

Annual Report 2023



Contents

Outlook from the Secretary General	3
International Department	4-5
Funds Acquired	6-7
What we achieved in Asia in 2023	8-9
What we achieved in East Africa in 2023	10-11
What we achieved in West Africa in 2023	12-13
What we achieved in Norway in 2023	14
How we used our funds in 2023	14
Total number of beneficiaries	15
Fighting corruption	16-17
Global Strategy 2024-2030	18-19
2023 Highlights	20-21
Our contribution to the SDG-goals	22-23
Annual report for 2023 from the Board of Directors	24-27
Activity accounts and balance sheet	28-29
Board of Directors and Advisory Board Members 2023	30
The facts behind the figures	31

ACRONYMS

ARP = Aktivitets- og redegjørelsesplikt (Reporting duty for employers on gender equality)	ICT = Information and Communication Technology
CBO = Community Based Organisation	INSO = International NGO Safety Organisation
CMSG = Community Managed Savings Group	KRS = Kristiansand
ECD = Early Childhood Development	Medco din HMS (Occupational Health Services Provider)
Falck BHT = Falck Bedriftshelsetjeneste (Occupational Health Services Provider)	MNOK = Millioner Norske Kroner (Million Norwegian Kroner)
FAQ = Frequently Asked Questions	NGO = Non-Governmental Organisation
HEAT = Hostile Environment Awareness Training	SDG = Sustainable Development Goal
HR = Human Resources	SF = Strømme Foundation
	SMF AS = Strømme Micro Finance AS

Looking Forward: Embracing Challenges and Achievements

As we reflect on the completion of Strømme Foundation's five-year Strategic Plan in 2023, we are reminded of the ever-changing landscape in our mission to fight poverty. This period has been marked by unprecedented volatility, with the global community facing unforeseen obstacles and setbacks.

Initially, in 2019, there was a glimmer of hope that we were on the brink of eradicating extreme poverty by the end of the present decade. However, as we reached the conclusion of the Strategic Plan, the reality is starkly different. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with ongoing conflicts and humanitarian crises, has exacerbated challenging conditions for millions around the world.

Over the past five years, Strømme Foundation has strategically focused its efforts on a select number of countries. Unfortunately, many of these nations have been plagued by political upheaval and mass displacement, leading to desperate circumstances. In fact, four of the ten countries where we operate are listed on the Norwegian Refugee Council's roster of the world's most neglected crises, underscoring the urgent need for sustained support and intervention.

In the face of these challenges, Strømme Foundation remains steadfast in our commitment to the communities we serve. We recognize the critical importance of amplifying the voices of those living in poverty, particularly in regions where media coverage and humanitarian aid are scarce.

Despite the obstacles, we take pride in our accomplishments. In 2023 alone, we impacted the lives of 575,454 individuals through our education and job creation programmes, with a remarkable 70% being women and girls. Among them are

young girls gaining access to education and empowerment, adolescents learning about their rights and advocating for change, and women acquiring skills to uplift their families out of poverty.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our dedicated donors who stand in solidarity with us in the fight against poverty. Whether through monthly contributions, one-time gifts, or corporate partnerships, your unwavering support fuels our mission and drives meaningful change.

As we look to the future, we remain resolute in our commitment to creating a world free from poverty. Though the path ahead may be uncertain, we are encouraged by the knowledge that our collective efforts will continue to make a difference in the lives of those most in need.

Thank you for joining us on this journey towards a brighter tomorrow.



Erik Lunde
Secretary General

Erik Lunde

International Department

Final Year of Impact: Concluding Our Five-Year Strategic Plan

2023 was the last year of implementation under SF's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. The economic impact of the pandemic continued in many of SF's target communities in 2023 and has in combination with events such as the war in Ukraine, resulted in record-high inflation and a cost-of-living crisis in many countries. The challenging economic situation has been further exacerbated by the impact of climate change affecting crops and harvests, resulting in rising food insecurity. West Africa, South Sudan and Myanmar continued to be afflicted by political instability, conflict, and insecurity in 2023. The trend of military coups persisted in West Africa, this time in Niger. SF's intervention countries in the region are now ruled by military regimes and the security situation is putting pressure on already strained public services.

Despite the challenges, SF's programmes continued to perform well in 2023, and most targets were attained or exceeded. SF's programmes enabled children to access education, empowered adolescents to take charge of their lives, supported women to become economically independent and facilitated communities to take the lead in their own development.

To prepare for exit as part of the five-year Strategic Plan, efforts were focused on ensuring the sustainability and capacity of the 791 community structures established since 2019, and enable community handover of

programme activities by the end of 2023. Strong community structures are essential to SF's efforts to build a strong civil society, and in Nepal, many of the community-based organisations received financial support from local governments which helped facilitate the construction of community centres, rehabilitation of irrigation channels, planting of tree saplings and distribution of agricultural seeds.

Ensuring access to inclusive quality education is important to provide a pathway out of poverty for children in marginalised communities. Across West Africa, children's access to education continued to be severely affected as thousands of schools were forced to close due to insecurity. In this context, SF is playing an important role by providing out-of-school children with a second chance at education through the Speed School programme. Despite the challenging security context, 10,500 children (47% girls) enrolled in 390 Speed School centres in 2023.

Across all countries, SF's economic inclusion programmes emphasize improving livelihoods and enhancing incomes for vulnerable families. SF's Community-Managed Savings Groups (CMSG) have helped strengthen women's financial position, providing an important safety net for households during difficult economic periods. By the end of 2023, 114,800 women were members of 5,411 CMSG groups and in West Africa, women saved on ave-

rage NOK 490. Access to capital helped increase women's economic activities and 76% started or expanded an income generating activity in 2023. In Asia, SF has combined training in income-generating activities with the establishment of collective production groups and facilities and strengthening of market linkages. This approach is showing good results with 41% of targeted families crossing the national poverty line in Bangladesh and Nepal by the end of 2023.



96%

In West Africa, 96 percent of learners that completed the Speed School programme transferred to primary school.

2,888

Across the three regions, 2,888 community mechanisms successfully achieved an advocated issue.

