

More impact for more children in need



Strategic plan 2021 - 2024

Help  a
CHILD

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Curious about our **strategic ambitions**?
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Introduction/**Preface**

More than 50 years ago our predecessors had a burning desire to help children and families in need. They gave their best to improve the lives of those they helped.

Fifty years later a lot of things have changed: programs, approaches, partners, staff. But what hasn't changed is our desire to give our best for children and families in need.

As we are searching for new answers to the challenges ahead in the coming years we are committed to make an even bigger change in the lives of even more children. There are so many children and parents in need of support and encouragement! We want to make a difference for them.



And to do so we want to improve ourselves continuously. We want to learn how to strengthen what already works well and to learn and try out new ways and methods to reach as far as we can with the means that we have. This requires us to learn how to be innovative and scale up and to be smart and flexible. And to work together well with others as we can't do it by ourselves.

Above all we want to make a difference in how we do our work, because as Mother Teresa said: It's not about how much you do, but about how much love you put into what you do that counts.

May the Lord bless our efforts.

Andries Schuttinga
CEO

'What hasn't changed is our desire to give our best for children and families in need.'

Management summary

We want to create more impact for more children in need and we want to stay relevant in a world that asks for scale, innovation and impact. Therefore we have formulated three main ambitions to achieve this:

MORE QUALITY AND IMPACT

A globalized and insecure world puts pressure on our ability to create more impact for children. We need to adapt our programs and increase its quality to make sure that we can continue to make impact.

The main choices we've made to achieve this is by introducing more on climate smart elements into our programs and by using the best of both worlds in Development and Disaster Response. By being part of system change we make a difference in the lives of more children and families. When we make our programs evidence based, we can make sure that they are impactful and more attractive to more donors.

STRATEGIC INNOVATION AND SCALE UP

We want more impact for more children. We strongly feel that strategic innovation and scale up not only helps us reach that goal by ourselves but also makes us a more attractive partner for others.

We do this by stepping up from ad hoc innovation to strategic innovation and scale up. And by building in accelerating principles in our current approaches. Being strategic in innovation is not enough, it also requires us to show case our innovations. Therefore we need to be more pro-active in innovation networks and alliances.

STRONG POSITIONING AND COLLABORATION FOR MORE RESOURCES

The needs remain high and we want to help as much children as we can. To be more successful in raising funds we need to make new choices and step up our current efforts.

The main goal here is to increase and diversify our (institutional) funding. For this we need smart alliance, networking, visibility and fundraising strategies. Next to that we want to strengthen our local partners so that they can create more impact and we want to reach new constituencies both in the Netherlands and in India. As we are aware that the role of international NGOs are changing, we want to monitor this development closely to stay relevant.



Who we are

Help a Child began with a letter. That letter came from India and described the dreadful poverty which children there had to endure. Its recipients were Hans and Anky Rookmaaker, who heard in it the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ: “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

Anky Rookmaaker set about making connections with people in India who also heard the Lord’s call and who wanted to help. She made connections with people here in the Netherlands who would be willing to contribute the necessary resources. Together with Mr. Slothouber, she and her husband founded ‘Stichting Redt een Kind’ on 28 March 1968.

Help a Child is a Christian, international relief and development organization, founded in 1968 in the Netherlands. Help a Child provides a future for children in need, their family, and their entire community. By empowering vulnerable communities we help them to change their living conditions and opportunities in a sustainable way.

Help a Child works in areas with a high incidence of poverty or in places

where children and families are extra vulnerable due to disasters or (imminent) conflicts.

Our reason to exist are the vulnerable children and families we want to support, but our right to exist is the loyal group of supporters that have enabled us already for more than 50 years to do our work on their behalf.

OUR VISION

As a Christian non-profit organization Help a Child wants every child – regardless of their social, political, religious, ethnic or economic background – to have a life in dignity, with love and with a promising future.

OUR MISSION

Help a Child provides a future for children in need, their family and their entire community.

