



EVA

**AHLSTRÖM**

SÄÄTIÖ STIFTELSE FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



## Letter from the Chair

### 2022 WAS A YEAR OF GREAT CHANGE

It has been one year since Russia started its war of aggression against Ukraine. The war overshadowed the entire year of 2022, bringing with it uncertainties in the global economy, an energy crisis and, for Finland, an application to join NATO. The confrontation has led to a division in the world between liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes. For Europe, it is essential for this to lead to the development of strong solidarity rather than division. Solidarity and cooperation are needed to tackle the challenges we face together.

2022 also brought changes to the composition of the Eva Ahlström Foundation Board. Maria Ahlström-Bondestam stepped down as Chair after 12 years of great success and strong leadership. On behalf of the entire Board, I would like to thank Maria for the incredible work she has done and wish her well in her future positions. As Chair, I will do my utmost to continue to support the ambitious and innovative work of the Eva Ahlström Foundation.

The United Nations calls on governments and the private and third sectors to work together to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

More is needed, now even more than before, from individual governments, companies and organisations to help support positive developments. The Eva Ahlström Foundation's goal has always been to create lasting solutions in society, especially for vulnerable children and young people, by means of innovative collaboration. In 2023, the Foundation is working on two major projects, Ahlström Collective Impact and the BLASH collaboration with HelsinkiMissio. Initiated by the Eva Ahlström Foundation in 2020, Ahlström Collective Impact (ACI) is a collaborative platform for private and public sector companies, foundations, shareholders and employees in the Ahlström network. The aim is to work with UNICEF to help solve some of the challenges facing the world. The Foundation continues to work with HelsinkiMissio and three other families by supporting the School to Belong project, aiming to improve inclusion among young people in Finland and reduce loneliness and its side effects.

In addition to these two major projects, the Foundation continues to seek new ways to effect change and enhance partnerships with the aim of further strengthening its ability to influence the position of the

most vulnerable, and also the most important individuals in the society of the future, i.e. children and young people.



Anna Tornivuori  
Chair, Eva Ahlströms stiftelse

# Annual Report 2022

Eva Ahlström Foundation (business ID 2361056-5)

## ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The idea for the Foundation emerged in August 2008 from several women in the Ahlström family. In May 2010, the Finnish Patent and Registration Office gave the 25 founders permission to register a foundation with the purpose of supporting organisations, societies or individuals in Finland and abroad with a good and documented reputation for working globally and locally to support women, children, and other people in a vulnerable situation due to poverty, oppression, war, political instability, natural disasters or other difficult circumstances. The Foundation aims to achieve its purpose through long-term work, and one of the Foundation's goals is to work with selected partners and beneficiaries in the long term, not just through one-off donations. The Foundation was registered in the Finnish Register of Foundations on 27 October 2010. The Foundation's website is at [www.evaahlstromstiftelse.fi](http://www.evaahlstromstiftelse.fi).

**Membership:** The Foundation is a member of the Association of Finnish Foundations.

**Board and auditors:** The Board was composed of the following persons during the first half of the year: Maria Ahlström-Bondestam (Chair), Johanna Ahlström, Malin Ahlström, Joanna Danielsson, Edvin Franck, Laura Meyer, Helena Nahj, Anna Tornivuori. The term of office of the Chair, Maria Ahlström-Bondestam, and Board members Joanna Danielsson and Edvin Franck, ended in May, and the following new Board members were elected in June: Camilla Ahlström, Leia Ahlström, Pauline Borg and Katariina Saikku (observer). Anna Tornivuori took over as Chair and Laura Ahlström was appointed Vice-Chair.