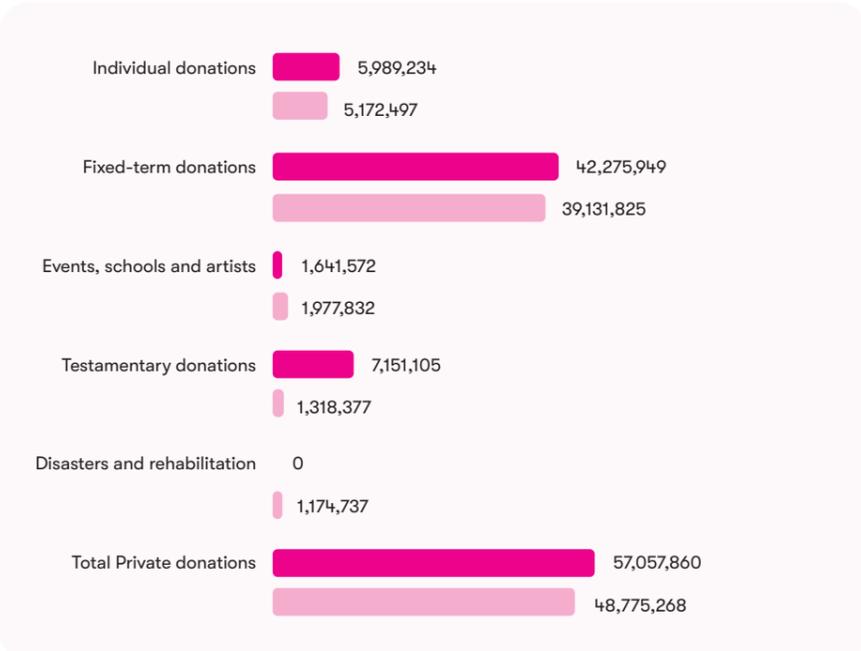
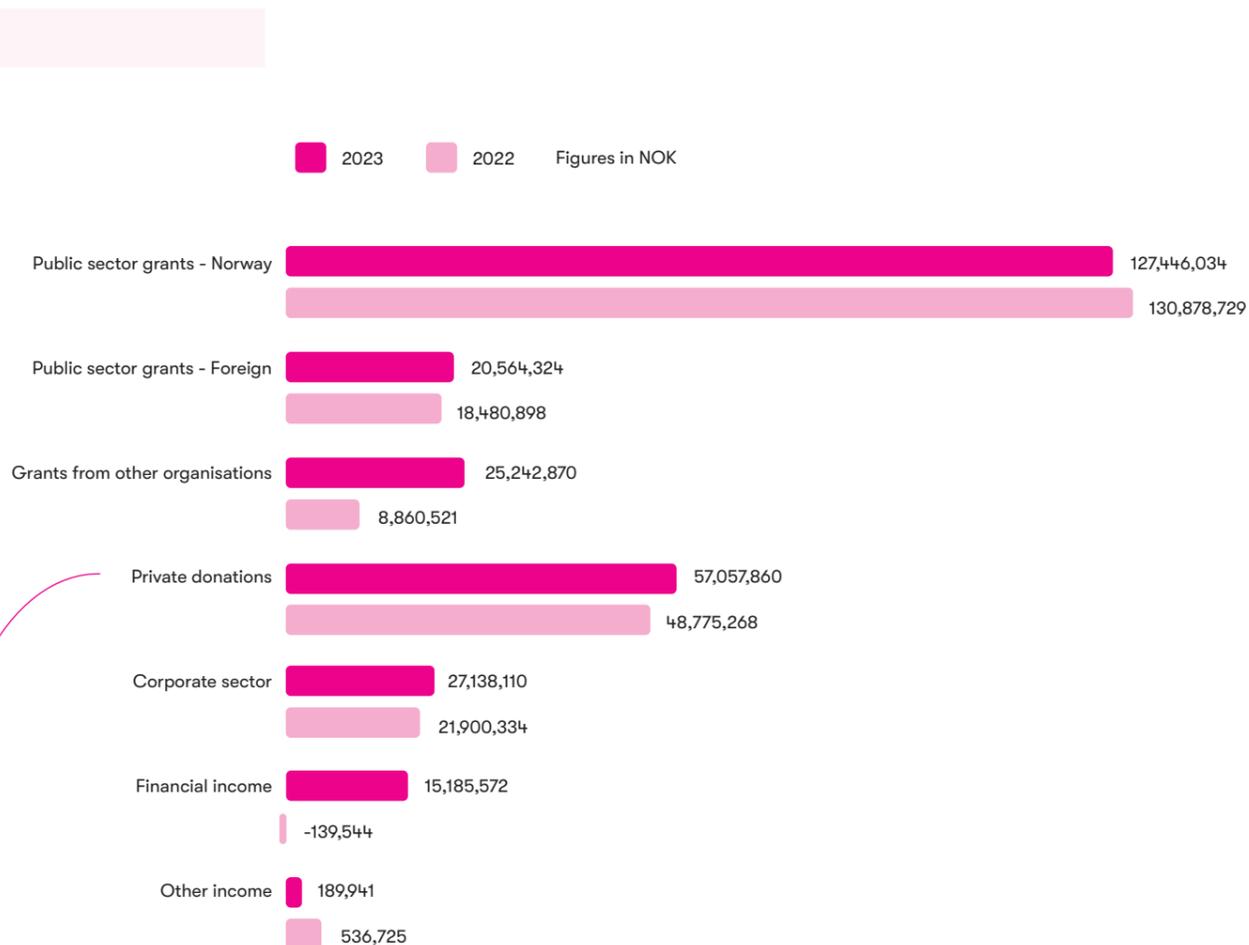
129,115

By the end of 2023, 129,115 men and women (89 percent female) were members of 5,411 savings groups.

Three smiling women from Tanzania count money from their savings box.

Local partner organisation: OCODE.

Photo: Strømme Foundation, Øystein Melhus Venås



Total funds received 2023

272,824,712

Total funds received 2022

229,510,795

New private donors in 2023

Despite a troubled global landscape with conflicts in Europe and the Middle East, Strømme Foundation has observed a strong willingness among the Norwegian people to support our education and job creation efforts in Africa and Asia. We are fortunate to have seen an increase in regular individual donors, who form the foundation of our income base.

Additionally, we have received more testamentary donations than usual this

past year, which makes us humble and extremely grateful.

In August, we have an extra focus on the importance of education as a way out of poverty. For the second consecutive year, we have organised a big event for all first graders in Kristiansand, to celebrate the first day of school and to highlight the importance of education.



A group of enthusiastic students from Kristiansand's Folk High School celebrates the sponsorship run to fundraise for SF's adolescent programmes.

Photo: Kristiansand Folk High School

What we achieved in 2023

Asia

Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar

Our focus

- Empowering families as a cohesive unit, fostering resilience and solidarity.
- Building strong civil society organisations within communities and strengthening the capacity of public sector institutions.
- Ensuring equitable access to quality education for marginalised groups, while also promoting the development of life and vocational skills.
- Elevating the voices of women and girls in decision-making processes and actively combating harmful practices like child marriage.
- Promoting livelihood diversification and fostering resilience against the impacts of climate change.

How we work

- Facilitate shared decision-making and income-generating activities through the implementation of Family Development Plans.
- Strengthen community structures to encourage collaborative actions that promote sustainable community development.
- Provide support for inclusive education initiatives and cultivate child-friendly environments within our supported schools.
- Deliver life skills training programmes aimed at boosting adolescents' confidence and empowering them as agents of positive change.
- Offer vocational skills training opportunities tailored to the needs of youths, equipping them for future employment and success.

292,712

is the total number of beneficiaries in Asia.

- 59 % are women.
- 112,458 are under 18 years old.
- 57 % are girls

791

Community Based Organisations (CBOs) were formed, and 75% achieved at least one advocated issue.

5,082

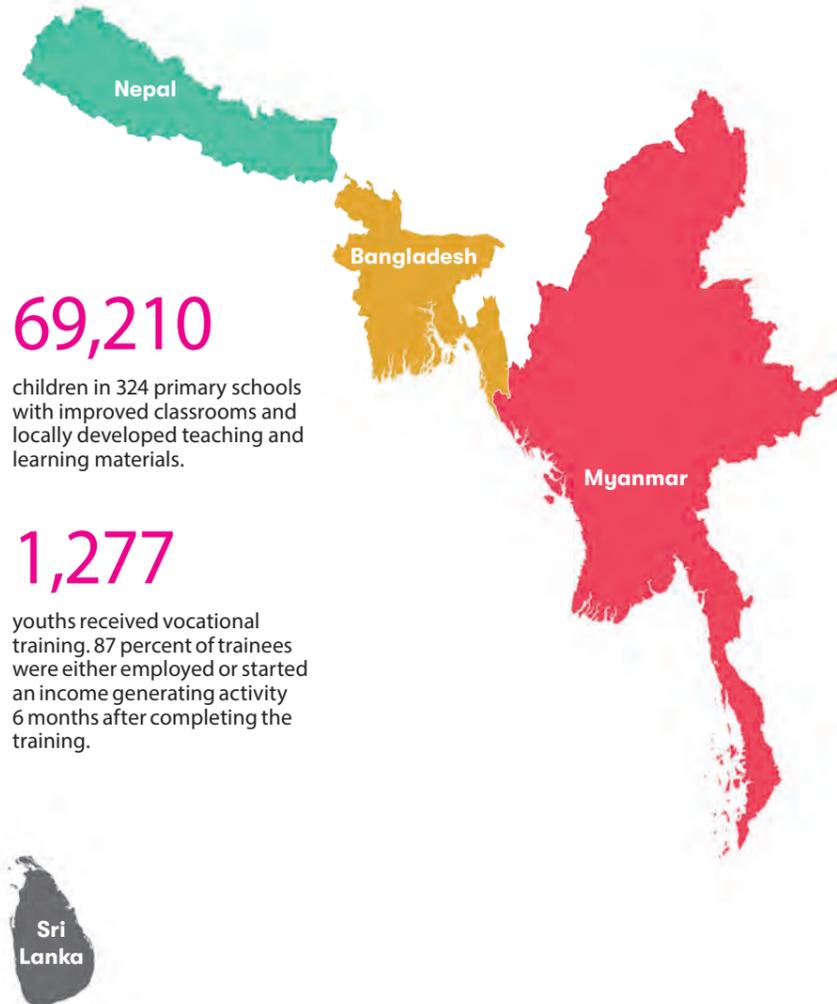
adolescents participated in 222 Samvad/Shonglap/Sagar Wine centres. 91 percent of adolescents improved their life skills after completing the programme.

69,210

children in 324 primary schools with improved classrooms and locally developed teaching and learning materials.