OUR CORE VALUES

We support children and families in need, because we follow Jesus Christ, who showed us God's love for mankind. The Bible teaches us to pass on God's love, to be merciful, to bring justice, to reconcile and to be good stewards. These Christian principles inspire us to give our best in all circumstances. Our corporate values are:

We value every child

We believe that every child is a unique gift from God, made in His image. We include all children, no matter their background, religion or abilities.

We are faithful

We are trustworthy and accountable to the ones we support and the ones supporting us. We use our resources wisely, effectively and efficiently.

We believe in the strength of the people we help

We encourage children, youth and adults to identify and use their God-given abilities.

We empower community structures and strengthen local resources.

We embrace partnership

We work together in relationships with mutual trust and respect. We are loyal and honest and expect the same from our partners.

We learn and adjust

We are open-minded and eager to learn. We appreciate feedback and we learn from our mistakes.

OUR STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

When we evaluate our own performance we see the following strengths and challenges:

Strengths

- We are an organization that can act flexible and agile.
- We have innovation power.
- Others tell us that we are a trustworthy partner and deliver quality.
- We are financially healthy.
- We have a strong local partner network that has the potential for scaling up and has a strong presence at grass root level.

Challenges

- We can improve in brand visibility, and promoting our unique selling points; we are often too modest.
- We lack scale and in size (both in our programs and office capacity).
- Our IF donor base and track record is vulnerable.
- We can be risk averse.
- We have insufficient own ICT expertise.

Our **context**

We are writing this strategy in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis. There is no way of knowing now how the crisis will develop, but what is clear is that we are living in a world where everything is connected and where causes in one part of the world can have huge consequences in other part of the world. The following trends and developments are important factors to consider as we make plans for the coming years.

GLOBALIZATION AND INCREASED INSECURITY

Globalization and its effects like urbanization, power shifts and technological advancement do not necessary have positive results for the people we want to help. Urbanization disrupts communities in rural areas and creates problems and poverty in urban areas. The geopolitical power shifts from North and West to East (for example India) and South impacts both our role and the role of our partner organizations and the communities we work in. Even though poverty is expected to decline globally, the places we work in – Sub-Saharan Africa and India – will still be the places where poverty concentrates. At the same time technology is changing

lives rapidly even though inequality in access to technology persists.

As economic growth will not be distributed equally, increasing inequality in society will create tensions. On top of that humanitarian crises will add to increased insecurity. Climate change affects food security and requires new ways of farming the land, but can also cause disasters like draught and floods.

In the countries we work in we see the effects of displacement and crisis, natural hazards and political instability and conflict. It means the context we work in is volatile. One moment we can really work on structural, sustainable change, but the next moment we need to switch back to disaster response

and recovery. It requires a very flexible approach. The fact that in an increasing number of countries civic space is shrinking doesn't help us to play our role.

THE SEARCH FOR MORE EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

It is a great challenge to achieve the ambitious SDG's by 2030 in a globalizing world with decreasing available funds. This calls for a greater need to cooperate well with relevant actors to increase the impact of the work. And that is exactly what donors do: they become increasingly demanding in terms of compliance, impact and scale. Also system change is seen as an effective way of achieving more impact. This is equally true for localization; local (faith based) NGOs will be favored more and more as recipients of aid. Furthermore there is an increased focus on the connection between humanitarian aid and development (nexus), the importance of youth and on technology and innovation. The Grand Bargain translates this into commitments that are inspiring to follow.

The role of the Western international NGO is under pressure due to the geopolitical power shift and the decrease in support from Northern constituencies. Alliances become more and more important and are increasingly non-traditional.



HOW WE CONTRIBUTE TO THE SDG'S

Fortunately, we are not alone in our mission to provide a future for children in need, their family, and their entire community. We are part of a broader international movement striving for a hopeful and sustainable future. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) give words to this shared ambition, and our programs directly contribute to achieving these SDGs.