**Auditor:** Kim Järvi, KPMG, alternate KPMG Oy Ab.

## Board meetings in 2022

Ordinary meetings

9 February, 10 March, 5 April, financial statements meeting on 5 April, 9 May, 1 September, 13 October and 15 December

## BOARD OF THE EVA AHLSTRÖM FOUNDATION



## Significant events in 2022

**2022 brought many changes for the Foundation. The Foundation's long-term work is guided by the Board's established strategic guidelines for a strategy period of three years at a time, and the strategic guidelines were updated in 2022 under the new Chair. The Foundation was also pleased to welcome new Board members and, for the first time, an observer.**

The Board of the Foundation reviewed the strategic guidelines and identified three focus areas for the strategy period 2022-2025: Inclusive Collaboration, Engagement within the family and the Ahlström network and Innovative Solutions for a better future.

The core activities are in the first focus area, Inclusive Collaboration. The main goal is to focus the Foundation's strategic investments (donations) on a small number of selected partners and deepen engagement with them to achieve the maximum effect. A clear focus on children and young people in Finland and worldwide forms the basis for selecting projects and partners.

The second focus area stems from the original idea of the foundation, to create a forum for engaging family members. The Foundation, in partnership with its strategic partners, will continue to organise events that offers the family the opportunity to learn about the issues the Foundation is working on. Another major initiative is the annual Eva weekend, which, after a break during the Covid-19 pandemic, will be held again from 2023.

In the third focus area, the Foundation will continue to learn about the field of philanthropy to continue to find new and innovative approaches to its work.

Despite the above adjustments to the strategic guidelines, the overall objective remains the same: a better world for future generations. The Foundation's Board is proud to represent and realise the Ahlström family's long-term vision.

## Finances of the foundation

### Statement of financial relationships with the Foundation's related parties

None of the Foundation's related parties has a relationship with the Foundation pursuant to Chapter 5, Section 2, of the Foundations Act or enjoys any form of partial or fully gratuitous advantages.

Statement of fee for the Board

The Board has not received any form of fee.

### Ordinary operations

The Foundation's ordinary operations are conducted by a Board working on a pro bono basis and an administrative manager employed part-time. The Foundation's administrative expenses are mainly for accounting, communications, various events and travel.

The expenses of the Foundation's ordinary operations in 2022 amounted to €74,574.25 (2021: €80,832.32).

During the year, the Foundation distributed a total of €442,339 in donations (including a targeted donation to Porin ensi ja turvakoti of €2,500) and received a total of €75,943 in support from members of the Ahlström family and its immediate circle.

### Investing activities

The Foundation's assets mainly consist of shares in Ahlström Invest BV, various

mutual fund shares and cash.

The return on investing and financing activities amounted to €48,179.09 (2021: €366,408.74).

The Foundation's assets are managed according to an investment strategy adopted by the Board.

The goal of the Foundation's investing activities is to create long-term conditions for a good return on investments and enable stable opportunities for dividends. This is done without a defined end date.

The Foundation has an investment committee which independently manages assets in accordance with the investment strategy adopted by the Board. The committee reports regularly to the Board on asset management.

In the past year, the investment committee consisted of two Board members, Joanna Danielsson and Edvin Franck in the first half of the year and Laura Meyer and Helena Nahi in the second half of the year, and two external members, Andreas Ahlström and Carl Ahlström (Chair).

As at 31 December 2022, the Foundation's assets had a market value of €4.7 million (2021: €5.7 million).