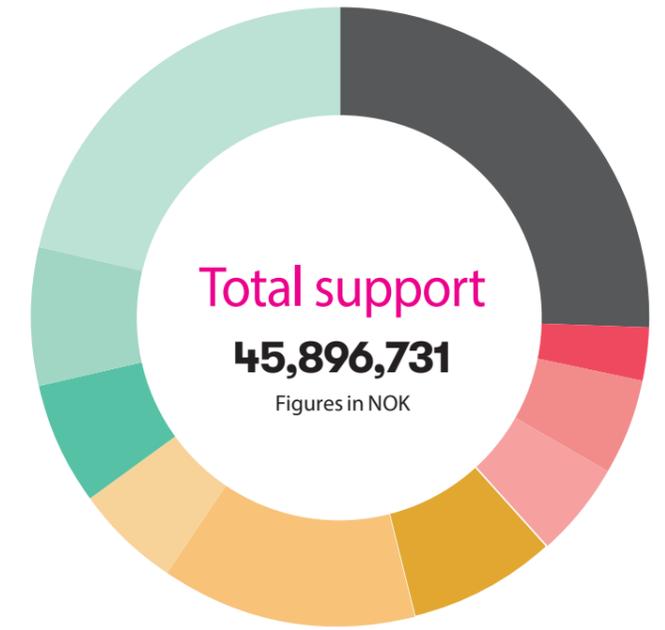
1,277

youths received vocational training. 87 percent of trainees were either employed or started an income generating activity 6 months after completing the training.



Support to partners/ projects 2023

by country and thematic goal including distributed programme follow-up in the regions.



Nepal

16,077,356

- 9,905,903 Strong civil society and public sector
- 3,239,531 Inclusive quality education
- 2,931,921 Improved livelihoods

Bangladesh

12,245,023

- 2,605,674 Strong civil society and public sector
- 6,136,753 Inclusive quality education
- 3,502,597 Improved livelihoods

Myanmar

5,855,381

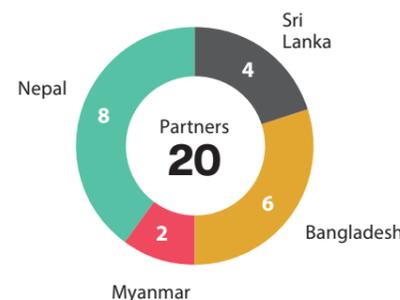
- 2,287,618 Strong civil society and public sector
- 2,352,347 Inclusive quality education
- 1,215,417 Improved livelihoods

Sri Lanka

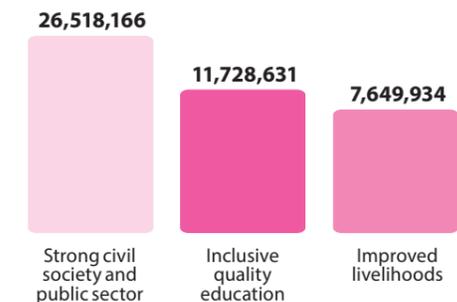
11,718,971

- 11,718,971 Strong civil society and public sector

Number of partner organisations



Distribution of support by thematic goal



What we achieved in 2023

East Africa

Uganda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Kenya

Our focus

- Enhancing access to Early Childhood Care and Development and elevating the quality of primary schools.
- Providing life skills training for out-of-school adolescents to empower them for success.
- Establishing community-managed savings groups to enhance access to and control over resources.
- Empowering women and youths to cultivate sustainable livelihoods, increase income, and foster entrepreneurship.
- Developing commercial villages and strengthening value chains to promote economic growth and sustainability.

How we work

- Improve the infrastructure and refine the soft skills of caregivers and teachers in supported ECD centres and primary schools to improve retention rates and enhance learning outcomes.
- Offer life skills and vocational training programmes tailored to out-of-school adolescents.
- Involve youths in viable trades that lead to lucrative employment prospects.
- Establish linkages between small rural producers and agricultural value chains to enhance their incomes and foster economic prosperity within communities.

201,281

is the total number of beneficiaries in East Africa.

- 76% are women
- 80,721 are under 18 years old
- 76% are girls

36,929

children supported in 101 Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres and primary schools with learning materials and improved infrastructure.

5,007

adolescents in 180 Bonga centres were empowered with life skills and knowledge of their rights.

62,117

participants were organised in 2,835 savings groups. 54 percent started or expanded and income generating activity.

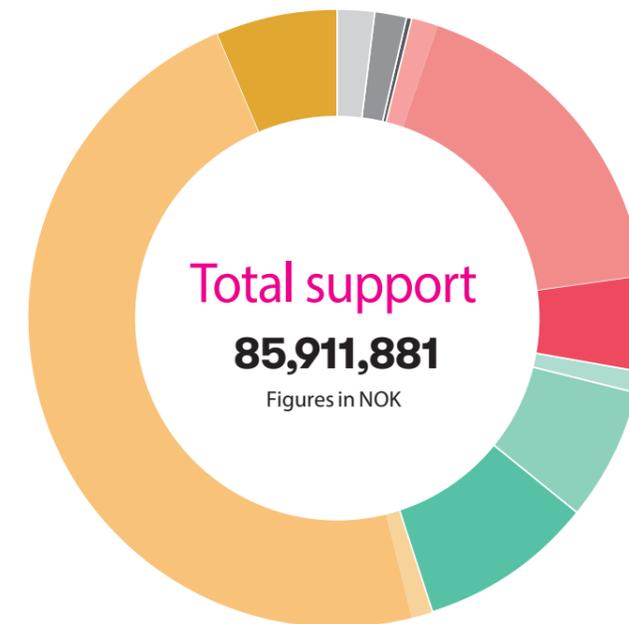
1,403

youths received vocational training in various trades from local artisans.



Support to partners/ projects 2023

by country and thematic goal including distributed programme follow-up in the regions.



Uganda

47,376,361

- 1,109,586 Strong civil society and public sector
- 40,813,785 Inclusive quality education
- 5,452,990 Improved livelihoods

Tanzania

14,629,147

- 955,345 Strong civil society and public sector
- 5,793,563 Inclusive quality education
- 7,880,240 Improved livelihoods

South Sudan

20,572,975

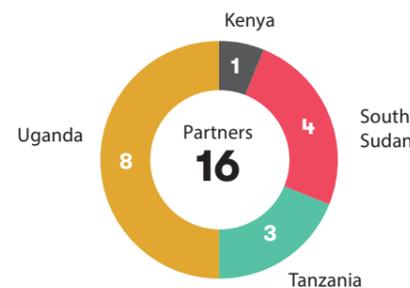
- 1,332,962 Strong civil society and public sector
- 14,873,762 Inclusive quality education
- 4,366,251 Improved livelihoods

Kenya

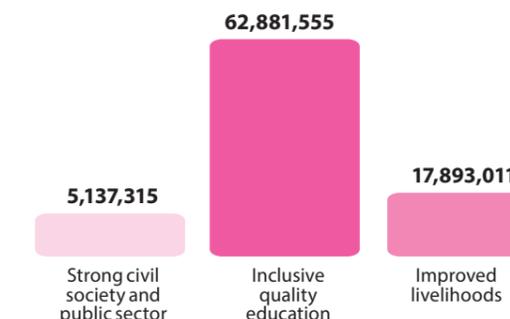
3,333,398

- 1,739,424 Strong civil society and public sector
- 1,400,445 Inclusive quality education
- 193,529 Improved livelihoods

Number of partner organisations



Distribution of support by thematic goal



What we achieved in 2023

West Africa

Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger

Our focus

- Establishing accelerated education centres for out-of-school children and adolescents.
- Providing literacy and life skills training for women.
- Promoting community-managed savings groups to overcome social and financial barriers.
- Training youth and women in various trades and waste management.
- Building capacity and advocating for community development.

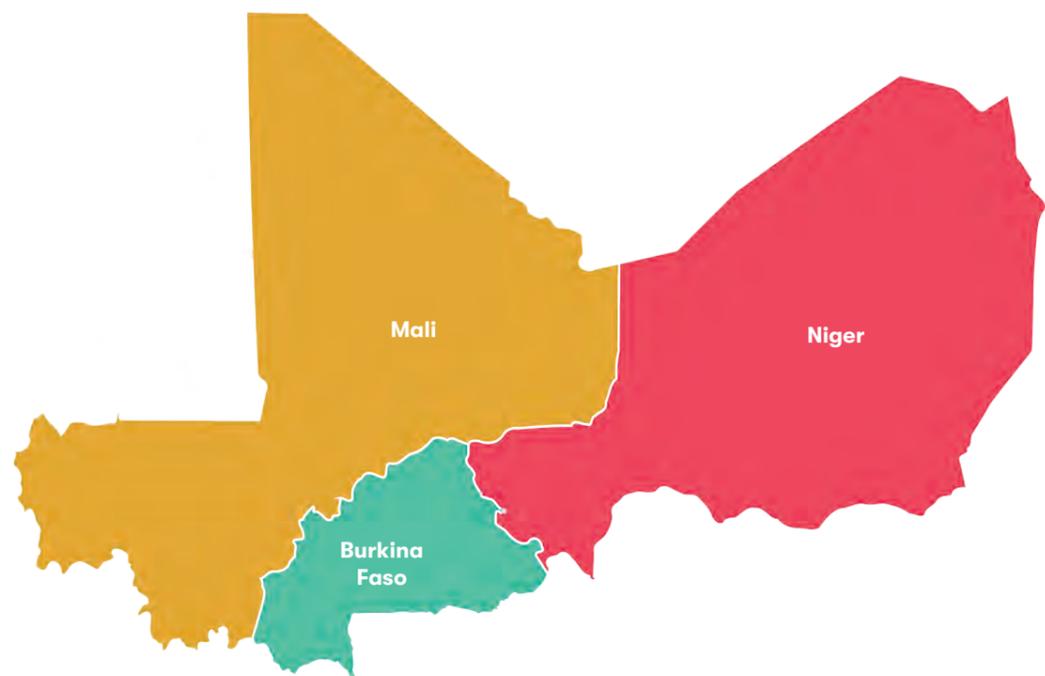
How we work

- Implement the Speed School programme, offering a condensed curriculum to allow out-of-school children to catch up with their peers and transition to the formal education system.
- Support women by providing life skills, literacy, and numeracy training.
- Establish community-managed savings groups for women to enhance their control over resources and decision-making power.
- Empower youth through vocational training and entrepreneurship development.

