



## Content

- 1. Foreword
- 2. Vision & Mission
- 3. Target Audience & Approach
- 4. Teams
- 5. Training Centers
- 6. Pioneering Sites
- 7. Projects
- 8. Finances
- 9. Contact



# Fore word

As humans, we first look first at visible results. God also sees the invisible results.

Take a tree with good fruit. You can eat the produce or sell it. And that's a good thing. But a wise farmer also looks at the quality of the seeds. Can the seed give new trees? New life: that's the real profit.

People like to give to projects with visible results, and that's understandable. But not every project that seems good is also good for people in poverty. Many initiatives (unconsciously) reinforce the dependent position of vulnerable people.

What are the invisible impacts of our projects? Wherein lies the real profit?

Of course Tree of Life aims for good results, but at its deepest level our motivation is to make a lasting, long-term impact. That people are liberated from inner poverty. The real profit is receiving a new, eternal Life.

In this annual report you will read about the visible impact we are grateful for. The less visible impact we try to make visible through the stories of people who have been inwardly changed.

All life comes from God, our Creator. Therefore, we give Him all the glory.

Enjoy reading our annual report!



Christian Slager Founder and Director Stichting Tree of Life



## Vision & Mission

Tree of Life comes alongside people in poverty to empower them to build a hopeful future for themselves.

Our mission is to strive to increase collaborative resilience. We do this by teaching people to be faithful stewards of their scarce resources. As a result, a hopeful future comes within reach.



# Target Audience

Our primary target group is farmers in developing countries.

The first step is (family) training in sustainable agriculture to achieve food security.

After this, we walk with together with the families to further develop in finance, family, health and faith. To this end, we train local people as trainers.







## It starts with the farmer

The once rich, fertile soil is depleted and dried out in many places. Farmers struggle with poor harvests and suffer from hunger. The causes are diverse: deforestation, overgrazing, burning, irregular rains and poor farming practices.

#### Effects of malnutrition

Too little food or a one-sided diet can lead to malnutrition. This undermines immunity in adults and can limit good cognitive functioning. Brain development in children can be impaired. This leads to learning difficulties, among other things.

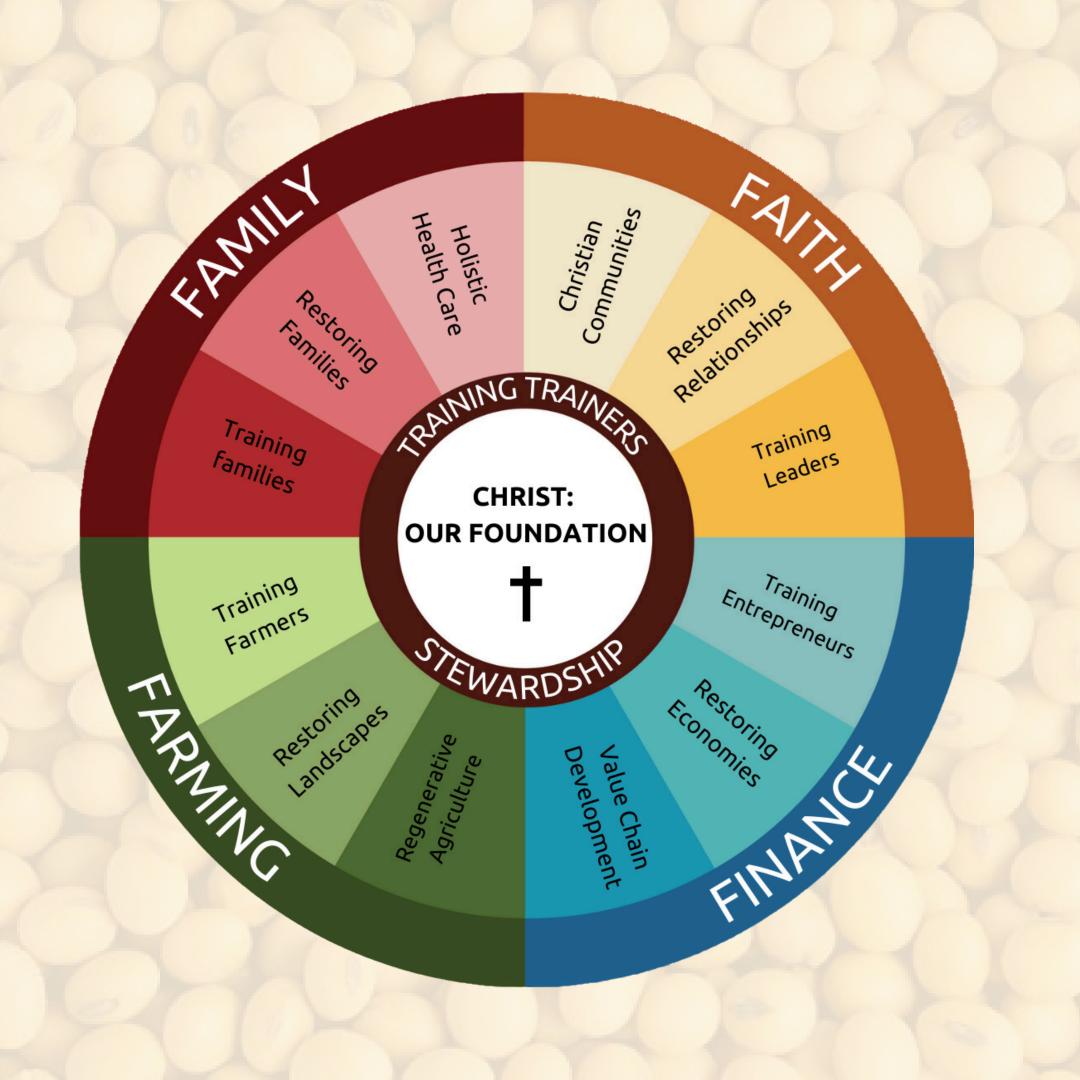
How can this downward spiral be broken?

