

Policy Plan 2023-2027

Stichting Ondersteuning Wenchi Hospital, in Ghana well known as 'Beltman Foundation'

Introduction

Initiated by Ms Joke Beltman-van der Giesen, Stichting Ondersteuning Wenchi Hospital in Ghana, Beltman Foundation (SOWHG/BF) was founded on the 24th of June 1998.

Mr and Ms Jan and Joke Beltman-van der Giesen were employed as medical doctors at Wenchi Methodist Hospital in Ghana before they settled as general practitioners in Groesbeek, The Netherlands. Wenchi Hospital was founded in 1951 and started as a small first aid clinic in a run-down school building. It had grown into an important regional hospital by the time Jan and Joke left Ghana. They remained very committed and engaged and starting SOWHG/BF was a logical result.

The goal of the foundation formulated in the articles of association

'financial and material support of health services in the Wenchi Ghana region in Ghana in general and support of Wenchi Hospital in specific'

There are several reasons to formulate this 2023 – 2027 policy plan. Because of development and growth of the hospital, their total yearly budget is growing. Support by SOWHG/BF until now was on demand. The board of SOWHG/BF followed the needs that were formulated by the Hospital management. A various number of projects without common theme were supported. Without question these were all important and valuable projects. Given the new circumstances, the board of SOWHG/BF wishes:

- To follow the growth of the hospital's yearly budget by seeking greater funds in order to accommodate the increasing financial needs;
- To focus more at a single discipline within the hospital;
- To set up more and different activities to communicate with their contributors, welfare foundations and other stakeholders with aim to raise more funding.

Wenchi Methodist Hospital (source: Annual report 2021)

Wenchi Methodist Hospital is recognized by the Ghana Ministry of Health as a regional hospital for Wenchi region. an area of about 3000 square km with 124,000 inhabitants. In addition, it has been designated as referral clinic in the districts Tain and Banda for a total of 45 smaller hospitals, clinics and health centres. The hospital has 250 beds and a staff of 521 employees. Amongst them 18 prescribers (those authorized to prescribe medicine): 13 doctors and 5 medical assistants.

The hospital offers the following disciplines: general OPD, first aid, general surgery, internal medicine, paediatrics, ophthalmology, mental health care, obstetrics and gynaecology, ENT, urology and orthopaedics. In addition, Public Health Services for rehabilitation, vaccination programs and education programs in the areas of nutrition, HIV, malaria, family planning, pregnancy and new-born infant care. The hospital has digital X-ray equipment, operating rooms (general surgery and urology, orthopaedics, obstetrics and gynaecology), nursing departments, a clinical diagnostic laboratory. The hospital is facilitated by a central sterilisation department, 2 ambulances, a morgue, emergency power units, own water supply and housing for staff and employees.

In 2021 OPD registered 92,689 patients. The main diagnoses were: malaria, joint and musculoskeletal disorders, diabetes mellitus, gastritis, and anaemia.

Within the medical staff, there is a serious lack of an internal medicine specialist and an obstetrics and gynaecology specialist. With a hospital's scholarship, obliging to stay at least 5 years employed at the hospital after graduation, 5 doctors study a specialism: obstetrics and gynaecology in South Africa, internal medicine and paediatrics in Ghana, general surgery in Ghana and orthopaedic surgery in Uganda.

The daily management of the hospital is in hands of a management team that includes doctors, an administrator and an estate manager. The management team is led by a CEO. The board and advisor of SOWHG/BF have good contact and (online) meetings with the CEO on regular basis.

The Ghanaian government offers General Health Insurance at a low premium and 82% of the inhabitants is card holder. Nevertheless, poor non-member patients are treated and nursed by the hospital free of charge. This, together with the fact that the General Health Insurance pays out far too late, brings the hospital in a constant position of negative cash flow.

SOWHG/BF 1998 up to and including 2022

The board of SOWHG/BF consists of 6 members, supported by an advisor:

- chairman: Jogchum Jan Beltman
- secretary : Barbara van der Eerden
- treasurer: Koen Sollie
- general boardmember: Joke Beltman- van der Giesen
- general boardmember: Ingeborg Tiecken
- general boardmember: Jan Sporken
- advisor: Jan Beltman

The articles of association describe that all board positions are unpaid. According to the articles of association, there is a possibility for expense reimbursement. This has not been used to date. Any trips to Ghana are paid for privately.

SOWHG/BF is a so called ANBI foundation, which means it is recognized by the tax authorities as a charity. Therefore the foundation has a website communicating objectives and policy, annual financial statements and an overview of the supported projects. Further to that, the website publishes all newsletters and a summary of the hospital's annual report.

From the beginning, the board of SOWHG/BF has fulfilled the objectives as described in the articles of association by focusing in particular on three different pathways:

- infrastructure: clinic buildings and housing for doctors and nurses;
- specialist training for doctors;
- general and technical services: energy- and water supply.