81,441

is the total number of beneficiaries in West Africa.

- 91% are women
- 12,133 are under 18 years old
- 52% are girls



10,500

out-of-school children enrolled in Speed Schools in 2023. 97 percent transferred to primary school after completing the programme.

96%

of women are more involved in household decision-making.

66,998

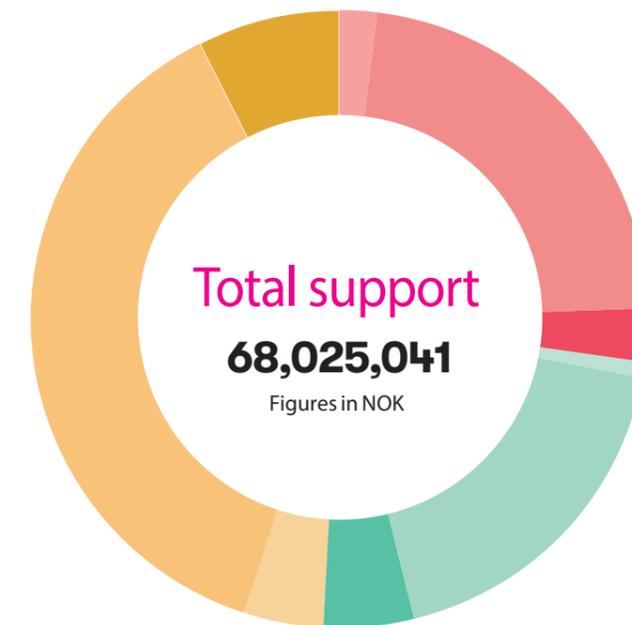
women were organised in 2,576 savings groups. 3,643 women took part in the Active Literacy programme.

614

youths received start-up kits for their income generating activities.

Support to partners/ projects 2023

by country an thematic goal including distributed programme follow-up in the regions.



Mali

33,297,863

- 2,787,072 Strong civil society and public sector
- 25,421,184 Inclusive quality education
- 5,089,608 Improved livelihoods

Burkina Faso

16,164,521

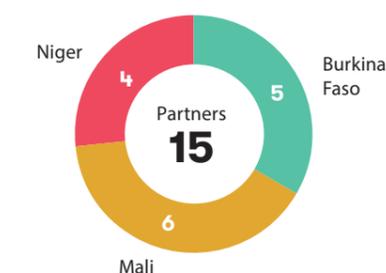
- 689,796 Strong civil society and public sector
- 12,227,542 Inclusive quality education
- 3,247,183 Improved livelihoods

Niger

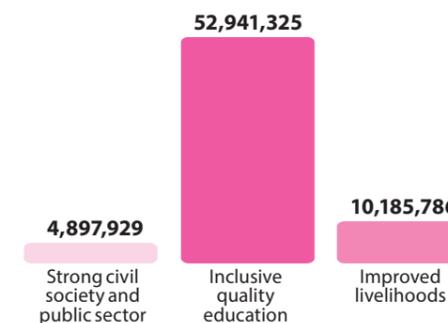
18,562,656

- 1,421,061 Strong civil society and public sector
- 15,292,600 Inclusive quality education
- 1,848,995 Improved livelihoods

Number of partner organisations



Distribution of support by thematic goal



What we achieved in 2023

Norway

Our focus

- Strengthening the capacity of regional and country offices as well as local partners.
- Enhancing fundraising efforts and fostering strong relationships with donors.
- Ensuring robust financial management and internal controls.
- Coordinating programme operations across all countries.
- Maintaining high standards for programme results, reports, and applications through quality assurance.

How we work

- Enhance digital monitoring systems to collect data on programme progress.
- Ensure timely submission of high-quality reports and applications to donors.
- Develop and maintain financial control systems and procedures to detect and prevent corruption.
- Build organisation-wide capacity to mainstream cross-cutting issues and foster innovation across programmes and field operations.

Achievements and challenges

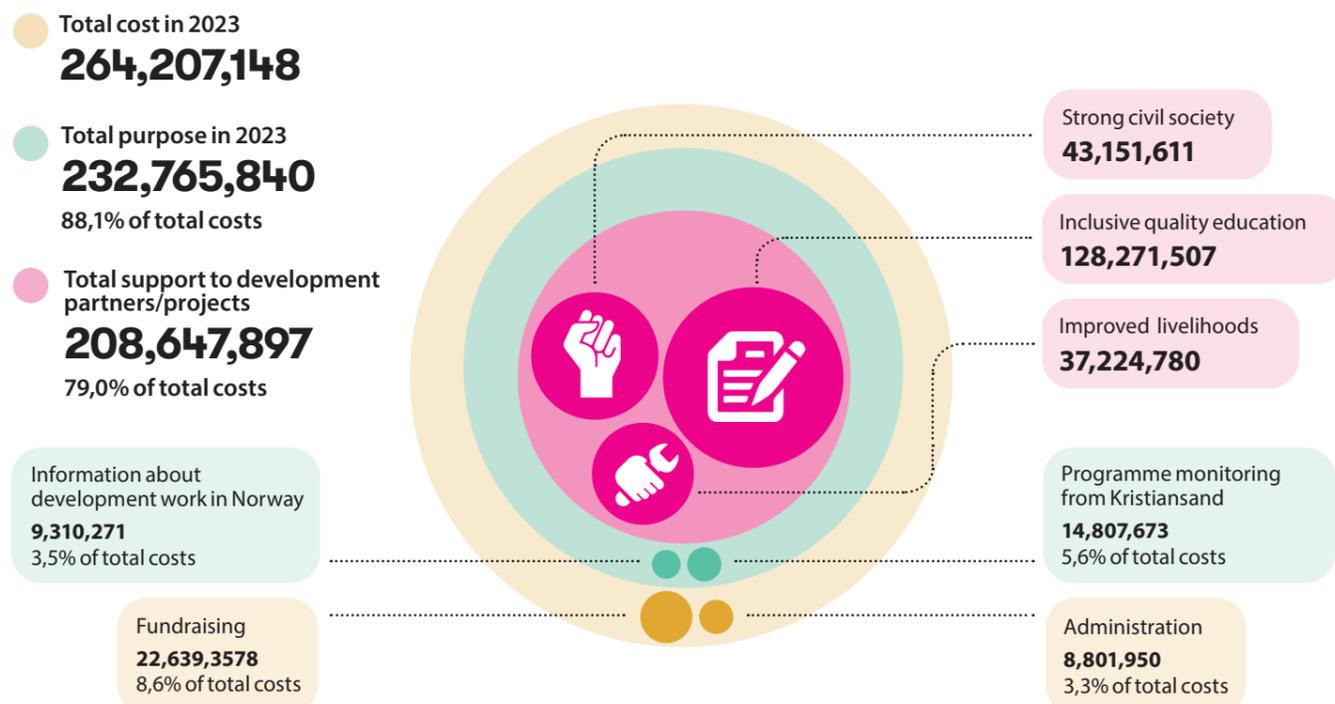
- Coordinated and consolidated results reporting across the three regions.
- Developed and operationalised quality standards for all programmes.
- Partnered with research institutions to strengthen learning and innovation.
- Secured new donor contracts to expand our programmes.
- Adapted to new challenges brought by insecurity, high prices, and climate change.