#### Improving harvests

Tree of Life facilitates agricultural trainings so that soils recover and harvests can improve. The trainings begin with 'Foundations for Farming'. This method focuses on conservation and production of staple food crops, such as corn. The first milestone is food security.

Tree of Life is developing trainings to transition to agroforestry from here. This is a regenerative way of farming, combining different (tree) crops so that they reinforce each other.

A mature agroforestry system can produce food for decades! Our projects are progressing in various stages.



## Our Themes

- Farming Regenerative agriculture is our primary tool to sustainably fight poverty.
- 2. Finance Good management of financial resources can make the difference in getting out of poverty and staying out of it.
- 3. Family Malnutrition has major consequences: for now and later. We want to give every family the opportunity to build a good and healthy life.
- 4. Faith We believe that restoring relationships between a human being and his Creator, the other, himself and creation, is the only sustainable solution to poverty.



Hedwig came to build a new website, but unfolded as a creative allrounder. Writing, designing, presenting, developing vision... You name it! An involved go-getter.

Hedwig van Nijkhuizen - Public Relations



The Tree of Life vision requires clear lines of communication, a solid administrative foundation and a healthy culture. Christian is a team player who builds an organization that can achieve its goals.

Christian Slager - Founder



Bianca brings warmth, sociability and practical wisdom to the team. As a volunteer, she supports the team one day a week and helps with relationship management and donor administration.

Bianca Prins - HR & Administration



Our inspired co-founder is never short of creative ideas, passion and compassion for people in poverty. In addition to his own business, Pieter regularly helps out in IT, design and as an ambassador.

Pieter Kruidenier - Founder

Our Team



## Sander Toziasse

Our president is as a rock for Tree of Life. Peaceful as ever, he keeps course and distinguishes between main and secondary issues.



# Sybren Stelpstra

Our secretary is an experienced and knowledgeable administrator. He asks sharp questions, analyzes clearly and comes up with concrete solutions.



#### Bianca Prins

Moved, encouraging and energetic. Bianca is always ready to serve and is receptive to God's guidance in doing so.



## Willem de Leeuw

Our treasurer has broad expertise. With an eye for detail, he asks the right questions at the right time.

### Our Board



































#### Mitongwe Training Center

Our training center in Malawi aims to provide local people with a sustainable and holistic solution to poverty. Sustainable means that there is local ownership and that local resources are not depleted, but built up and multiplied. Holistic means that we want to address all aspects of poverty: material, physical and spiritual poverty.

There are seventeen ongoing projects, including training in (forest) agriculture, food programs for malnourished children and the elderly, a community garden, a soccer tournament and mother-child programs. On the following pages is a sampling of what happened in 2023. Tree of Life does all of this in close cooperation with Stand as One Ministry from Canada.





