

The Friendly Haven



ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Who are we ?

The main objectives of The Friendly Haven are the following :

- ▶ To support vulnerable children, especially orphans and children subject to various forms of abuse,
- ▶ To propose sponsorship programmes to support children in a difficult situation,
- ▶ To build, create and operate reception centres for struggling children and orphans,
- ▶ To promote, defend and practice Peace and Non-violence values, especially regarding children,
- ▶ To fight against inequalities and poverty,
- ▶ To promote Human Rights and respect.

We have been mainly acting in Togo and the Democratic Republic of Congo ever since our creation in 2008. We have also brought our help in war zones, such as Syria and Ukraine.

In Togo, The Friendly Haven built and founded the Hope Foster Home (HFH), located in the central region of Togo. It started its operations in 2013 and was nominated **the best performing orphanage in its region and ranked among the five best in Togo**, according to a report by the ENEIS research consultancy appointed by the Social Action Ministry and UNICEF (April 2016).

It has been temporarily closed following the corrupt machinations of our former local partner. Throughout the subsequent legal battle, The Friendly Haven has continued to support the children of the HFH, currently numbering twenty two, of whom six girls and sixteen boys. They have been entrusted to foster families locally. We are supporting these foster families as a whole, including brothers and sisters of the children of the HFH and children in the immediate neighbourhood in Atakpamé.

Despite this closure under duress, The Friendly Haven never lost hope.

2022 was a particularly positive year for our association :

The Court gave a verdict in favour of The Friendly Haven, and :

A ruling was made by the Court's president allowing the reopening of the Hope Foster Home orphanage.

What are our actions in Togo?



SOCIAL SAFETY NETS

Distributing food and providing financial help to protect children and foster families from the effects of economic hardship caused by inflation.

Your generous donations made it possible in 2022 to support 22 vulnerable families (159 persons).



The Friendly Haven regularly organizes meetings in our Atakpamé centre. These monthly meetings gather children and their families : **exchange, communication and gifts for the benefit of children.**

These gifts brought provisions to the families, and also helped them to settle their water and electricity bills, pay their rent as well as the education expenses of the children.





FOOD PRECARIOUSNESS

Additional gifts of food were made to reinforce the resilience of the most destitute families facing food crises.

Your donations made it possible to help 27 additional families in 2022 to cope with soaring prices in Togo.



The coronavirus pandemic combined with the Russian-Ukrainian war have impacted the social, economic and financial life of the population of Togo. Food prices have doubled or tripled, even quadrupled in some cases. Children and families with low income were the most exposed.

The Friendly Haven decided to help the families of the children of our centre as well as those families living near our centre, through a **distribution of food and hygiene kits.**





EDUCATION

Supporting destitute children at the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

In 2022, The Friendly Haven supported 33 children, giving them stationery and school equipment as well as clothes so that they could get access to school in good conditions at the beginning of the school year.

Let us keep in mind that, in Togo, children can access school only if they wear the school uniform. The uniforms must be bought by the families: this often proves to be very difficult, if not impossible. This is why we bring our support.

The right to education is an internationally-recognized right. It is the basic main pillar for the children's



development and future.

It is much more difficult for orphans to get access to education, as they face many more obstacles. Poverty prevents foster families from paying for school equipment, or force them to make the children work to survive.

In this context, The Friendly Haven makes the education of children a priority :

- Raising the awareness of the foster families on the importance of a regular schooling for the children
- Providing children with school equipment and supplies.



COMMUNICATION AND EXCHANGE

Communication and exchange make it possible to establish a genuine climate of trust between all the participants aiming at a common objective for the benefit of children.

In 2022, thanks to your donations, we could continue to organize regular meetings with the families and the local teams, paying close attention to the needs of everyone.



Frequent meetings take place with the children, families and educators on a regular basis in the office of The Friendly Haven.

It is a great opportunity to achieve a fruitful exchange and dialogue between the different interested parties: follow up on the schooling of the children, economic and social situation in Atakpamé, challenges and problems that foster families and children are facing, review of possible relevant solutions.



CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Every child, wherever he or she is, looks forward to enjoy a heartwarming Christmas celebration !

In 2022 your donations allowed us to light up the faces of the children and family members with a beautiful smile.



Each and every year, Christmas is a celebration which makes a strong and joyful impression on children's mind.

That is why The Friendly Haven

never hesitates to organize this celebration year after year for the children of The Hope Foster Home.

This Christmas celebration includes various games, prizes, dance entertainment, drawing competitions and traditional songs. After all the recreational activities, children and family members gather for a good celebration meal.

Then Santa Claus, in his traditional attire, did his famous magic. This year, upon suggestion from the beneficiaries and in view of the economic and social situation, he opted for distributing food and hygiene kits, not forgetting to offer gifts to the youngest children.



What are our projects in Togo ?