All our programs, both in disaster response and in development, contribute to the immediate and long-term alleviation of poverty. Together with partners, we empower and equip children and their families in the poorest areas around the world for a hopeful future: a life with sustainable livelihoods instead of hunger. And we do so irrespective of a child's social, political, religious, ethnic or economic background, because every child deserves to have a life in dignity, with love and with a promising future.



In development, we focus on Early Childhood Development and Youth & Work programs. Thus, we invest in the health and well-being of children and youths through quality education for both girls and boys, parenting courses, community building programs, technical and vocational training and through helping youth and families to start their own sustainable, environment-friendly (agri)business. As families become socially and economically resilient, a hopeful future for their children is secured.



In our work in fragile situations, our primary goal is child protection. To this end, we contribute to food security, sanitation and emergency education in crisis situations, and we assist in peacebuilding processes to achieve long-term safety.

OUR CONSTITUENCY IS CHANGING

Overall we see a need towards a more personal approach and personal attention. People are looking for a sense of belonging and involvement.

Our constituency base shows a steady decline in the number of Christian donors. More and more Dutch have little or no connection with the churches. At the same time the donors that remain are committed and generous in giving. There is a continued desire of private donors for NGO's to work together. Christian migrants are becoming increasingly an interesting – but difficult to reach – group.

Trends in private fundraising show a focus on innovation and technology. Innovations in online and mobile fundraising become more and more important; the same is true for harnessing the power of data. Growth in private fundraising income is expected through e-mail and marketing automation where it becomes increasingly important to approach the donor individually. Next to this a growth in inheritances can be expected. Overall the competition is increasing.

Our way of **working**

This strategic plan is not reinventing Help a Child from scratch. On the contrary, we build on solid work from the past. Before we look at our ambitions for the coming period, this chapter underlines the building blocks we have developed before, and want to keep, improve and build on.

HOW WE WORK

We work with a so-called Theory of Change as depicted below. The picture must be read from the inside out: everything is centered on the child. The child is at the heart of our Theory of Change.



HOW WE RAISE FUNDS

Although we are first and foremost a constituency based organization we have made the decision to increase our impact by also using our private income as a multiplier to attract institutional funds. The consequence of this is that we have to deal with the interests of two very different groups of donors that do not always have similar goals and aims. Especially the trend in institutional fundraising for more scale and impact is a challenge for us. Nevertheless we want to address that challenge as we feel it is an important way to stay relevant and to multiply the impact we can make in the lives of the children we want to help.

WHERE WE WORK

We work in Africa and in India in the places where children need our help the most. We work in rural areas and for as long as we are relevant and have value to add. We work in a mix of developing and fragile countries offering development and disaster response programs.