## MALAWI

We want to introduce you to our amazing management team! Together these heroes are responsible for eighty-five staff members who together run seventeen projects at Mitongwe training center.

Pictured: Chico, Desire, Steven, John, Carol, Emmanuel, Deon and Kingsley. Malawi

# Regenerative agriculture

Last year, the food forest grew considerably. The various crops in the ten demo fields are doing well! A wealth of greenery shows that the concept works. Re-foresting and producing ample food is possible. The freeze-dryers could barely keep up with the supply of ginger and turmeric, among others.

This shows that an important step has been taken to restore the landscape. Where forest is rapidly disappearing in Malawi, we see the opposite here. Crops are being protected from rain. Biodiversity and soil fertility are being cultivated.

A lot of knowledge is available at the training center. Twice a year there is an 'Agroforestry Training', a five-day course for international guests. They receive an intensive course on forest agriculture, the models and practical elaboration. Course participants take this knowledge home to apply it there.



'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,

I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

'When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25: 35,36,40



Malawi

# Learnt young

The family center at the training center is always busy. Participants in the mother-child programs come faithfully. Mothers with children up to age 4 can come for a morning of 'learning how to play'.

There are few toys available in the villages. Therefore, kindergarten is a great opportunity to learn skills that will be useful later in school. The fruit snack served is also an important reason to come. A fun fact: the snacks come straight from the farm's land.

Every Saturday and Sunday, about 130 children attend the Young Warriors children's club. They sing, dance, play and listen to a story from the Bible. Vegetable gardening is also among the activities. This is in the spirit of 'young learned, old done'.

This way we hope to teach the children that you can grow more than just corn (number one crop in Malawi). To conclude, the children receive a nutritious soup. The ingredients were freeze-dried in our own freeze-drying center!







# Construction work

In 2023, two construction teams went to Malawi. Prior to the trip, no less than two shipping containers full of sponsored building materials were filled. Thanks to the efforts of Derco Methorst and Hennie Veldhuizen.

The first construction team focused mainly on structural work on a number of steel structures for a training workplace, a storage room and medical clinic. A cold room was also installed.

The second construction team specialized in welding and electrical work, among other things. The entire ventilation wiring for the freeze-drying center was replaced. The guest house was also fitted with fans.

In the fall, there was a construction halt due to a shortage of cement. Thanks to some generous donations, we were able to purchase local cement again and construction could resume!



## Gardening and soccer

The community garden grows, flourishes and bears fruit. The youth and teens are co-responsible for maintaince and harvesting work. The garden has a considerable diversity of crops. This takes some getting used to for most Malawians because they usually only eat corn porridge. But a one-sided diet is not healthy and can lead to chronic malnutrition and learning disabilities.

The garden introduces young and old to new fruits and vegetables. Cooking and tasting together is part of it! The community garden creates six jobs.

In addition to the community garden, the soccer league is still very much alive. The players are also coached in discipleship and to pay the dues they help build things like the community garden.



In January 2023, Christian and Hedwig met the EO Metterdaad team. The cooperation soon gained momentum.

Already in March, a film crew left for Malawi to film four episodes of ten minutes each.

In May and June, the episodes were on TV. In total, the campaign raised €190,000.



#### Developing ten villages

The beautiful proceeds from EO Metterdaad will be spent on initiatives for ten villages around the training center to develop their village.

We have hired two staff members to oversee this process.

#### Fear of change

In recent years, over 3,000 farmers have been trained in sustainable agriculture at the center. However, only a handful of farmers practice it. Fear of failure, displeasure of ancestors or villagers and influence from companies selling fertilizer are some of the reasons for this. The idea that 'white men's magic' is practiced at the training center also plays a role.

#### Strategy

After extensive reflection on our pedagogy and the dynamics in the villages, a two-pronged strategy was chosen: demonstration in the villages and a tool called 'community mapping'.

#### Seeing is believing

Two families who faithfully did apply what they learned in their fields are Duncan and Doris (pictured) and the Bonongwe family. Our team came alongside them, taking their fields to the next level. Now there are fruit trees, vegetables, a tree nursery and supply for water were constructed. This model shows villagers what is possible in their own village and it is now the 'talk of the town'.