Global programmes



How we used our funds in 2023

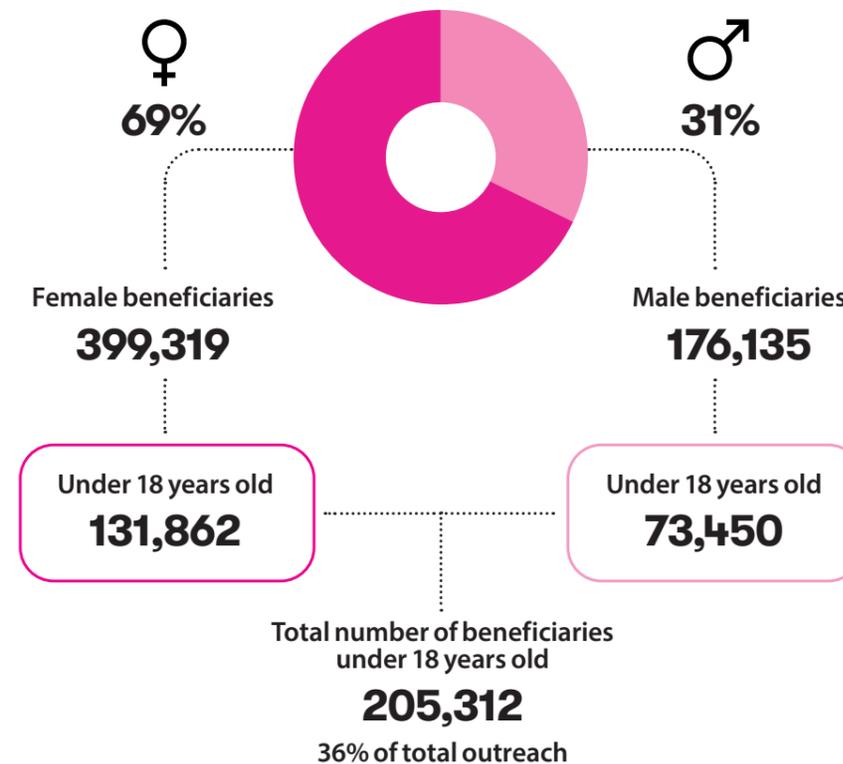
All figures in NOK



Total number of beneficiaries

575,454

People benefited from our work in 2023
We achieved this in collaboration with 51 local partner organisations



Ongoing cases 2023



Fighting corruption – one main goal

Strømme Foundation (SF) recognises corruption as a main cause of poverty and inequality and is committed to prevent and eliminate it. SF and its programmes advocate for zero corruption not only within its own staff and partners, but also empowers target communities to actively oppose corruption in society. SF programmes adhere to strict anti-corruption practices and the organisation has in place effective and responsive whistle-blower routines to act upon events of suspected corruption.

Strømme Foundation uses an online system for receiving and handling whistle-blower cases. The system manages both financial cases and all types of harassment cases. The whistle-blower channel is easily accessible on our web pages and accessible for all our staff and all partner staff.

Strømme Foundation's efforts to combat corruption are targeted at three levels: our staff and systems, local partners, and local communities. Strømme

Foundation (SF) continuously works to strengthen local partner capacities and raise awareness of the importance of having robust internal control systems. This is central to capacity-building efforts where partners are trained on SF financial procedures and other administrative-related issues. Results from East Africa show that all partners had significant improvements in organisational capacity (77%) and financial management and governance (83%) in 2023 compared to the baseline (59% and 57% respectively).

More extensive use of digital tools for programme monitoring and reporting has improved transparency and consequently SF's ability to immediately follow up on challenges or deviations. Anti-corruption is integrated as a topic across SF's global programmes. Programme participants are trained and empowered to prevent, recognise and address corruption in their community, and good governance anti-corruption measures are built into actual activities,



Strømme Foundation has zero tolerance for corruption.

Photo: Per Fronth

Global Strategy

2024-2030

What we want: Vision and Mission

Strømme Foundation’s vision is a world without poverty. Our mission is to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goal 1 – To end poverty in all its forms everywhere, and by 2030, eradicate extreme poverty. Strømme Foundation is fighting poverty. Poverty is a condition

characterised by deprivation of basic human needs, such as income, food and education. We work to ensure that all people, especially those who are most marginalised, excluded or discriminated against, have equal rights to economic resources and get their basic needs met

and can live a dignified life. Promoting social justice and ending poverty requires a just transformation to a sustainable future. We want to contribute to a green economy that is socially inclusive, low-carbon and resource efficient.

How we fight poverty: Thematic focus

1 Education

Promote social change and sustainable development through inclusive quality education and lifelong learning.

Cross Cutting Issues

- Gender Equality
- Climate & Environment
- Inclusion
- Preventing Corruption

2 Income & Job creation

Promote social change and sustainable development through improved livelihoods, income generating activities and green jobs.

How we work: Development approach



Rights-Based Approach

Promote that people’s dignity and rights are respected and realised.



Long-Term Development

Promote societal change and build resilience.



Safeguarding

Ensure that our programmes safeguard people and our planet.



Strategic Partnerships with Civil Society, Businesses and Public Sector

Leverage resources to fight poverty.



Targeting the most vulnerable

Focus on children, youth, women, and persons with disabilities.



Community Based Approach

Ensuring sustainability and local ownership.



Impact-oriented

Change lives and communities.

Who we are:

Strømme Foundation is an engaged and professional Development Organisation

Values-based Knowledge-seeking Impact-oriented Co-creative

Our values:

Human Dignity

Strømme Foundation believes that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Respect

Strømme Foundation strives to approach people with openness and respect, without distinction of any kind.

Justice

Strømme Foundation has a drive to ensure and fulfil human rights for all, especially those who are most marginalised, excluded or discriminated against.

Solidarity

Strømme Foundation believes in the obligation to promote the dignity, rights and development of all people, irrespective of differences and boundaries.

Organisational priorities:

1 Increase our impact through quality programmes

2 Mobilise Increased Resources to Fight Poverty

3 Build One Organisation

2023 Highlights

NEPAL



Fighting child marriage

Samvad Networks play a vital role in addressing child marriage. In Sunil Smiriti Rural Municipality, they organised awareness raising campaigns and advocated for local government intervention. Consequently, the Municipality formed a committee, including the network's chairperson, to combat child marriage. Together, they devised a strategic plan with the ambitious goal of eradicating child marriage by 2025. This plan has received official endorsement and is now being implemented.

NORWAY



First Day of School Celebration

For the third year in a row, the Strømme Foundation organised a large party in mid-August for all first graders in Kristiansand. The town square was filled with happy schoolchildren who participated in various activities and enjoyed music and entertainment from the stage, including performances by Josefine and Oskar, NRK Super, and the Science Centre.

NORWAY



Luncheon for esteemed donors

Loyal, private donors are the cornerstone of SF's fundraising work. To express our gratitude, we extended invitations to donors aged 67 and above for a luncheon filled with insights, motivation, and entertainment. A notable turnout of 200 donors graced the occasion, including our most senior donor, a remarkable 98-year-old woman who has faithfully supported SF for 41 years. Several donors have been committed supporters since SF's inception in 1976.

BANGLADESH



Women's Day

SF Bangladesh marked International Women's Day through rallies, discussions, and cultural programmes. In collaboration with local administrations, the events garnered participation from members of community-based organisations, youths, and residents alike. Centred on women's rights and gender-based violence, the day served as a platform for sharing experiences and knowledge, fostering empowerment among women.

MYANMAR



Empowering Adolescents

The Sagar Wine initiative has empowered previously overlooked adolescents in project communities. Led by community-based organisations, support teams, and animators, Sagar Wine provides adolescents with knowledge of their rights and life skills, enabling them to promote positive behaviours among their families and communities. Adolescents are driving social development actions leading to impacts such as a decrease in early marriage.

MALI



Waste management and job creation

Mali's Green Jobs project tackles plastic waste while simultaneously providing jobs for 30 youths. Through the processing of 130,316 kilograms of plastic, a total of 2,614 school benches have been produced. The project, implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, exemplifies effective environmental action and active youth involvement. Norway's Engineers without Borders has provided technical support.

BURKINA FASO



Graduation Ceremony

The Accelerated Learning Strategy for Skilled Youth is a vocational training programme that promotes entrepreneurship among qualified young people in urban and semi-urban areas. In November, the first cohort's graduation ceremony was held. This was an opportunity to issue each participant with a certificate of completion of training and showcase some of the products produced by the graduates.

NIGER



Improving Household Resilience

In Fantou Zougou, women's savings groups obtained 18 hectares of arable land from the local authorities through advocacy efforts to develop agricultural value chains. With the support of Strømme Foundation, they also secured a site to install a borehole. Their agricultural activities had a far-reaching impact, directly benefiting over 1,500 households and enhancing household resilience.

SOUTH SUDAN



Change in cultural gender practices

In South Sudan's remote Kuron village, the Toposa community's cultural norm barring women from business and community talks with men has been overturned by CMSG's efforts. Now, both genders engage in discussions, save together, and women have assumed leadership roles, marking a historic shift towards gender equality in savings and social discourse.