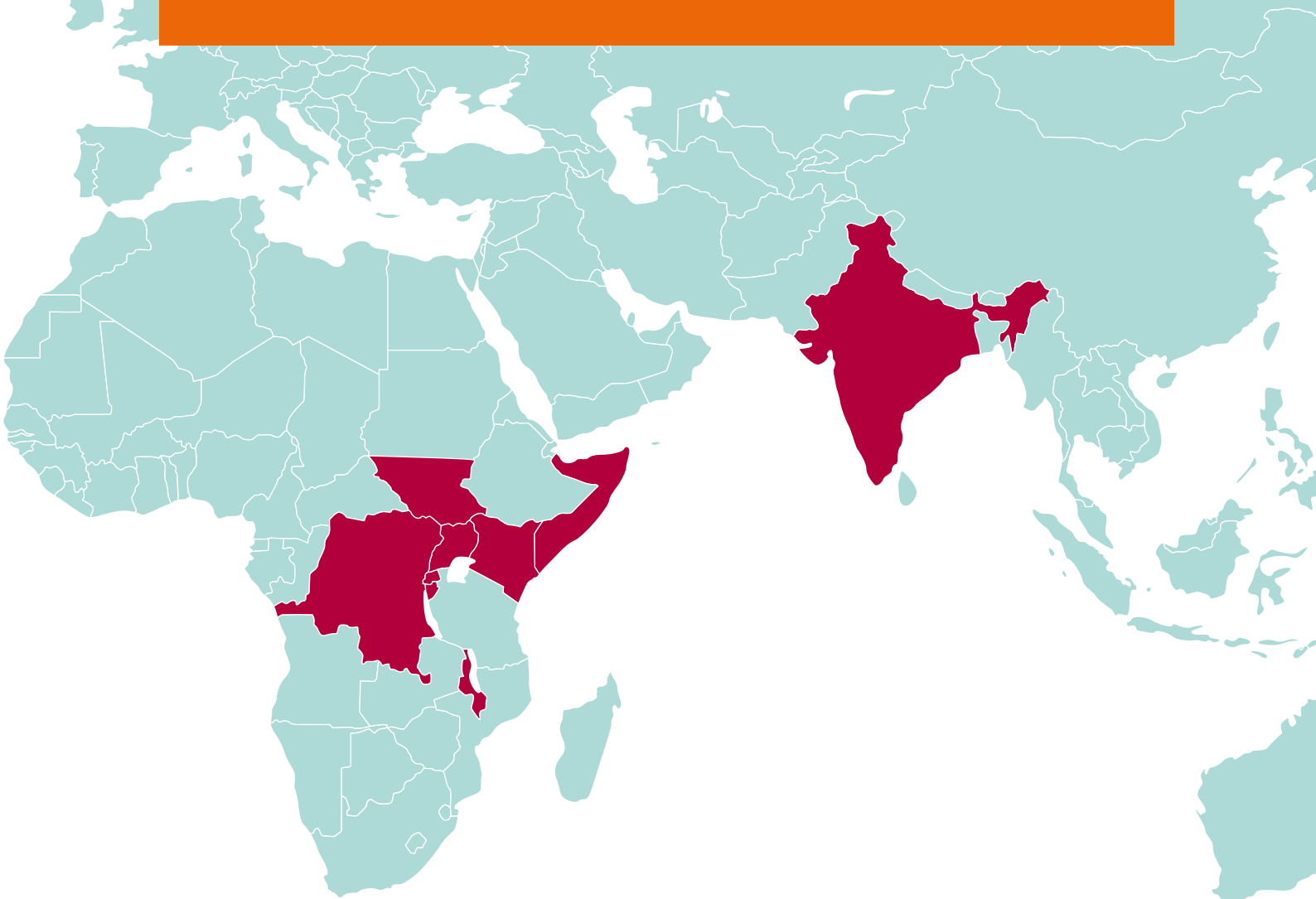
OUR GEOGRAPHICAL CHOICES

For the coming years we have chosen to work in a mix of countries with a development profile and a fragile profile. The countries with a development profile we are working in currently are Kenya, Rwanda, India, Malawi and Uganda. The countries with a fragile profile are Burundi, DRC, South Sudan and Somalia.

As countries develop further there also comes a time that our role

adds less value. We want to make well thought through decisions on when to enter and when to exit a country.

We want to be present in each country we work in, therefore we will establish a country office in Uganda. For Somalia we are awaiting an evaluation before we are ready to make that decision or still choose for another country.



WITH WHOM WE WORK

Already in 1968 we chose to work through local Christian partners. At the time that was a very innovative choice. After four decades working solely through local partners we decided to also be present ourselves in the countries we do our work. In that way we can coordinate the programs better, guard the quality of work and add specific expertise. And also we can play a role in building the capacity of our local partner and acquiring local funds for as long as our local partners are not able to do so.

BUILDING ON PREVIOUS CHOICES

The main strategic ambitions for 2016 – 2020 were developing a Theory of Change, implementing a decentralized structure and a move to more fragile countries. We have largely realized these ambitions and we want to build on these results with new insights to sharpen our strategic focus for the coming years.