#### **Food Security**

The demonstration fields make people realize that hunger is not necessary.

Duncan and Bonongwe are really the only ones in their village who have enough food for the upcoming season.

#### **Community Mapping**

Although we know it works, our trainings do not have the desired results. Therefore, we have trained our trainers in 'community mapping'. In this new strategy we want to invite people to come up with their solutions so that they take ownership themselves. Together with its villagers a village is mapped in a three-day workshop.

#### Diagnosis

What problems do people have? What about health, water, trees, food security and other amenities? Are there natural disasters such as flooding and erosion? This step is important because many villagers believe they have no control over their poverty situation. During the sessions, it gradually becomes clear that there can be a valuable role for everyone.

#### Local ownership

Our trainers do not come up with solutions. They only give recognition and ask solution-oriented questions. After the three days, participants are invited to come up with their own action plan. This way they become the owners of the problem and the solution themselves.

Malawi

# Management in transition

Last December, project leaders
Deon and Sarah indicated their
intention to hand over their
leadership as of July 2024. We
are very grateful for their input
over the past five years. The
project is moving from a
pioneering phase to a more
established organization.
Therefore, we are looking for
new people to take this on. In
addition, a wonderful local
leadership team has emerged,
which is doing more and more
tasks well independently.

In cooperation with our Canadian partner, several vacancies have been created.

We are looking for a regenerative farmer, a manager couple, a hostess/mentor and an executive for the medical clinic.

We are excited that Mitongwe continues to grow and can be an employer for many people. The impact for them is great: an income, opportunities to learn, food security. This is far from being true for the entire region or all of Malawi.

In short: there is still plenty to do!





'I will give you a new heart.
I will put a new spirit in
you.

Your own heart, which is as hard and as cold as stone, I will remove from you.

And then I will give you a warm, soft heart'.

This is what God says in Ezekiel 36:26-27



## Meet-ups & challenges

Tree of Life has supported Steven and Truus in running a training center in Cameroon since 2003. The year 2023 brought beautiful things amidst an ongoing military conflict in the region.

In May, the couple came to the Netherlands and visited the Emmaus Church in Barneveld, among other places. This congregation has decided to support the work in Cameroon for a number of years. Wonderful!

#### Faithful team

Steven writes about agriculture: 'This year we have an abundant harvest of corn, beans and sweet potatoes. During our time in the Netherlands, the team that stayed behind decided to plant sweet potatoes on a large piece of land. That was a big job, because everything was done by hand'.

We are grateful for the faithful team that helps build the training center year-in and year-out, putting the mission into practice.

#### Kameroen

### Trainings 2023

The farm has an important role model function. Farmers can receive training in sustainable agriculture and then apply it to their own fields. People who are curious can come and see the demonstration fields at the training center. Last year, some 200 farmers were trained at the center.

#### First training abroad

Staff members from other mission organizations were also trained in Cameroon. For example, we were asked by Agape from Switzerland to train a group of pastors from the Central African Republic (CAR).

Daniel traveled to CAR from the center in Cameroon. He flew for the first time in his life! In ten days, he shared theory and hands-on learning with the participants.

In addition, Daniel also attended our agroforestry training in Malawi in November. Daniel will start agroforestry fields at the farm in Cameroon in 2024.











# To care for and to innovate

Looking out for the weak is a major motivation of Steve and Truus. The farm was started with that motivation back then. The proceeds were used to provide food to, pastors' families so they could focus on their ministry.

There is always something to do. That's why people regularly report as seasonal workers. One young man relates, "I am so grateful for the opportunity that I can come and work here. It has helped me pay for my nursing studies for the past three years. Without the income from my work here, I wouldn't have been able to study."

To keep deepening and broadening its knowledge and to keep providing innovative training, the center also tries something new from time to time. For example, it is experimenting with an old-fashioned method of storage. Potatoes are kept in a covered pit. They are then sold again when there are hardly any potatoes on the market.

Zambia

# New beginnings

Last year we added a new Tree of Life training center in Zambia! Jan and Rozemarijn van Vuuren got in touch with us because their mission has a lot of overlap with ours.

They are happy to introduce themselves to you: "We are the Van Vuuren family and have been living in Zambia for over six years now. We are settled in the old mining town of Kabwe, where 300,000 people live. Just outside that town we are working to develop an organic farm. We produce for the local market such things as broiler chickens, eggs and lettuce.

