

## Annual Report 2021

The Covid 19 pandemic does not just go away. It continues to change our daily lives, even if we can slowly hope for an improvement. It has also shown us how quickly prosperity and security can falter. The people of Zimbabwe are experiencing this in the same way - and yet in a very different way:

Zimbabwe had four lockdowns in 2021 with schools and businesses closed. In addition to the problems due to the pandemic, the economic situation overall is very poor. Especially in winter (our summer), the disease was rampant. In autumn, schools reopened with postponed exam times. Food is scarce as droughts are increasing. Last year's rainfall was not enough and access to water is still precarious in the dry areas affecting so many people. In the cities, there are power cuts almost every day. Domestic violence has increased under lockdowns and access to health care has become difficult. At least the political situation has been calm even though there is very little progress. People are positive despite everything and do not give up hope that the situation will slowly, slowly improve.

### Sethule Orphans' Trust

Sethule Orphans' Trust was and is a ray of hope for many rural families. The annual report of our director, Thabbeth Cotton, gives a glimpse of what the Trust was able to achieve: 150 families received a total of 450 food parcels, Sethule led a campaign against child abuse, introduced child protection measures in many places and financed the education of 51 schoolgirls and schoolboys. 298 birth certificates were obtained and over 1000 families learned about the importance of this document. At the new Sethule Skills Centre, young people who have grown up in the simplest of conditions in the countryside learned how to cope with modern day life in a college or city. The new Sethule headquarters in a suburb of Bulawayo finally gives the staff enough space for office work and meetings and gives Sethule a "face".

### Events and information

Our general meeting on 3 May was held virtually. In June, we offered an exciting Zoom meeting for all donors. The media team of Sethule Orphans' Trust made a touching video for both events. It was particularly impressive for me that team members from Zimbabwe were able to attend the meeting and give information about their work thanks to modern technology. We will do this again.

Director Thabbeth Cotton travelled back to Zimbabwe in the summer after a longer break due to Corona. We sent her report to all interested parties in the September newsletter. On 14 November, we held a benefit event in Gümmligen entitled "In Search of Happiness - Animal Tales from Africa" with around 40 participants, which was covered in the local media. The Christmas letter to our donors was again a success, raising 13,330 Swiss francs.

### Digital

Two students from the Bern University of the Arts designed a new logo and website for us based on the new image of Sethule Orphans' Trust. [www.sethule.ch](http://www.sethule.ch) provides information about Swiss Friends of Sethule and about the work in Zimbabwe. [www.sethuletrust.org](http://www.sethuletrust.org) is the website of the Sethule Orphans' Trust in Zimbabwe. We are legally different organisations with different tasks, but of course work together and the websites are linked. In December, we also launched our Instagram account "Swiss Friends of Sethule". The last innovation in the digital area concerns Twint: our association is registered there, donations via Twint are now possible on our website and in all new newsletters.

There is another independent organization in the UK which is raising funds to support Sethule as well.

### Finances

In 2021, we received 70,225 Swiss francs from private individuals and 72,127 Swiss francs from six foundations and four churches. A significant portion of this was given to fund the Sethule Skills Centre project. I thank everyone very, very much for this wonderful and generous support! Thanks to the closure of the previous Swiss account of Sethule Orphans' Trust at the end of 2020, we were able to transfer a total of 209,806 Swiss francs to Zimbabwe via Western Union. 56,287 Swiss francs were used to finance the construction of the new headquarters, 153,519 Swiss francs went to the various activities of Sethule Orphans' Trust, in particular the birth certificate project, the school programme, food distribution and the new Sethule Skills Centre. The processes of these transfers are well regulated and controlled.

Our assets at the end of the year amounted to 105,552 Swiss francs, the greater part of which is reserved for specific projects. The costs for administration, fundraising and the new website of our association amounted to 2.9 percent of the expenses, taking into account the donations in kind even only 1 % percent. I would like to thank all those who contributed to this great result with donations in kind.

### Committee

Our Board met twice by Zoom and in November finally once again "in real life" at the American School in Leysin. For the first time, we were able to have a direct exchange with the three new board members, which was great. All board members work on a voluntary basis. I thank them very much for the creative ideas, the good discussions, the concrete help and the many hours spent. I would especially like to thank Christopher Blake, our finances are in good hands with him.



Anne-Marie Saxer-Steinlin, President



Scholarship students

**Committee** (as of end 2021)

Madeleine Bichsel, 3113 Rubigen  
 Esther Blake, 1854 Leysin  
 Christopher Blake, 1854 Leysin  
 Michael Cotton, 1854 Leysin  
 Alex Flynn-Padick, 1854 Leysin  
 Anne-Marie Saxer-Steinlin, 3073 Gümligen  
 Manuela Schläfli, 3006 Bern  
 Lis Seeley, 1814 La Tour de Peilz  
 Carol Seymour, 1854 Leysin  
 LeighAnn Shafiq, 1854 Leysin  
 Melanie Whitlow, 1072 Forel

Treasurer, address list

President  
 Website, Instagram  
 Secretary, Fundraising

**Director of Sethule Orphans' Trust**

Thabbeth Cotton, 1854 Leysin

**Auditor**

Bernhard Kobel, 3065 Bolligen



**Websites**

[www.sethule.ch](http://www.sethule.ch) (Schweizer Freunde von Sethule Orphans' Trust)  
[www.sethuletrust.org](http://www.sethuletrust.org) (Sethule Orphans' Trust)

**Bank account information**

CH19 8080 8006 4294 9373 3  
 Banque Raiffeisen, 1860 Aigle, Payable to: Swiss Friends of Sethule Orphans' Trust,  
 Weiherstr. 10, 3073 Gümligen