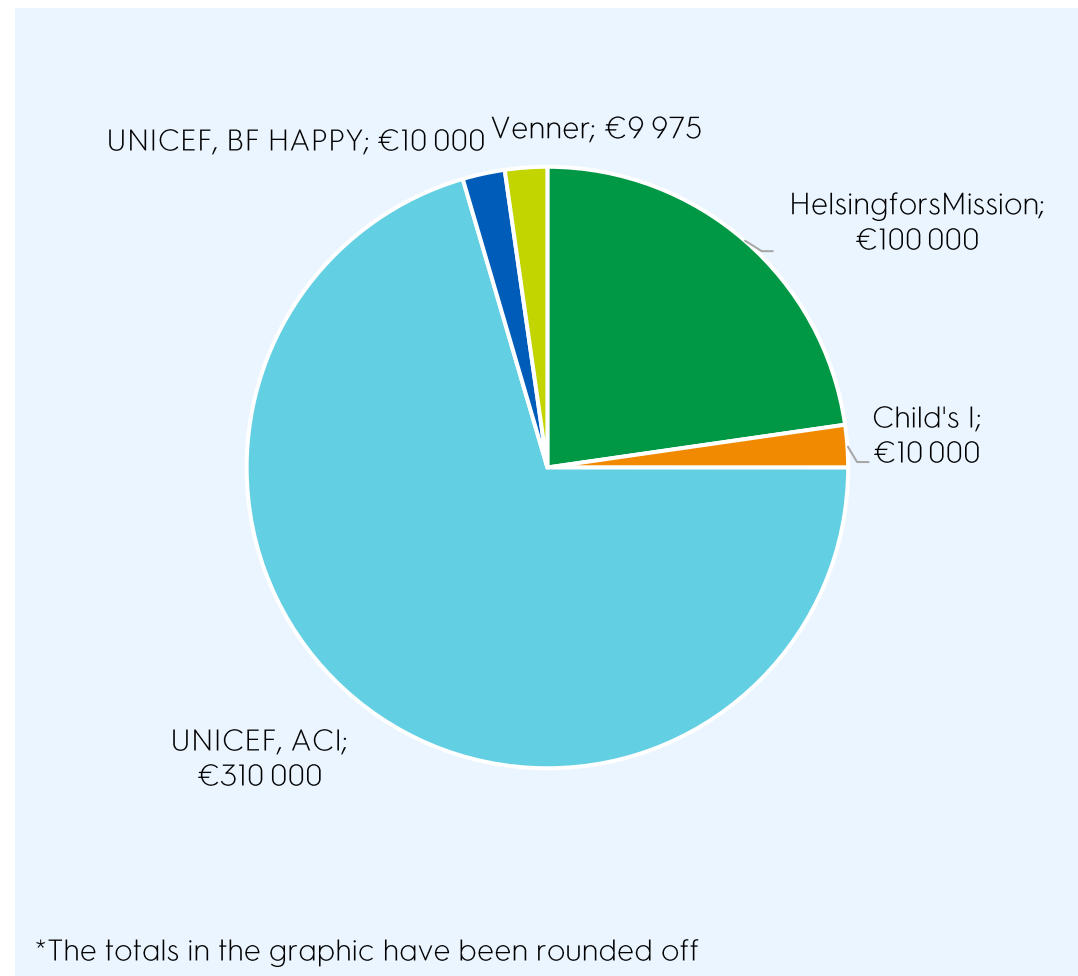
## Strategic partners and support disbursed in 2022

The Eva Ahlström Foundation systematically focused its work on a small number of partners and projects, aiming to achieve maximum impact with its investments. The Board of the Foundation strongly believes that this can best be achieved with the support of established, professional, recognised actors, both nationally and internationally.

In Finland, the Foundation is concentrating its efforts on HelsinkiMissio and the BLASH partnership. The Foundation also supported Ukrainian families in Finland with the help of Venner's food boxes.

On the international stage, UNICEF remains the main partner. As two major collaboration projects with UNICEF Finland were concluded during the previous strategy period, in 2022 the Foundation channelled its investments (donations) to UNICEF via Ahlström Collective Impact. The three-year Nordic partnership led by the UBS Optimus Foundation ended in 2022. With a Swedish family and a Norwegian family, the Foundation supported the work of the Child's I Foundation, which addresses the problems related to the institutionalisation of children in Uganda.

## Support distributed in 2022





## Children's and young people's feelings of exclusion are stronger than ever - the program in collaboration with HelsinkiMissio plays an important role

The pandemic polarised the well-being of young people. Those who were doing well before the pandemic are also doing well after it. However, some young people feel even worse. According to a survey, the increased sense of loneliness experienced during the pandemic has not returned to previous levels despite the opening up of society and the return to normality. One in four young people feel that they do not have a single friend or a friendship group in which they belong. (School to Belong loneliness survey 2022).