We do this to generate income for the counseling platform Elyada Center Zambia (ECZ). From this income we pay the salaries of all employees and organize trainings that aim to ensure that more people have access to mental health services."





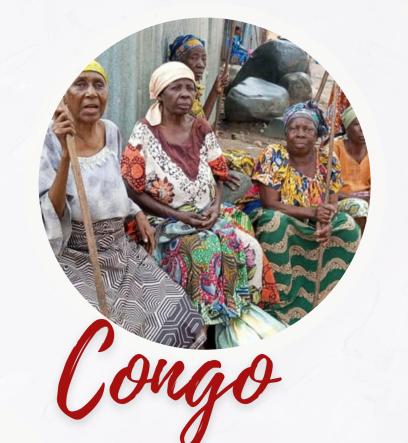
# Investing in people

An important part of the center in Zambia is the farm. On 'The Farm', unsprayed vegetables and honest meat are produced for the local market, including catering industry in Kabwe.

The basis of healthy crops is healthy soil. This contributes to biodiversity and climate resilience. The soil in Zambia is dry and soil improvement contributes to better water retention. The farm wants to set an example for local farmers to inspire them. To stay close to the local reality, people are used as much as possible instead of machines.

A job means an enormous amount to an employee. It can make the difference between a month of eating or not eating enough. Elyada Center is an important employer in the region.

# Pioneer sites



The Tree of Life training center in Kalemie. The focus is to train refugee Pygmies in sustainable agriculture.



A demonstration field has been established in Bolgatanga. Last year, 300 farmers were trained. There is vision to start a national training center.



Lech Acharai training center was born when Pieter & Corina bought land in Gobabis.
The focus is to train poor people in regenerative agriculture.

Congo

# Agriculture for the poorest of the poor

In the Democratic Republic of Congo Tree of Life aims to improve the living standards of the Pygmies through agriculture. These people are the original inhabitants of Congo and still live as hunters and gatherers. Agricultural skills are lacking. Many of them have fled due to deforestation and violence.

In 2023, with our support, the pastors couple Sethi & Debora bought farmland and a house in Kalemi. This is where many refugees reside.

A training room will be built, demo fields and a well will be constructed. There will also be a borehole. Ten families can lease part of the land so they can work towards food security for their families. Proceeds from the demo fields will benefit widows and orphans.





# Overwhelming response

2023 was a special year for Gaspar and Dorien in Ghana. They attended the Foundations for Farming training in Zimbabwe in the spring. They want to set up a training center in Ghana.

Upon their return they established a demonstration field of corn and trained five farmers. Three applied what they learned immediately.

When the sustainably produced corn was at its best, they and the three pioneers invited their neighbors to come and see. Gaspar and Dorien prayed that after five open days, 100 people would be interested in the full, three-day course. To their great surprise, after two open days there were 300 applications!

The rest of the year consisted of training these 300 farmers.



# Ghana Start of something beautiful

Farmers in northern Ghana adopted this method. All kinds of costs had skyrocketed. Fertilizer in particular had become unaffordable. The sustainable method taught to the farmers cost up to ten times less, including through the use of compost.

In the first year, Gaspar and Dorien's demo field yielded nearly 1,000 kilograms of corn per hectare. That's two to ten times what the farmers were used to! Praise God!

After the farming season, Gaspar and Dorien organized ten training sessions at farmers' homes to teach them how to make compost there. Since then, 300 farmers have been trained and 50 compost piles have been built. The team in Ghana now has four trainers in addition to Gaspar and Dorien. A wonderful start to what promises to be a beautiful training center!







# Training centre in the making

In mid-July 2023, we met Pieter and Corina Schouten. A lovely couple who would exchange the Netherlands for Namibia only a few weeks later. Their goal is to set up a training center to provide employment for underprivileged youth and produce food for malnourished children from the slums.

The couple used the first six months to integrate and help with various projects for school children. In late 2023, they purchased a piece of land and started building the training center.

The end goal is a self-sufficient project. Pieter and Corina want to offer young people a safe haven and show the love of the Lord Jesus through practical coaching and working together.



#### Heartache

Heartbreak, that's what I feel when you walk into the yard again.
The fourth time this week, the umpteenth time last month.

