renew our thanks for its outstanding field work.** Locally in Goma, we support two NGOs: one is called Protection et Solidarités and the other Tulizeni.

**At the reception centre and orphanage of Tulizeni**, which is now supported by the Red Cross, **dozens of war (or disease) orphans are sheltered, as well as young women who were raped and became pregnant**, often ostracized by their own families. At Tulizeni, they receive the necessary psychological support to face the forthcoming birth and parenthood with love and safety. Field volunteers achieve an extraordinary work.



**In south Kivu, we support the victims of rape and torture in the legal area, through a local NGO encouraging the establishment of external Courts, i.e. travelling Courts.**

Victims can thus be supported in their legal process, and obtain recognition and see the perpetrators being condemned.



This is all the more important in the context of impunity which has prevailed for so many years. We intend to continue acting in the east of Congo, where the situation continues to be very tense and peppered with major violence on a daily basis

## Our actions in Syria

**Syria is not a country in which we usually operate. However, the urgency of the situation has prompted us to collaborate with VIVERE, our priority being to support malnourished infants.** The field team can usually attend to some 50 to 65 infants per month, providing food supplements, which helps and noticeably reassures destitute families in the middle of a conflict.

The country remains in a state of war.

The value of the Syrian currency continues its vertiginous fall while the price of basic essentials keeps rising. Impoverishment becomes more and more prevalent and dire.



Even if our help is small, the VIVERE- Friendly Haven team brings a precious support to these families and show them that a small flame of human solidarity is not extinguished.



# CONCLUSIONS

In spite of COVID and all the difficulties it creates, we have been able to have a **year 2021 full of achievements and success, thanks to you, your generosity et your commitment to remain at our side.**

After several years of great financial challenges and difficulties for our association, tormented by the fear of being obliged to close our structures, we were eventually able to take a breath and act with confidence. For this, we are immensely grateful to you.

Moreover, the highlight of the year 2021 was our success in the legal proceedings vs. our former field partner in Togo. We see it as the victory of integrity and courage in the service of the children. We resisted to death threats and all sorts of dilatory manœuvres. We stood firm. Because yesterday, today and tomorrow, despite all potential difficulties, our priority is and remains the most vulnerable children, who are the greatest and most fragile gift in this world. To protect them and be at their service is our credo.

***In 2022, we wish to continue with you at our side with the same resoluteness and the same capacity of resilience.***

**Donations can be made:**

**by bank cheque to be mailed to:**

**« La Maison des Amis »  
HAPPY ALPILLES, Route du Ferigoulas,  
Quartier Haut Devenson, F 13 890 Mouriès, France**

**or by bank transfer to :**

**Bank name : La Banque Postale  
Account holder : La Maison des Amis  
Account number : 20041 01008 2153721R029 38  
IBAN : FR 17 2004 1010 0821 5372 1R02 938  
BIC : PSSTFRPPMAR**