For the past three years, the Foundation has invested in HelsinkiMissio's youth work through the BLASH collaboration. The BLASH collaboration began in 2020 on the initiative of the Eva Ahlström Foundation in collaboration with HelsinkiMissio, the Berner family, the August Ludvig Hartwall Foundation, the Päivikki and Sakari Sohlberg Foundation and Veikko Laine Oy. Over the three-year period, the total support amounts to nearly €1 million. The aim of HelsinkiMissio's youth work is to reduce exclusion among young people by providing low-threshold help which increases young people's well-being and empowers them.

During the first year of the program, the services for young people in HelsinkiMissio were developed, redesigned and expanded in accordance with the prevailing exceptional circumstances. New ways of contacting young people were developed with further lowering of the threshold, and professional helpers and volunteers were available where the young people were - online and in social media.

In 2021, the digital service was further improved, and, for example, an appointment for a first call can now be booked on the website at any time of the day. In addition to local help, location-independent help is now offered in the form of remote discussions and support persons in Finnish, Swedish, and English.

During the third year of the program, the School to Belong concept was developed, evolving during the program into a national model for reducing loneliness in schools.

In the first year alone, 46 educational institutions signed up to participate, a total of around 45,000 pupils. To receive a School to Belong certificate, educational institutions commit to creating a strategy and an action plan to reduce loneliness based on the specific features of their own educational environment.

### The help made a difference: 2022 results

The counselling improved the well-being of young people:

- In total, 1,288 young people benefited from counselling services in 2022
- 86% of young people felt that their thoughts had become clearer
- 86% felt that their perception of their own situation had improved and 78% felt that they were in a better position to solve problems
- 94% felt that they had been seen and heard

The support services reduced young people's sense of loneliness:

- In total, 214 young people benefited from the support services in 2022
- The support person relationship had a positive effect on 89% of young people and 88% felt they could share their burdens with the support person
- 78% found meaningful employment and 69% felt more self-confident in social situations.
- 2/3 of young people felt that their attitude towards the future had become more positive
- The willingness to recommend both counselling and support services to other young people is very high among the young people who have benefited from these services. The NPS figure is +82.

### Support disbursed in 2022: :

BLASH collaboration to improve young people's well-being:  
100 000€







## UNICEF

The partnership with UNICEF has been an important part of the Foundation's activities since its inception, and we are pleased to note that the partnership has continued to deepen and has also broadened to include other bodies in the Ahlström network through Ahlström Collective Impact.



### **Ahlström Collective Impact brings together the entire Ahlström network to realise the family's vision of a better world for future generations**

In 2020, on the initiative of the Eva Ahlström Foundation, a new form of collaboration with UNICEF Finland was created, in which the entire Ahlström network is offered the opportunity to take part. The initiative is based on the Foundation's conviction that individual actors alone cannot solve the challenges facing the world. We need to work together across traditional sectors and boundaries in society. All parties involved in the initiative commit to supporting UNICEF's work to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The initiative has chosen to focus specifically on SDGs 4: Quality education; 5: Gender equality; and 17: Partnerships for the goals.

In 2020, Ahlström Collective Impact invested in UNICEF's Covid-19 crisis response for children. About half of the actors in the Ahlström network joined the initiative right from the start. Subsequently, other actors in the network have been inspired to participate and we are happy to report that, in 2022, a total of 13 companies and foundations and several individual family members contributed through Ahlström Collective Impact to a total investment of over EUR 1 million in support of UNICEF's work.

In addition to the monetary contribution, the initiative has brought together and engaged 40 individuals from different companies and 8 different countries within the network through its ambassador program for training on children's rights, quality and equality. The ambassadors are encouraged to spread the knowledge further in their own local networks and in this way, Ahlström Collective Impact reaches out to employees across the Ahlström network.

One of the long-term goals of Ahlström Collective Impact is to inspire other family businesses to replicate the model within their own networks. A milestone in this regard is that, from 2022, the initiative will serve as an educational case study for students of philanthropy at the International Institute for Management Development (IMD).