KENYA



Inauguration of Boys' Dormitory

In 2023, a new 86-bed boys' dormitory was opened at Rekereo Primary School in Masai Mara, thanks to support from Å Energi and Strømme Foundation. This safe lodging is crucial for uninterrupted learning, particularly in areas like Rekero, where wildlife disruptions are common. The event highlighted education as a key pathway out of poverty. Heartfelt gratitude goes to Å Energi for their contribution to this impactful endeavor.

UGANDA



RISING project: New classrooms

RISING Uganda, a project for vulnerable out-of-school children, initiated the construction/refurbishment of 67 classrooms and 53 WASH facilities across nine districts, valued at over 3 billion shillings (about 8,4 MNOK). The First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet K. Museveni, represented by Hon. Margaret Muhanga, marked the occasion by laying a foundation stone at Buteme Light Primary School in Kamuli district.

TANZANIA



Launching of the new Country Office

SF Tanzania was inaugurated in Dar-es-Salam, presided over by the Chairman of the Council and Secretary General Erik Lunde. The event, attended by SF partners, stakeholders, and government representatives, marked the opening of the country office. This move aligns with SF's global decentralization agenda, aiming to improve partner and beneficiary relations and stakeholder engagement and facilitate the expansion of Strømme's work in Tanzania.



Edited in Photoshop

Edited in Photoshop

Our contribution to the SDG-goals



By 2023, Strømme Foundation and partners reached

575,454 beneficiaries



36% of total outreach are participants under 18 years of age.



69% of participants are female.

SF's Outreach 2023

	Total	Male	Female
Under 18	205 312	73 450	131 862
Adults	370 142	102 685	267 457
Total outreach	575 454	176 135	399 319



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

454

early marriages stopped in Asia.

107,350

women and 31,268 adolescent girls take part in household decision-making.

74,004

women leaders in local community mechanisms and processes.



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

128,528

Number of children, adolescents, and adults in 4,847 centres getting a second chance to return to education.

99,740

Number of children in supported primary schools.

52,846

Number of adolescents in 489 Adolescent Empowerment centres.

11,689

Number of education staff trained.

8,563

Number of School Management Committees trained.

8,493

Number of formal and non-formal education institutions provided with learning materials.



Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

45,582

Number of families that form 2,279 self-help groups.

129,115

Number of members in 5,411 savings groups.

14,429

Number of youths in vocational training.

Annual report for 2023 from the Board of Directors

Strømmestiftelsen (SF) is a rights-based development NGO, established in 1976 in Kristiansand by Chaplain Olav Kristian Strømme. SF aligns its efforts to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 1 of eradicating extreme poverty and halving relative poverty by 2030 and works towards a vision of a world free from poverty. Our values are human dignity, justice, and solidarity. Our most important interventions in the fight against poverty are education, job creation and strengthening of civil society.

Strømme Foundation's origins and work are based on Christian values. We understand this as a practical commitment to protect the dignity of every person, show solidarity with the oppressed, marginalized and discriminated, and act against injustice. These are values that inspire people of different social, cultural, and religious backgrounds to work for and support SF's mission. SF fights poverty irrespective of faith and other backgrounds. With a deep conviction of the value of equitable partnership, SF works together with local communities and actors to fight poverty.

Today, SF has grown into a professional organisation that has a framework agreement with NORAD and spends over NOK 200 million annually to help the world's poor. As a rights-based NGO, SF provides the tools and training needed to lift people out of poverty with dignity and respect. SF works in the world's most marginalised communities regardless of ethnic group, religion, nationality, or political affiliation.

SF has its head office in Norway (Kristiansand) and nine country offices in Mali (Bamako), Burkina Faso (Ouagadougou), Niger (Niamey), South Sudan (Juba), Uganda (Kampala), Tanzania (Dar es Salaam), Nepal (Kathmandu), Bangladesh (Dhaka) and Myanmar (Yangon). In addition, we have a field office in Moyo, Northern Uganda. Our programme in Kenya is managed by the Kampala office.

BOARD ACTIVITIES 2023

The Board of Directors has held four ordinary meetings in 2023. The board has dealt with a total of 46 cases.

In 2023, the Board of Directors consisted of the following members:

Arvid Grundekjøn (Chairperson of the Board), Kristin Tofte Andresen (Deputy Chairperson of the Board), Vidar Haukeland, Adelheid Firing Hvambal, Knut Arild Hareide, Carol Azungi Dralega and Ole Morten Stavland (staff representative).

2023 Board Deputies:

Arild Hestås, Arnhild Leer-Helgesen and Tørres Gilje (deputy staff representative).

Board Insurance:

Insurance has been registered for the board members and the

Secretary General to protect them from possible personal liability for the organisation. The insurance applies worldwide, except in the United States and Canada.

Board election:

The Board of Directors is comprised of 7 members in total, and 3 deputy members.

The Board shall be elected as follows:

- The Council shall elect 6 members and 2 deputy members, of whom at least one member shall be elected from one of the countries in which SF operates.

- 1 member and 1 deputy member shall be elected from among SF staff.

The Council elects the Chairperson of the Board from among the appointed Board members. Board member elections shall be organised by an election committee.

PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

2023 was the last year of implementation under the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. During the five-year period, SF's intervention countries have faced numerous crises and challenges. While the economic impact of COVID-19 still resonates, SF's target communities have also felt the impact of global events such as the war in Ukraine, a cost-of-living crisis and extreme weather events. In West Africa, the political instability continued in 2023 with a coup in Niger. All SF's intervention countries in the region are now ruled by military regimes and the security situation is putting pressure on already strained public services. In East Africa, climate change is increasingly affecting crops and harvests, resulting in growing food insecurity. With families struggling to put food on the table, children are at risk of dropping out of school. In Asia, the conflict between the military regime and the opposition continued in Myanmar in 2023, while Bangladesh and Nepal experienced relative stability.

Our target groups are primarily women, children and young people, and people who live in poverty and who do not have their rights met. Based on our values, our goal is to ensure that "no one is left behind", as advocated by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. SF, therefore, strives to reach persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and other marginalised groups through our programmes.

Despite challenging circumstances, SF programmes performed well, and most five-year targets were met. Most encouragingly, 14,014 families crossed the poverty line, 85% of children are learning and performing well in school, and 75% of youths found paid employment or are self-employed after completing vocational training.

A key reason for the strong results is SF's development appro-

ach where all programmes are implemented by local partners with a strong contextual knowledge and close relationships with local communities.

To prepare for exit, emphasis was placed on ensuring the sustainability and capacity of the 791 community structures established since 2019 to facilitate community handover of programme activities by the end of 2023. Strong community structures are essential to SF's efforts to build a strong civil society, and in Nepal, many of the community-based organisations received financial support from local government which helped facilitate the construction of community centres, rehabilitation of irrigation channels, planting of tree saplings and distribution of agricultural seeds.

Ensuring access to inclusive quality education is important to provide a pathway out of poverty for children from marginalised communities. In West Africa, SF's Speed School programme provides out-of-school children with a second chance. Despite the challenging security context, 10,500 children (47% girls) enrolled in 390 Speed School centres in 2023. Since 2019, 96,908 children completed the programme and an impressive 96% transferred to host primary schools upon completion.

Rural women are disproportionately affected by poverty, and strengthening women's economic empowerment is a key focus for SF's efforts to improve livelihoods for the rural poor. By 2023, 114,801 women were members of 5,411 Community-Managed Savings Groups. In West Africa, women saved on average NOK 490. Access to capital helped increase women's economic activities and 76% started or expanded an income generating activity in 2023.

FINANCIAL FIGURES

	MNOK		
Public sector Norway	127,4	130,9	-3,4
Public grants from abroad	20,6	18,5	2,1
Grants from other organisations	25,2	8,9	16,4
Private donors	57,1	49,0	8,1
Corporate sector	27,1	21,9	5,2
Other	15,4	0,4	15,0
Total Revenue	272,8	229,5	43,3
Cost for purpose activities	-232,8	-221,6	11,2

Grants from Other Organisations:

There was a significant increase in grants from other organisations, attributed to extended activities in projects like the Operation Days Work project and Educate a Child (RISING) project in Uganda and Strømme Micro Finance support to programmes in Sri Lanka.

Private Donors:

Revenue from private donors increased notably, driven by

fixed-term donations and legacy contributions.

Other Revenue:

There was a significant increase driven by increase in financial income.

Cost for Purpose Activities

Costs for purpose activities increased by 11.2 MNOK compared to 2022, reflecting activity and expenses in the organisation's core activities.

Annual Result:

The annual result improved significantly by 32.6 MNOK. This improvement can be attributed to increased revenue from various sources, including financial income, outweighing the increase in expenses.

Consolidated accounts

The consolidated accounts for SF and our microfinance group ended with a positive result of MNOK 1.1, compared to a loss of MNOK 23.7 in 2022.