Our strategic ambitions

Based on our desire to learn how to create more impact for more children in need and the trends we observed in *Our context* we have formulated three main strategic ambitions:

- More quality and impact
- Strategic innovation and scale up
- Strong positioning and collaboration for more resources

MORE QUALITY AND IMPACT

A globalized and insecure world puts pressure on our ability to create more impact for children. We need to adapt our programs and increase its quality to make sure that we can continue to make impact.

- We want to be much more **climate smart** in our programs to address the effects of climate change.
- We want to increase the quality of our Development and Disaster Response programs by **adding key**

elements from each approach into the other.

- We want to impact more children by being part of **system change at country level**. We will do that through our expertise areas Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Youth & Work.
- We want to make sure that our programs have quality and do create impact and therefore they should be **evidence based**.

HOW WE GET THERE

- By 2024 Help a Child wants to integrate Climate Smart approaches into our programs, especially in PiP (Integrated Farm Planning) and Youth & Work.
- By 2024 we want to be physically present in every country in which we have programs and we want to have ECD and Youth & Work expertise in development countries and child protection expertise in disaster response countries.
- By 2024 all development countries will have disaster risk reduction elements in their programs and all disaster response programs will be linked to sustainable development initiatives wherever possible.
- In this policy period the children and families we work for will be more involved in the design of our programs. Beneficiary and community accountability and participation will be part of all phases of our project cycle.



STRATEGIC INNOVATION AND SCALE UP

We want more impact for more children. We strongly feel that strategic innovation and scale up not only helps us reach that goal by ourselves but also makes us a more attractive partner for others.

- We need to develop from ad hoc innovation to **strategic innovation and scale up**.

- We want to participate in **innovation networks** and we want to **build alliances** with large partners who have scale-up capacity to ensure our innovative concepts reach scale.
- We want to build **acceleration principles** into our current approaches, reaching more scale with adaptations of our current concepts.

HOW WE GET THERE

- We want to accelerate the Child Centered Community Development (CCCD) model, and evaluate our pilot projects (like for example PiP, Parenting, and the scaling of ECD centers). We want to roll out the pilots if they are successful. In that way we want to continue to develop and test innovative and scalable concepts in the coming years.
- Furthermore we want to explore and test innovations connected to technological developments and develop an accompanying scaling approach.
- By 2024 we have won at least 5 innovative calls and we have participated at least in 2 scale up projects with other large partners.
- We want to create (financial) space to experiment and to innovate.
- We want to invest in (technical) innovations in connecting the sponsor child or family with the sponsor.
- We want to develop and implement new (innovative) fundraising models, the first being a private funding model for disaster response areas.

STRONG POSITIONING AND COLLABORATION FOR MORE RESOURCES

The needs remain high and we want to help as much children as we can. To be more successful in raising funds we need to make new choices and step up our current efforts.

- In this policy period we need to **increase and diversify our** (institutional) **funding**. For this we need a smart alliance, networking, visibility and fundraising strategy. In doing so we will have generated the means to double the number of children we can help by 2024.
- We want to **strengthen our local partners** and build their capacity so that by the time we leave a

country they are empowered to take over our work completely.

- We want to **reach new constituencies**. We want to explore ways to reach constituencies in **India**. Also in the Netherlands we want to explore how we can reach out amongst **migrant churches**.
- We know that the **role** of (Western) international **NGO's is changing** in the coming years although it is difficult to predict exactly how. We want to monitor this development closely and make sure that we find a role for Help a Child to stay relevant in helping children and families in need.

HOW WE GET THERE

- We want to expand our partnerships and align those partnerships more with our strategic priorities (innovation, scale up, and non-traditional partnerships). We will start this by formulating an alliance strategy which should include a sharp definition of our unique selling points.
- We want to work on a more smart networking, visibility and fundraising strategy for each country and the Netherlands (with a

focus on innovation and scale up) especially in order to increase our chances of fundraising success. This includes prepositioning towards donors, working on relationships, and packaging our current programs as attractive products.