"Ahlström Collective Impact (ACI) inspires people to focus on good, universal values, which in turn leads to good values in business as well. The ACI model benefits the world around us and specifically the welfare of children globally. The collaboration would have the greatest impact if other actors were inspired by the model and copied it. If everyone thought and acted like Ahlström Collective Impact, a global impact would be achieved."

Marja-Riitta Ketola, secretary-general at UNICEF Finland ***"Ahlström Collective Impact inspires people to focus on good universal values, which will lead to good business values. The ACI model is good for the environment and specifically for children globally. The best effect can be received if other companies would copy this model. If everybody would do the same thing, it would have a global impact and do a lot of good."***

#### Support disbursed in 2022: :

Ahlström Collective Impact: 310 000 €



## Investments in Child welfare in West Bengal

The Foundation's three-year investment period in UNICEF's Child welfare project in West Bengal, supported by the satellite organisation Eva Ahlström Foundation International, ended in 2023. The final report will be published in fall 2023.

The child welfare project in West Bengal focuses on improving conditions and services in orphanages and child care facilities, establishing suitable accommodation and supporting foster family arrangements so that as many children as possible can grow up and develop in a home environment rather than in an institutional setting. There are approximately 20 million orphaned children in India today. Of these, fewer than 1% have actually lost both parents. Most have been abandoned by their parents, have fled or have been saved from very difficult circumstances, such as human trafficking, exploitation and crime. The fate of these children is a consequence of extreme poverty, abuse, maltreatment and health problems. Their chances of growing up and developing to their full potential are very low.

8% of all crimes against children in India are reported to occur in West Bengal. Child crime has also increased in the area, accounting for 2% of all crimes committed by children in India. After the pandemic, the need for child welfare is greater than ever and the focus has been on mitigating its negative effects such as increased poverty and exposure to various forms of violence.

The goal of the project is that by the end of the project in 2023, the state of West Bengal will be better equipped to provide preventive services for children at risk of abandonment or separation from their families. The project aims to achieve lasting effects, including reduced crime and delinquency among children, increased child-friendliness of authorities in dealing with criminal cases involving children, more resilient children and families, and better prospects for vulnerable children.



©UNICEF UNI213183 Narain 2019  
The boys in the photo are not related to the project



## BF&HAPPY

The successful HAPPY project in Vietnam coordinated by UNICEF was continued in 2020 in the form of the three-year BF&HAPPY project in Rwanda. From a consortium of three Finnish families (Hartwall, Ahlström and Paulig - HAPPY), the collaboration grew to include five families (Berner, Fazer, Hartwall, Ahlström, Paulig).

In 2020–2022, the BF&HAPPY project aimed to reduce maternal and infant mortality in Rwanda. This was done by training healthcare personnel working in maternity care and delivery. The project was implemented in 10 selected provinces in the country. The project also focused on access to vital healthcare equipment for the care of infants.

In November 2022, UNICEF Finland organised a field trip to Rwanda on which representatives of the families in the BF&HAPPY project had the chance to familiarise themselves with UNICEF's work in the field and the results of the project. The Board of the Eva Ahlström Foundation was represented on the field trip by Johanna Ahlström.

***“The field trip to Rwanda with the entire BF&HAPPY group was a wonderful shared experience that gave us a greater understanding of UNICEF’s fantastic and vital work. At the same time the trip also gave us many insights into how we here in Finland could develop our services based on how Rwandan society works.” Johanna Ahlström, Board member***