The total equity increased from MNOK 217.2 in 2022 to MNOK 220.8 in 2023. The cash flow from the operational activities is satisfactory; total liquid assets at the end of the financial year were MNOK 176.3 compared to MNOK 166.2 MNOK in 2022.

The balance of liquid assets excludes Strømme Micro Finance AS (SMF AS) which has been consolidated according to the equity method. Liquid assets in the SMF group are MNOK 54.9, compared to MNOK 67.4 in 2022.

Key figures for Strømme Foundation's percentage share of total costs for 2023 are as follows:

Administration	3,3%	3,4%
Fundraising	8,6%	9,0%
Purpose	88,1%	87,6%

In addition, the Norwegian Control Committee for Fundraising has introduced a measure for the share of the private funds income that are utilised for the organisation's purpose, and this amounts to 75.5 % (70.6 % in 2022).

WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND EMPLOYEES

2023 was a year characterized by a lot of work and processes for all employees. This mainly related to the new Strategic Plan, re-structuring of the organisation and the Norad application. The involvement has been wide, and the feedback is that the employees feel they have been included in the processes towards establishing our future priorities and structure.

To ensure the co-determination of employees in all change processes we have established employee representatives in all countries. This group has collaborated closely with the Leadership and Secretary General to safeguard the interest of all employees.

To reduce the insecurity around the future structure, there have been several global information meetings during the year,

and continuously information sharing in our global Teams chat. We also established a channel for FAQ's that was used by staff.

Capacity building:

The interest for individual development/capacity building has grown, and the competence committee approved 15 of 17 applications in 2023 two for relevant Master studies. We also arranged a digital training over 4 months for gaining a professional certification within Project Management. 20 employees fulfilled this training, and we see this will be very useful in the new set-up where we will be working more team-based with small and large projects.

Working environment:

Due to all the processes in 2023, we did not conduct a working environment survey for 2023. This will be done in 2024. Still, we have been working with our goals set in "Likestilt arbeidsliv" (Equality in the workplace) and "Miljøfyrtårn" (Internal and external environment) certificates with actions to measure and achieve a good working environment. We have also in 2023 run a tender to find a new healthcare service (Bedriftshelsetjeneste) that can help us strengthen the work with our working environment and surveys related to psychosocial challenges.

Gender equality, inclusion, and diversity:

In our Global HR Guidelines, we have included a section that deals with how our organisation shall encourage and tailor our workplace so people with disabilities can be included in a good way as our staff. We are also repeating our values in our policies, HR processes and procedures to uphold the focus on these and implement them in our culture and in the way we work.

Like other workplaces, SF is required by law to outline how gender equality, inclusion and diversity are addressed. Considering the reporting duty for employers on gender equality (ARP), the report can be found on SF's website.

By the end of 2023, there were four men and three women on the Board. Among the employees in Kristiansand, there were 21 women and 14 men (compared to 18 and 17 in 2022).

Other information:

The number of full-time equivalent persons in Norway including the microfinance group went up from 31.5 in 2022 to 32.5 in 2023. Abroad, there were 33 women and 81 men (compared to 37 and 74 in 2022). Overall, there were 54 women and 95 men (compared to 55 and 91 in 2022) employed in the organisation. The leadership team, which includes department directors in Kristiansand and regional directors, consisted of four men and five women by the end of 2023. SF strives for gender equality at all levels and is conscious of this during recruitment of new staff.

In 2023, the Kristiansand office had a total absence rate due to sickness of 5.2 % (5.63 % in 2022).

The Kristiansand office has an agreement for occupational health services with Falck BHT. (This has now been replaced by Medco din HMS)

There were no serious work accidents at the Kristiansand office that have resulted in material destruction or personal injury during the year.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Board continuously monitors SF's risks through quarterly reports. In 2023, the focus has been on monitoring the combined consequences of the pandemic and Russia's war on Ukraine, which have resulted in higher inflation rates, civil unrest, and brought more uncertainty into our countries of operation. SF has established strong systems and controls to mitigate fraud and corruption and has maintained a good dialogue with donors upon suspicion of corruption. The digitalisation of reporting through new tools has facilitated the overview and management of the programme portfolio.

The security situation has remained challenging in Myanmar, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and South Sudan in 2023. South-Sudan is still the most dangerous country in the world for development aid workers, with the number of fatalities higher than for war affected countries like Syria and Afghanistan. Crime, murder, conflict between different groups of the population, and traffic accidents are some of the reasons that make South Sudan a dangerous country to work in. Political instability and insecurity also characterise the Sahel region. Niger suffered a military coup in 2023, and the UN-led Minusma peace-keeping force and the Norwegian embassy to Bamako withdraw from Mali by the end of 2023.

SF has implemented mitigation measures to improve the security situation for our employees and in our programmes. These measures include better planning of travels and sharing of vital information with other NGOs. The Regional Office in West Africa has a good overview of the security situation in all three countries and has comprehensive security plans in place.

Ten staff members from SF Krs have attended a three-day-long HEAT course in 2023.

Most of SF's costs are incurred in currencies linked to the US dollar or the Euro, while the largest share of the revenue is in Norwegian kroner. Therefore, exchange rates play a significant role in what SF can deliver to its implementing partners in the South. However, the terms of SF's contract agreements with its partners stipulate that the obligations are limited to the budget adopted in Norwegian kroner. SF is entering into forward exchange contracts to secure parts of the exchange rate between the Norwegian kroner and the US dollar or Euro.

SF has no external loans, so there are no serious consequences for the organisation if interest rates increase significantly.

Microfinance activities are undergoing liquidation but are still exposed to both financial and societal risks. Based on follow-up systems in the company's portfolio, the board believes that the risk has been reduced to an acceptable and controllable level.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

Strømme Foundation's vision is a world without poverty. Our mission is to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goal 1 – To end poverty in all its forms everywhere, and by 2030, eradicate extreme poverty. SF continues its efforts to strengthen marginalised communities so that they can escape poverty.

The global landscape has been profoundly shaped by the aftermath of the pandemic, conflicts like the war in Ukraine, exacerbated by international crises such as inflation spikes and the looming climate emergency. These challenges are particularly hitting hard the countries where SF operates. Compounding

these issues, some nations, like Norway, have redirected aid funds from poverty alleviation to address the crisis in Ukraine and aid Ukrainian refugees, making it tougher to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In SF's operational areas, political instability and worsening security are the norm, with non-state actors facing growing constraints on their work in certain regions. Against this backdrop, 2023 saw SF embarking on a journey to formulate a new strategic plan, a process necessitated by the evolving global landscape. Our aim is to champion social justice and eradicate poverty through a transition to a sustainable future. We envision contributing to a socially inclusive, low-carbon, and resource-efficient green economy.

SF remains committed to combating poverty through education and job creation, prioritising support for the most marginalised communities through decentralised operations and local partnerships. Recognising the blurred lines between humanitarian aid and long-term development efforts, SF is poised to navigate this dynamic space effectively.

Furthermore, 2023 was characterised by the planning of the transition to a new organisational model, with a decentralised headquarters and strengthened country offices. Looking ahead, SF intends to bolster strategic alliances, particularly

with emerging private sector entities, both domestically and internationally. The imperative for more green jobs to tackle extreme poverty and mitigate climate change drives SF's commitment to prioritise green job creation in its future endeavours.

The Board of Directors believes that SF has activities and international programmes that are suitable for further operations. The Board believes that SF is in a good position to respond to changes in global and national contexts, and to changes in the institutional and private donor market.

ALLOCATION OF THE YEAR'S RESULT

From SF's net surplus of MNOK 11.9, MNOK 4.8 has been allocated to purpose capital for programme activities and MNOK 7.1 to other purpose capital. Further, MNOK 8.0 has been transferred from purpose capital for microfinance to other purpose capital.

In addition to SF's result, the SMF AS group had a consolidated deficit of MNOK 10.5, which is reducing the purpose capital for microfinance, and our share in other companies reduced the purpose capital for programme activities by MNOK 0.2.