Your small, quick body, your roguish eyes that say so much but can't make words out of it. Your head that always thinks of a way out to get food.

The speed of a Damra boy with which you move. Your smell that tells me you haven't showered in days or that your clothes haven't been washed.

Your eagerness to learn on the one hand, when you sit next to me during homework class.

At the same time your restlessness, your eyes scanning the environment and people.

With your 8 years you don't read, know numbers one to three, perhaps because your head is too full.

You speak little, and precisely because of that you say a lot.

Heartache because I wish you peace.

Sadness because I wish you stability, the very thing that is so enormously difficult for you. You can't do anything with the routine and structure of the day. After about five days you want freedom.

You then want to flee, to freedom. Eat from the garbage cans in the village. That which we consider rhythm, regularity and structure are enemies to you.

You have learned, far too young, to survive. To take things and food before you ask. Honesty is not an option at your age,

simply because it wasn't taught to you and you can't survive with it.

In moments like these, when you walk into the yard your way: tough, confident, outwardly happy, my heart cries out. I feel the tears running in my soul, but I keep them hidden from you. I smile, play with you, give you my unconditional love and sincere attention.

I let you go, when you are picked up to go back home.

'Do justice Lord', is my silent prayer for him, but also for so many others who live the same life or rather suffer from it?

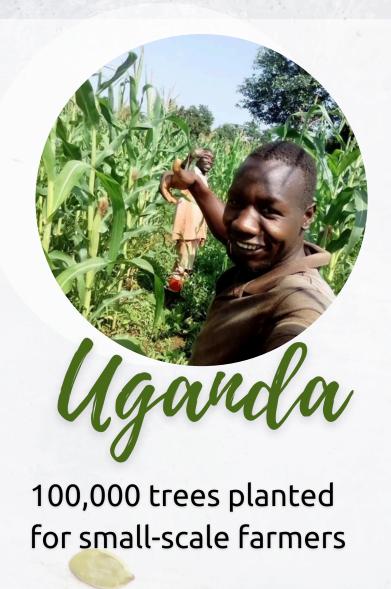
By: Corina Schouten



# Curacy Sound People learn the

principles of sustainable

agriculture



# Junion Control

Projects

Prisoners heard the Good News and received hope and perspective

Farmers received microcredits.
A small amount of money that makes a big difference.



Curaçao

# Investing in youth

Lucas and Esther van Twillert live and work with their three children on Curaçao. They are committed to helping vulnerable youth, among other things by teaching them agricultural skills. Youth unemployment on the island is high and many young people end up in crime. Learning skills can make a difference for the future of these young people.

Every Saturday morning a number of young people come to work on the compost. This is collected, sieved and sold to local gardeners after every eight to ten weeks.

In addition, dragon fruit is grown. The 2023 harvest was largely lost because birds ate almost all the fruit. Young people help build mesh mats for the dragon fruit. These are sold and they earn a penny from this.





Uganda

# Expansion & Harvesting

Gertjan and Kate Flikweert are working together with Tree of Life and partner organization Hope Alive. They are building a self-sustaining farm that creates jobs and grows trees.

Last year, several projects continued to expand, such as the projects with chickens, pigs and crickets. Also, the first tilapia from the fish pond were caught and sold. And several kilograms of honey were harvested. It was a nice harvest, after a few years of investment.

The dairy goat project also expanded considerably. Ten local goats have been purchased and crossed with bucks of a good dairy goat breed. In 2023, four new goats have already been born. In early 2024, Gertjan and Kate hope to welcome several new goats to the farm.







## Investing in youth

Gertjan tells: "We also grew corn in the local way of planting and also with the Foundations for Farming (FFF) method, so people can see the difference. On ¼ hectare with the local way of farming we harvested 74 kg of corn. On the ¼ hectare where we used the Foundations for Farming (FFF) method, we were able to harvest 238 kg.

We are currently working hard to put more mulch on the land so it will be ready for the next season in March/April."

#### Food forest

"On the farm in 2024, we hope to plant a food forest with a variety of tree and shrub species (including, for example, banana, papaya, breadfruit, mango and moringa) where people can find fruit all year round.

If it works well, we hope to use our tree nursery to grow enough cuttings so that local families can plant their own small food forest on their own land."