In 2021, initiated by advisor Jan Beltman, a Cashew Farm Project was started. On 50 acres in the neighbourhood of Wenchi, owned by the hospital, cashew trees were planted. Goal of this project is twofold: to generate an income for the Hospital in the future (harvest can be expected within 5 years) and to create employment for residents of Wenchi and the surrounding area.

A complete overview of the supported projects can be found at www.wenchihospital.nl, under "projects".

A financial reserve of 7.5K euro is always kept in order to support in the event of an emergency. For instance, we could immediately support during an acute outbreak of a streptococcal meningitis and the recent covid19 pandemic.

During the first 25 years of SOWHG/BF, fundraising brought a total amount of 534.000 euro to support the hospital. Money was collected via three pathways:

- a steady number of private contributors;
- charities and foundations;
- occasional fundraising activities.

SOWHG/BF has a stable number of approximately one hundred loyal contributors. There has been no active recruitment campaign, these donors have been recruited within the networks of the various board members. It can be expected that there will be no further increase and that the number will rather decrease in the coming years. Donors are kept informed of the development of the hospital and the supported projects through an annual newsletter by traditional mail in December.

Charity foundations that supported SOWHG/BF were found in the board member's networks or via internet. They were mainly approached for a specific project,

The occasional fundraising activities are for example bike tours sponsored by Rabobank, sponsored participants of the Nijmegen 4-Day Marches, parties and receptions for anniversaries and so on. Additionally, the board sent so called emergency newsletters when acute support was needed, for instance for an outbreak of streptococcal meningitis, a new emergency power generator, an ECG machine and recently the covid19 pandemic.

The board of SOWHG/BF wishes to support projects at the hospital in a less ad hoc manner, but in a more structural and purposeful way. This is based on the priorities described in the hospital management's multi-year plan.

The board strongly wishes to respond to the World Health Organisation's appeal to governments and NGO's to put '*maternal and new-born health*' high on the agenda. Mortality rates of mother and child during and after labour are highest in the African sub-Saharan region. SOWHG/BF has advocated for renovation of the maternity ward. Three separate delivery rooms with complete new inventory are realized. This new setup offers women giving birth a quiet and private place. For the coming 5 years, obstetrics and gynaecology is the board's centre of gravity. Naturally, support in case of emergencies must remain possible.

SOWHG/BF 2023 until 2027

The purpose described in SOWHG/BF's articles of association:

'financial and material support of health services in the Wenchi region in Ghana in general and support of Wenchi Hospital in specific'

remains fully applicable and the board wants to give it a tangible interpretation.

The focus of the support to Wenchi Hospital is on mother and child care. The hospital management's multi-year plan is leading. This is used to determine which projects will be supported.

In addition, the Cashew Farming project will be supported during start-up phase to make the necessary investments.

Financial objectives

- The aim is to generate an annual income of 50.000 euro by means of fundraising;
- The foundation retains a small amount of 7.500 euro to act on emergency situations. Funds that were earmarked for special projects selected from hospital management's multi-year plan will be kept in reserve;
- Board member positions are unpaid and costs and expenses will be kept as low as possible. The board realises that the goals with respect to upgrading communication cannot be reached without increasing costs.

Fundraising objectives

- In 2023 a few special fundraising projects are planned as part of SOWHG/BF's 25th anniversary;
- Each year (after 2023) one or two specific fundraising activities will be organized for projects selected on the basis of annual plans of the hospital management.;
- Each year, two charities, who have already sponsored in past or found in the board members networks or on the internet, will be written to with a request for funding;
- Loyal private contributors, mostly donating in December or January, will be kept informed about SOWHG/BF's activities. The option of starting a fundraising campaign amongst these loyal contributors will be explored.

Communication objectives

- The annual (hard copy) newsletter in December to loyal contributors will be continued;
- A plan will be made to upgrade the website to motivate visitors to come back again. This can be done by publishing more news facts, small video's from Wenchi Hospital, employee interviews and testimonials of loyal contributors
- The option of a Facebook page will be investigated.

Other objectives

- A CBF Recognition will be applied for;

(The Dutch Fundraising Regulator (CBF) is an independent foundation which has been monitoring fundraising by charities since 1925. The CBF's task is to promote trustworthy fundraising and expenditure by reviewing fundraising organizations and giving information and advice to government institutions and the public.)

- A plan to offer Dutch medical interns the possibility to fill a training position at Wenchi Hospital will further be explored. This can generate modest extra income for the hospital and the networks of these students can be approached for sponsoring;
- The board strives for more structured communication and meetings with the hospital staff. It is important to have timely access to the multi-year plan in order to choose projects to be funded. At least once a year Alexander Kwaku Kyei, CEO, will be invited for a zoom meeting with the board.

Evaluation of the policy

The board of SOWHG/BF meets four times a year. During the meeting in the first quarter, the annual financial report for the previous year is adopted. An abstract of the financial figures will be published on the website including a statement of the sponsored projects.

In addition, the evaluation of the policy plan is annually on the agenda of the first board meeting. On this basis, the annual plan for the current year is discussed and determined. If, as a result of the evaluation, it is necessary to change or supplement the policy plan, this will be recorded in writing and added as an appendix to the policy plan.