Kristiansand 13. June 2024



Arvid Grundekjøn
Arvid Grundekjøn
Chairperson



Kristin Tofte Andresen
Kristin Tofte Andresen
Board Member



Adelheid Firing Hvambdal
Adelheid Firing Hvambdal
Board Member



Vidar Haukeland
Vidar Haukeland
Board Member



Arild Hestås
Arild Hestås
Board Member



Celeste de la Huerta
Celeste de la Huerta
Board Member



Erik Lunde
Erik Lunde
Secretary General

Strømme Foundation Activity Account

FIGURES IN NOK

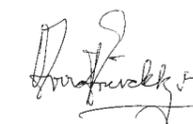
Funds acquired		
Public sector grants - Norway	127,446,034	130,878,729
Public sector grants - Foreign	20,564,324	18,480,898
Grants from other organisations	25,242,870	8,860,521
Private donations	57,057,860	48,993,133
Corporate sector	27,138,110	21,900,334
Financial income	15,185,572	-139,544
Other income	189,941	536,725
Total funds acquired	253,864,611	251,720,084
Funds spent		
Cost of fund acquisition		
Fundraising cost	-20,740,845	-20,816,962
Other acquisition cost	-1,898,512	-1,887,569
Total cost of fund acquisition	-22,639,357	-22,704,531
Purpose cost		
Support to development partners/projects	-164,918,871	-159,145,262
Programme follow-up at regional offices	-43,729,026	-39,616,193
Programme follow-up from Kristiansand	-14,807,673	-13,080,368
Information activities in Norway	-9,310,271	-9,727,813
Total purpose cost	-232,765,840	-221,569,636
Administration cost	-8,801,950	-8,649,854
Total funds spent	-241,567,790	-230,219,490
Net change in funds	11,296,821	21,500,594
VAT compensation	3,264,099	2,735,354
Total net change	14,560,920	24,235,948
Additions/reductions in purpose capital		
Change in purpose capital for programme activities	4,835,646	33,151,904
Change in purpose capital for microfinance	-8,000,000	-61,552,665
Transferred to / (from) other purpose capital	15,046,017	7,722,889
Total additions/reductions	11,881,663	-20,677,872

Strømme Foundation Balance Sheet as of 31.12

Long-term assets		
Fixed assets		
Property	291,394	333,024
Office furniture and equipment	236,544	256,875
Total fixed assets	527,938	589,899
Financial assets		
Investments in subsidiaries	37,329,847	37,329,847
Investments in other companies	200,000	200,000
Loan to subsidiaries	-	8,000,000
Overfinanced pension schemes	2,462,671	2,602,556
Total financial assets	39,992,518	48,132,403
Total long-term assets	40,520,456	538,032,302
Inventory		
Inventory	30,277	54,284
Receivables		
Trade Debtors	1,685,631	1,735,526
Inter-company receivables	252,957	240,059
Other short-term receivables	24,144,598	10,564,537
Total receivables	26,083,186	12,540,122
Investments in current financial assets	98,080,999	83,532,696
Bank and cash	78,245,928	82,711,935
Total current assets	172,400,112	169,819,423
Total assets	212,920,568	217,851,725
Liabilities		
Long-term debt		
Staff gratuities in regional offices	4,157,921	7,671,739
Legacy obligations	150,000	150,000
Total long-term debt	4,307,921	7,821,739
Short-term debt		
Creditors	4,443,009	2,491,940
Public duties and taxes	2,439,874	2,701,392
Owed to employees	2,545,631	2,213,625
Inter-company debt	236,016	-
Deferred project income	29,998,957	24,622,544
Other account payable	693,666	1,295,994
Total current liability	40,357,154	33,325,494
Total liabilities	44,665,075	41,147,233
Total equity	168,255,493	176,704,492

Purpose capital (PC)		
Founding capital	3,326,092	3,326,092
Acquired purpose capital		
Purpose capital for programme activities	41,552,038	36,716,393
Purpose capital for microfinance	37,329,847	45,329,847
Other purpose capital	116,087,793	101,041,776
Total acquired purpose capital	194,969,678	183,088,015
Total purpose capital	198,291,770	186,414,107
Liability		
Long-term debt		
Staff gratuities in regional offices	4,157,921	7,671,739
Legacy obligations	150,000	150,000
Total long-term debt	4,307,921	7,821,739
Short-term debt		
Creditors	4,443,009	2,491,940
Public duties and taxes	2,439,874	2,701,392
Owed to employees	2,545,631	2,213,625
Inter-company debt	236,016	-
Deferred project income	29,998,957	24,622,544
Other account payable	693,666	1,295,994
Total current liability	40,357,154	33,325,494
Total liability	44,665,075	41,147,233

Kristiansand 13. June 2024

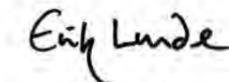

Arvid Grundekjøn
Chairperson of the Board

Kristin Tofte Andresen
Board Member

Adelheid Firing Hvambal
Board Member

Vidar Haukeland
Board Member

Arild Hestås
Board Member

Celeste de la Huerta
Board Member

Erik Lunde
Secretary General

Strømme Foundation Board of Directors and Advisory Board Members

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS; 31. DECEMBER 2023

Arvid Grundekjøn, Chairperson
 Kristin Tofte Andresen, Deputy Chairperson
 Dralega Caroline Azungi, Member
 Vidar Haukeland, Member
 Ole Morten Stavland, Member
 Adelheid Firing Hvambdal, Member
 Knut Arild Hareide, Member

SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Arild Hestås, Substitute
 Arnhild Leer-Helgesen, Substitute
 Tørres Gilje, Substitute

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS; 31. DECEMBER 2023

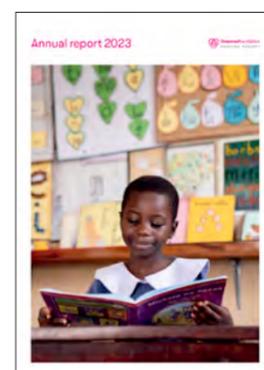
Stein Hannevik (chairperson)
 Steffen Syvertsen
 Live Fanavoll (Re:act Leader)
 Andreas Kolaas
 Line Alice Ytrehus
 Aud Sunde Smemo
 Anne Helen Høyland Mork
 Lars Erik Lyngdal
 Dag Tynes
 Vidar L. Haanes
 Arne Bang
 Synnøve Bjørke
 Jostein Sæth
 Jørgen Reme
 Vigdis Anita Gåskjenn
 Per Kristian Lunden
 Solveig Omland

ELECTION COMMITTEE; 1 JANUARY 2023

Stein Hannevik
 Svein Haanes
 Ingunn Folkestad Breistein

Pricewaterhouse Coopers conducted the external financial audit for 2023.

For the Auditors' report and the complete Strømme Foundation financial statements, including cash flow, accounting principles and notes, see: <https://strommefoundation.org/en/about-us/publications>



Cover image: A primary school girl from Tanzania sits attentively reading a book. Local partner organisation: OCODE.

Photo: Strømme Foundation | Øystein Melhus Venås



Strømme Foundation is a member of the Norwegian Control Committee for Fundraising (Innsamlingskontrollen) and is certified by Eco Lighthouse (Miljøfyrtårn).

Strømme Foundation is also a signatory to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief.

The Annual Report has been confirmed for screen reader accessibility by Joseph Walugembe, Disability Inclusion Specialist.

Editor: Kirsten Falch
 Graphic design: Innoventi
 Printed by Aksell
 Photo: Strømme Foundation ©



From struggle to success: Umari's journey to becoming a Model Village

TEXT AND PHOTO: STRØMME FOUNDATION NEPAL

In 2019, when SF started working in Umari village in the Kapilvastu region of Nepal, the village faced severe socio-economic challenges. Child marriage was practiced, alcohol and drug abuse widespread, gender-based violence common and many families faced economic hardship. After five years of implementation of the SEEDS programme focused on establishing sustainable community structures, providing access to quality

education, empowering adolescents, and improving livelihoods, the socio-economic situation in the village has dramatically changed. The village is now known for eradicating child marriage, preventing school dropout, eliminating violence, and promoting a "one family, one business" approach.

"Parents are now reluctant to marry off their daughters without their consent. Recently, six marriage proposals were rejected by parents due to the age of their daughters." - Sagar Tharu, chairperson of the SAMVAD graduate network.

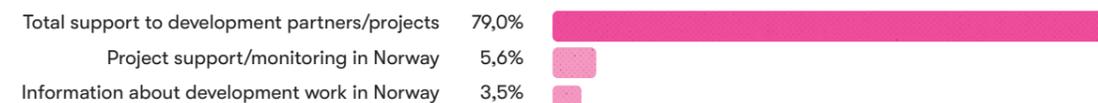
Awareness-raising and social campaigns have had a transformative effect on the village. Child marriage is no longer practiced, and each family in the village is now committed to their children's well-being and aspirations for their future. All 134 families have declared their homes violence-free, reflecting a profound positive shift in the community's social fabric. The economic transformation is also evident. 90% of families are now engaged in income-generating activities. The transition from wage labour to self-employment has increased by 40% and improved incomes. In 2023, Umari was declared the first Model Village in Shivaraj municipality.

The facts behind the figures

How we used the money in 2023



Distribution of the purpose cost in 2023



Our intervention countries



Strømmestiftelsen
Tangen 8, N-4608 Kristiansand, Norway
Tel.: (+47) 38 12 75 00
post@strommestiftelsen.no
Org.no 952 002 139
strommestiftelsen.no