





Dear Helpers,  
dear Members,  
dear otherwise interesterd readers and  
everyone else holding this piece of paper in their hands,

With this document you are receiving the first issue of our association newsletter. Hurray! Newly founded only last spring our association is now already close to celebrating its first anniversary. So there's a lot we want to share with you: The beginnings when we first put into words our common goals, structured the association accordingly and put it well on its path in the right direction. Our first success stories in the buddy-program and of course this year's Alley-Christmas, which we were able to celebra-

te despite the pandemic and which was once again an unforgettable experience that brought joy and a cheerful end of the year to all people present.

On the following pages we will recount our first steps as an association, share some anecdotes, present you with the most important numbers and of course thank you for the success of this first year. By the financial and moral support you gave, you were an essential part of it.

## 1. The foundation and development of the association since March 2020

At springtime of last year, in the midst of a mystical silence caused by the often mentioned virus, the newly formed board met for the first time to found the association.

A few months have passed since then and still, the virus is working its mischief. We weren't lazy either and have been extremely hard-working in these last months. We were able to structure the association in a useful manner and have gained more supporters and helping hands in various fields of our association: Altogether around 60 helpers became part of the activities of our association and never grew tired of assisting those in difficult life situations. The Christmas-present initiative was very popular and 36 helpers supported the campaign - some willing helpers even had to be put off until next year, due to the current restrictions.

In the newly founded buddy-program we were able to mark our first successes as well. You will find out more about it in the anecdotes in chapter two. In this place we'd like to mention that new helpers were found for this specific program as well. Ten more people have been accompanying others who are seeking help in a one-to-one setting over a longer period of time, supporting them on their way through personal issues throughout the whole year. Another ten people have supported the buddy-program as members of the helper-pool and thus contributed in several short-term assignments.

We also have good news from our financial section. We were able to stay within our - frankly quite modestly calculated - budget for 2020. Around Christmas time we even made a small surplus. This money was later invested in a Covid-19 safety concept, which was needed to carry out the Alley-Christmas in an organized way. The effort we put into it was paid off and the Alley-Christmas was once more a great success for everyone involved. At this point we'd like to once more say "Thank you" to our thirteen

members who made this possible through their membership fee, as well as to every institution and private donor who made the work presented in this newsletter possible through their financial support. We hope to be able to count on you this unfolding year as well!

## 2. Stories from the buddy-program

Despite only having been brought to life recently, the buddy-program has already written unforgettable stories and enriched the lives of many people. In a few cases it even initiated a turning point. We don't want you to miss out on a few anecdotes, so here they are:

### The work of the buddy-program

- enabled an eastern european family to reunite in Switzerland, find a suitable space to live and integrate their children in our school system. Five people who are profiting from the buddy-program themselves helped the family move into their flat. Furthermore, one of the children was able to join a local soccer club despite the tight budget thanks to the buddy-program.
- helped a family father find a suitable job.
- demonstrated itself through small gestures like helping to paint walls ...
- ... visiting a jazz concert with an african refugee ...
- ...or collecting furniture, in which the pool of helpers was a reliable network.
- made it possible for an ethiopian refugee to find a temporary job.
- also consisted of german lessons, administrative support in processing bills or of help with school-work and studying, which resulted in great pre-grades for the LAP (the final exam of an apprenticeship).
- spontaneously led to spending christmas or sledding days in the mountains together
- erlaubte es einem Paar, in der Schweiz zu made it possible for a couple to get married

- in Switzerland, after the hardship request had been granted.
  - enabled a person to get a job in a small business by means of a hardship request.
  - even led to a court decision in favor of a refugee, by providing them with professional and emotional support.
  - made it possible for a sex worker to get out of prostitution after many years. The woman found work in a different sector, received German lessons and a temporary place to stay.
  - and much more ...
- winter clothes, soup, tea and 200 presents. The amazement when we showed up in spite of the circumstances was huge and the people appreciated it even more, that they could celebrate Christmas together with others. Also in this year and especially in these times, our initiative was able to convey recognition, appreciation and a sense of belonging. At this point we want to thank everyone who has helped make the success of this initiative possible.

### **3. A look back at our Christmas-present initiative 2020**

Back in August 2020 the preparations for the Christmas-present began. For the first time, the campaign was organized under the official umbrella of the association Njira. Planning the initiative became extremely difficult due to the frequently changing rules concerning the Covid-19 pandemic and so the team was challenged in its creativity and flexibility. Concepts and assignments had to be adapted or even fully renewed constantly.

During the first week collecting the presents, we received only around 40 presents. A heavy insecurity spread in our team. Would the pandemic also reduce the people's motivation for charity? ... All the greater was our amazement when, on the last day of collecting presents, we counted 1400 presents in total! A Group of 15 people then set out in teams of two to distribute the presents to more than 18 institutions. The recipients were people working in the sex industry, people struggling with addiction, people with a refugee background and many more.

In order to plan and celebrate the Alley-Christmas, a suitable safety concept was created. Soup was cooked, clothes were sorted, some presents had to be rewrapped and the shopping carts were decorated. At 5 pm. we set out to the Alley-Christmas, fully packed with















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