#### Thailand

## Faith in prison

Kees and Willemijn Brouwer have been working as missionaries in Thailand since 1978. They visit prisoners to encourage and teach them. In 2023, many people came to faith. There is even a baptismal pool in the prison. For those who want, there is an opportunity to be baptized right away. There is also a project to help ex-convict women.

The couple writes: "We see many young women in the services. They have to serve their sentences for years.
When they are released, they don't know where to go because they have lost contact with their home. For these people we have created a 'Half Way Home' so they have a place to live for the first few months. Here they get help from Pastor Appichat and his wife to carefully take steps into society."







#### Training health workers

Last fall, a course was started to train seven health workers. They can start work in remote mountain villages after an intensive course. They will set up a medical post, dispense medicine and do consults.

#### Microcredit

In addition, Sam and Karin oversee the project with microcredits. Reliable people get a loan of about fourty-five euros to buy chickens, a pig or something else. They can, for example, start a store. By 2023, four microloans have been successfully issued and repaid.

#### Finances

Tree of Life aims to reach as many farmers as possible with training in sustainable agriculture, faith, family and finance.

This is possible because many donors and funds entrust us with their resources. Therefore, we want to spend the money we receive as well and responsibly as possible.

To ensure our transparency and reporting meet high standards, Tree of Life has, for the first time, engaged WITH accountants. They specialize in non-profits and have issued a compliation statement for 2023 financial statements.

That means a big step forward in financial reporting for Tree of Life. In previous years, the compilation statement was provided by an accounting firm. The financial accounting and reporting is in accordance with Rjk C2 'small fundraising organizations'.

The financial statements are presented separately and can be found under <u>this link</u> or this URL www.treeoflife.international/downloads (in Dute)



#### SAMENSTELLINGSVERKLARING VAN DE ACCOUNTANT

Aan: het bestuur van Stichting Tree of Life

De jaarrekening van Stichting Tree of Life te Ede is door ons samengesteld op basis van de van u gekregen informatie. De jaarrekening bestaat uit de balans per 31 december 2023 en de staat van baten en lasten over 2023 met de daarbij horende toelichting. In deze toelichting is onder andere een overzicht van de gehanteerde grondslagen voor financiële verslaggeving opgenomen.

Deze samenstellingsopdracht is door ons uitgevoerd volgens Nederlands recht, waaronder de voor accountants geldende Standaard 4410, 'Samenstellingsopdrachten'. Op grond van deze standaard wordt van ons verwacht dat wij u ondersteunen bij het opstellen en presenteren van de jaarrekening in overeenstemming met RJk C2 'Kleine fondsenwervende organisaties'. Wij hebben daarbij onze deskundigheid op het gebied van administratieve verwerking en financiële verslaggeving toegepast.

Bij een samenstellingsopdracht bent u er verantwoordelijk voor dat de informatie klopt en dat u ons alle relevante informatie aanlevert. Wij hebben onze werkzaamheden, in overeenstemming met de daarvoor geldende regelgeving, dan ook uitgevoerd vanuit de veronderstelling dat u aan deze verantwoordelijkheid heeft voldaan. Als slotstuk van onze werkzaamheden zijn wij door het lezen van de jaarrekening globaal nagegaan dat het beeld van de jaarrekening overeenkwam met onze kennis van Stichting Tree of Life. Wij hebben geen controle- of beoordelingswerkzaamheden uitgevoerd die ons in staat stellen om een oordeel te geven of een conclusie te trekken met betrekking tot de getrouwheid van de jaarrekening.

Bij het uitvoeren van deze opdracht hebben wij ons gehouden aan de voor ons geldende relevante ethische voorschriften in de Verordening Gedrags- en Beroepsregels Accountants (VGBA). U en andere gebruikers van deze jaarrekening mogen dan ook ervan uitgaan dat wij de opdracht professioneel, vakbekwaam en zorgvuldig, integer en objectief hebben uitgevoerd en dat wij vertrouwelijk omgaan met de door u verstrekte gegevens.

Voor een nadere toelichting op aard en reikwijdte van een samenstellingsopdracht en de VGBA verwijzen wij u naar www.nba.nl/uitleg-samenstellingsverklaring.

Sliedrecht, 26 september 2024

WITh Accountants B.V.

# Colofon

Compilation & Design
Hedwig van Dijkhuizen
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Algemeen Nut
Beogende Instelling