Our pillar activity

Your donations in 2023 will allow us to continue to support vulnerable children—especially orphans and mistreated children—as well as foster families.

Our priority

A ruling was made at the end of 2022 by the High Court chief judge allowing us to forthwith undertake **the reopening of our Hope Foster Home orphanage. That is indeed a great victory for us.**

We need to emphasize that, after being closed for five years, the Hope Foster Home orphanage needs a renovation of all its infrastructures (buildings, dormitories, plumbing, electricity, etc.)

To achieve it, we will ask our donors to help us.

However, we are obviously quite conscious that funds will subsequently be needed for the maintenance of the orphanage and the pursuit of our activities. We are therefore looking for a **partner in the field**, so that we could achieve our objectives together, without our donors having to bear the brunt of the costs.

- **We will continue to provide our support to orphans in their foster families.** The year 2023 will be quite challenging, especially with an overall inflation rate expected to reach 8.7% in Togo, and more for food prices.

- **Widows** have also been part of our main preoccupations for the last 10 years or so. We plan to continue to contribute to the enhancement of their professional capacities and their means of subsistence.

- We also plan to **pursue our activities promoting non-violence vis-a-vis children**, by reinforcing the actions we have already undertaken with schools.

What are we doing in Congo ?



Support to the victims of the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, especially to the victims of sexual abuse

Your support allowed us in 2022 to noticeably contribute to the actions of our partners in the field, namely VIVERE and the Protection and Solidarity NGO, making it possible to exfiltrate 8 female human rights advocates, whose safety and integrity were in jeopardy.



L'équipe de Protection et Solidarité

In North Kivu, the geopolitical situation remains extremely volatile, with several factions fighting each other, which generates **extreme violence. Rape and torture continue to be used as weapons of war.**

Since its foundation, The Friendly Haven has endeavoured to support the victims, in the medical, psychological and legal fields..

Our action in favour of our VIVERE partner contributed in 2022 to the exfiltration of eight female human rights advocates, whose situation was precarious and their life threatened, and also to provide them with an emergency food support. In the refugee camps of North Kivu, tens of thousands of people live in miserable conditions and sexual abuse is commonplace there. Our support, however modest, contributes to protect those we can help.



Kanyaruchinya refugee camp in North Kivu (picture from the Protection and Solidarity NGO)

What are we doing for the Ukrainian refugees ?



Support to the refugees at the borders of Ukraine and in France

Your generosity allowed us in 2022 both to support our friends of the VIVERE association for a direct action in the field but also to bring a material and psychological support to a dozen of refugees in France.

We have intended from the beginning of the war to support two sister associations of our VIVERE partner, already well represented locally.

In Moldova: the *Compasiune* association who offers a shelter to 120 refugees in 3 sites,

In the Transnistria territory :: the *Women's Initiatives* helps refugees who have been welcomed at the home of 78 local families

In both cases, our friends coordinate their action with local platforms managing the flows of refugees and checking where places are available to welcome them. It appeared that their action is not only efficient but also imbued with humanity, as VIVERE confirmed it.

Testimonies from refugees that we have contributed to shelter are all personal stories of shock, terror, improvised blind escape, suffering and anxiety for their loved ones still in Ukraine.



Refugees sheltered by Compasiune in Moldova



Transnistria : mother and child from South Ukraine supported by Women's Initiatives

In France, we also supported refugees staying near the office of The Friendly Haven :

- A mother and four of her children in a highly precarious and staggered condition, to whom we proposed material help and psychological and medical support,
- A Russian foster family who took care of an Ukrainian girl 16 years old,
- A mother of three, a dermatologist doctor, who had health problems, to whom we provided psychological support,
- A young mother who left Ukraine shortly before giving birth to her second child, and whose husband is treated for a cancer in France, who also managed to flee.

We are both happy and honoured to have been able to support them both psychologically and materially after their ordeal. We thank our donors to have given us this possibility.



Nainia and Sacha, 4 and 6 years old, arrived end March 2022, with winter clothes given by the Friendly Haven

NB : Touched by the situation of refugees from different countries who found themselves blocked in Greece in miserable conditions, we gave some little help to the **Choose Humanity association**, in Athens: we admire their outstanding work.



Refugee camp in Chios, Greece



Distribution of hygiene products, food and clothes in Athens



And, as a conclusion...

- Once again, we would like to thank you for your help and support which made it possible to achieve the many things that we did in 2022, in Togo of course with very good news, but also in Congo, in Ukraine, Greece and France at the service of refugees. We feel so honoured to have made all this together with you.
- To make this positive momentum continue and develop to the benefit of the most vulnerable ones while we also look for new partnerships, we ask you to stay at our side.

Together, we can move mountains and we already did it! Now, let us continue together on the way to the next achievements!



Distribution of Christmas gifts, December 2022, Togo