**Support disbursed in 2022: :**

BF & HAPPY: 10 000 €

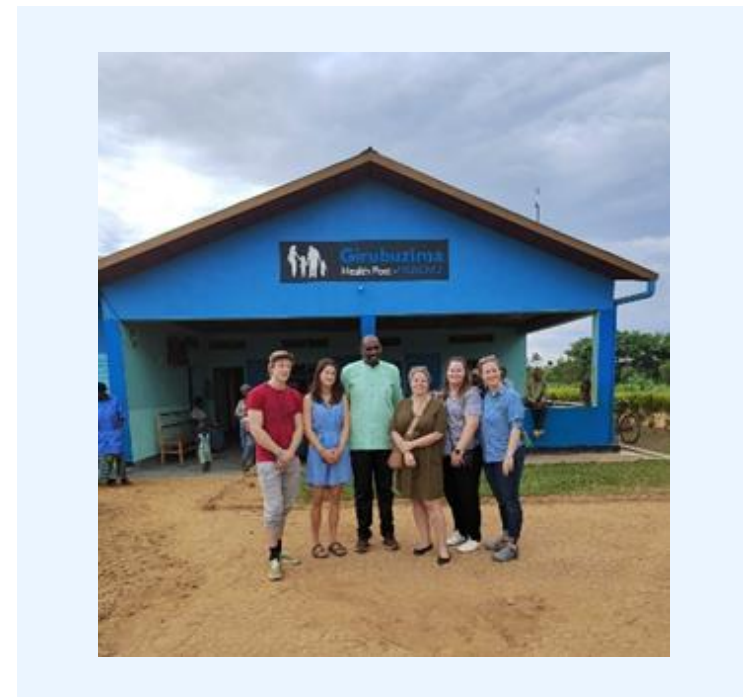


Photo credit: private collection

**BF&HAPPY**

BERNER FAZER HARTWALL AHLSTRÖM PAULIG PERHEET YHDESSÄ

## Child's I

### The Co-Nordic project supported the work of the Child's I Foundation in Uganda for three years

The Child's I Foundation wants to draw attention to the problem of children in institutions and, under the leadership of the UBS Optimus Foundation, the Co-Nordic partnership supported the work of the Child's I Foundation in Uganda, 'Kamengo Community Transformation', in 2020–2022. The project has been successful, and the approach will now be replicated in a new district of the area.

The project has three main components:

1. Keep families together
2. Reunite families or create new families
3. Strengthen the local community

The three-year project has now ended. The Child's I teams supported vulnerable families and children and the project achieved the following results in 2022:

- 3,967 children received support in the form of necessities such as food and medical care during the pandemic
- 2,380 families were reunited or new families were created through the network created by Child's I
- 35 children could move from an orphanage to a safe, caring family
- 157 community volunteers were trained to ensure that their local community is safe and thriving

Child's I has been working in Uganda for over 10 years to develop an evidence-based practice that focuses on helping families stay together, reuniting children with their families, or finding alternative family solutions or adoption. The results from this period are far more significant than can be expected from an organisation of the size of Child's I, and with proof that children should grow up with their families, not in orphanages, the organisation is now ready to continue the work and make it scalable on a global level.

### Support disbursed in 2022

Child welfare: €10,000



## **FUTURE PROSPECTS**

After two years of the Covid-19 pandemic, the international community is now facing new challenges. The world political situation is in turmoil and there is an increasing need for unity and community around human rights and sound values. The growing need for small and large actors to take responsibility and build bridges will continue to inspire the Foundation's Board in its work to improve opportunities for the world's children and young people.

Why focus on children and young people? The answer is simple. Children and young people are our future. How they feel and live today has a huge impact on what our world looks like tomorrow. They are the parents, workers and decision-makers of the future. The world cannot afford to lose a single child, either at the individual level or the societal level. An investment in the well-being of children and young people is thus not only an investment in the personal potential of a child, but in the well-being of society as a whole.

At present, it is difficult to assess how the world economy will be affected and develop in the short or long term. The Foundation's investment strategy in the current situation is cautious and restrained. The Foundation's liquidity is good, and it has been ensured that the Foundation will be able to cover its current operations and committed donations with its current cash reserves.

The Board of the Foundation has a clear vision and clear objectives for its activities. With strong commitment and desire to make a difference, the work to find new solutions with a real impact continues, and despite the uncertain world situation, the Foundation's Board is confident of a better world for future generations. Together we are strong!