- We want to continue to invest in marketing automation and acceleration of growth: smart leads generation and developing entry giving products as steps towards sponsorship. Also the implementation of data-

analysis tools should help us to in the end approach each donor individually.

- We want to expand the number of second hand shops to at least 10 by 2024.
- The focus on legacies will continue to be important in this policy period.
- In this policy period we want to explore possible projects in the Netherlands to engage our private sponsors beyond giving financial support (meaning, time and knowledge).
- We want to make clear choices in our lobby & advocacy focus and translate those choices into a message that our constituency can embrace and rally around.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR OUR ORGANIZATION?

Becoming a successful innovative organization is not an easy task. We want to use this policy period to make steps to get there. We feel that the following issues will contribute.

- We already have a flat organization with strives for transparency and has a learning attitude. We want built on this and foster an innovative culture.
- Being innovative also means being agile and flexible as an organization. After 5 years of

organic growth and decentralization we will review our processes and procedures, get rid of redundancies and make them lean.

- We need to be able to use state of the art IT systems to accelerate impact. This means that we want to replace our current IT system and that we need to have specialized ICT expertise in house.
- The innovation, alliance and fundraising strategy requires new skills, competences and capacity from our staff both in the Netherlands and in the country offices. We will review our HR strategy to make sure we succeed in this.
- In order to deliver quality towards our donors we need more dedicated attention to compliance and financial sustainability. We want to fully adhere to the Core Humanitarian Standards and be CHS certified by 2024.

STRATEGY **2021–2024**

Our mission: Help a Child provides a future for children in need.

MORE IMPACT **FOR MORE CHILDREN**

Ambition

More **quality** and **impact**



Ambition

Strategic innovation
and **scale up**



Ambition

Strong **positioning**
and **collaboration** for
more resources



This means

**More climate smart
programs**



**From ad hoc
innovation to
strategic innovation
and scale up**



**Increase and diversify
our (institutional)
funding**



**Use best of both
worlds in
Development and
Disaster Response**



**Be pro-active
in innovation
networks & alliances**



**Strengthen our local
partners**



**Be part of system
change**



**Accelerate our
current
approaches**



**Reach new
constituencies**



**Make sure our
programs are
evidence based**



**Guard our role as
international NGO and
stay relevant**



Our financial ambitions

INCOME <i>(in 1.000 euros)</i>	Baseline 2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Income from individuals	6.180	6.157	6.776	7.055	7.462
income from businesses	435	464	494	525	560
Income from government subsidies	5.637	5.375	5.705	7.485	9.090
Income from other non-profit organizations	1.555	1.807	2.074	2.393	2.771
Other income	5	10	10	10	10
	13.812	13.813	15.059	17.468	19.893
EXPENSES					
Expenditures on objectives					
- Programmes	12.286	12.000	13.019	15.074	17.351
- Information and awareness	456	475	498	509	515
	<i>12.742</i>	<i>12.475</i>	<i>13.517</i>	<i>15.583</i>	<i>17.866</i>
Costs raising income	960	1.089	1.154	1.202	1.234
Management and administration costs	462	553	600	649	680
	14.164	14.117	15.271	17.434	19.780
BALANCE	-352	-304	-212	34	113

STEADY GROWTH

After a pause in 2021 – because of a change in accounting principles and the end of our Burundian ARC project – we see a steady growth in the coming years. All parts of the organization contribute to this growth: from the private and institutional fundraising departments, and our second hand shops in the Netherlands to the local fundraising done by our country offices.

This increase in financial means, next to our ambitions in being more innovative and working on scaling up and accelerating our current programs will enable us to fulfil our main ambition to have more impact for more children in need.



**'It's not about how much you do,
but about how much love you put
into what you do that counts.'**



www.helpachild.org