

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Foreword

Dear friends, donors and partners,

The past year has been marked by new initiatives both in the Netherlands and in Nairobi. Thanks in part to the efforts of our board, we have made progress in making Safe Spaces Nairobi more sustainable, in our fundraising activities in the Netherlands, and in expanding our network. We look back with pride on the results we achieved in 2025.

Mission & Vision

The Support for Safe Spaces Nairobi Foundation supports the NGO Safe Spaces Nairobi. The NGO Safe Spaces was founded in 2008 with the mission of helping girls and young women from the Eastland slums (in Nairobi) to gain and maintain prospects for an independent life outside the slums.

Safe Spaces Nairobi achieves this by giving girls opportunities to discover themselves through education, sport and employment, enabling them to develop into strong women who can escape poverty, violence and exclusion.

Key activities & results for 2025

Fundraising

Contract with Wilde Ganzen for the Safe Water project

In 2024, Safe Spaces drilled a productive water well connected to the Nairobi City Council's water network. This will serve as a safe and reliable source of water for the residents of the Mathare slum. To this end, Safe Spaces has established 'Safe Water Services' as a social enterprise. It will provide the following:

Phase one: The water well was drilled next to the Safe Spaces office to an optimal depth of 250 metres. This gives residents access to clean water. On 8 March 2025, International Women's Day, the service point was officially opened with a celebration. Here, 20-litre jerrycans can be filled, and there is a second point for filling lorries with water tanks. Safe Water Services is intended for all residents of Mathare and the neighbouring neighbourhoods.

Phase Two: this involves adding water purification and bottling equipment to meet Kenyan standards. This will enable the community to purchase drinking water in 1-litre bottles and provide Safe Spaces with an additional source of income to support its education and empowerment programmes. This phase will also ensure a reliable energy supply through the installation of solar panels and an emergency generator. This solar panel system will serve a dual purpose: to power Safe Spaces' digital library and computer training programmes, and to pump water to the storage tanks and run the bottling machines. The water tanks provide crucial storage for the community during periods of water shortages from the local authority.

The contract with Wilde Ganzen (project number 2024-0089) provides for the funding of Phase Two. The total budget for Phase 2 is €39,500. Of this, the Support for Safe Spaces Nairobi Foundation must provide €26,335, whilst Wilde Ganzen will contribute €13,165.

Listed as a charity on Supporta and the Social Handshake

Supporta. By being listed as a charity on Supporta, athletes can raise funds for the Support for Safe Spaces Nairobi Foundation through their sporting achievements. These may be sporting events that the Support for Safe Spaces Nairobi Foundation has included in its list of charities, but it is also possible to register a sporting event with Supporta yourself. The athlete can then raise funds for Safe Spaces.

In 2025, a total of €1,870 was raised for the Safe Water project during the Heuvelland 4-Day Walk, and €720 during the Gouda Marathon.

The Social Handshake

By registering as a charity with The Social Handshake, employees can donate a (small) portion of their salary to the Support for Safe Spaces Nairobi Foundation. Whilst this has not yet yielded significant results in 2025, it offers opportunities to attract more regular donors in the near future.

Funds raised

In 2025, several applications were made for funding for the Safe Spaces programmes. The Landau Foundation donated €7,500 for the digital library. Other applications were less successful. AFAS rejected our application, but we were told that there is interest in funding a new digital library. This offers opportunities for funding the library in the new building that Safe Spaces hopes to realise in a few years' time.

In 2025, we also received €2,300 from our regular donors for Safe Spaces' programmes.

By organising a charity dinner, we raised €520 for the Safe Water project.

Visits to Nairobi & the Netherlands (2025)

Board member Mark Hanssen visits Nairobi

From 1 to 8 March, Board Member Mark Hanssen visited Safe Spaces in Nairobi. During his stay, he attended the official opening of the new water service point. He shares his experience below.

Visiting Safe Spaces Nairobi: Experiencing Impact First-Hand

In 2025, as a board member of the Support Safe Spaces Nairobi Foundation, I had the unique opportunity to visit Safe Spaces in Nairobi in person. After being involved with the foundation's board for more than three and a half years, this was my first opportunity to meet the people and experience the place we have been supporting. It became a visit that left a profound impression on me.

My week in Nairobi was an emotional rollercoaster. I felt shocked, amazed, surprised, angry, proud, inspired, and at times deeply saddened. At the same time, I was moved by the incredible strength, resilience, and optimism of the community. Throughout my visit, the words of founder Penina Ntenyara Musi Yimi—*"I am the change"*—kept resonating with me. To me, they perfectly capture the spirit of Safe Spaces.

Seeing with my own eyes how Safe Spaces creates opportunities for girls and young women in the Mathare informal settlement was truly inspiring. By providing access to education, from primary school to boarding school, secondary school, and even university, the organisation creates genuine opportunities for a brighter future. Safe Spaces also invests in personal development through sports, vocational training, and digital skills. Basketball is used not only to build physical strength but also confidence and mental resilience. Training programmes in automotive mechanics and computer skills equip young people with practical skills to shape their own futures.

I was also struck by the importance of the organisation's work in hygiene education, sexual and reproductive health education, and personal development. Safe Spaces offers much more than education and training, it creates a safe environment where girls can grow into confident and independent young women.

Another inspiring aspect of my visit was seeing the organisation's progress towards greater financial independence. Initiatives such as Awesome Blossoms, the vertical hydroponic gardens, and the Safe Spaces jewellery shop not only generate income for the organisation but also create employment opportunities for women in the community. Through mutual support mechanisms and initiatives such as *table*

banking, women are encouraged to develop their own entrepreneurial activities.

Without question, the highlight of the week was the inauguration of the new water project: a dedicated water source with a storage capacity of 90,000 litres of safe drinking water. While access to clean drinking water is something many of us take for granted, it remains a daily challenge in Mathare. Thanks to the support of organisations including Wilde Ganzen, this project became a reality. Celebrating its opening together with the community on International Women's Day felt like a powerful celebration of progress, partnership, and hope.

This visit reinforced my understanding of the tangible and far-reaching impact of Safe Spaces. It also confirmed how important it is for us, as a board, to stay closely connected to the realities on the ground in Nairobi. The work of Safe Spaces is authentic, impactful, and invaluable to the community it serves.

Visit of Carlijn de Waard Safe Spaces Nairobi

In August, Carlijn de Waard visited the Safe Spaces vegetable farm in Nairobi. At that time, she was not yet a member of our board. She describes her experience below.

On 29 July, Peninah picked me up in Nairobi, and together we travelled to Safe Spaces. I was in Kenya to conduct fieldwork for my MSc thesis. I first became familiar with Safe Spaces through an Academic Consultancy Training, part of my MSc in International Development at Wageningen University & Research. I couldn't resist sending Peninah a WhatsApp message asking whether I could visit Safe Spaces in person, and of course, the answer was yes!

During the consultancy project, I worked in a multidisciplinary team on a challenge presented by Peninah and her team. We explored how Awesome Blossoms could further strengthen its hydroponic farming system to become more financially sustainable while increasing its impact for women in Mathare. Our research focused on optimising the cultivation system, identifying promising new crops, improving knowledge sharing, and strengthening women's entrepreneurship.

Our recommendations aimed to increase the independence and resilience of Awesome Blossoms. For example, we advised reducing reliance on external inputs by producing fertilisers locally and diversifying crop production with turmeric, blueberries, Malabar spinach, and marigolds. We also highlighted the importance of stronger knowledge sharing through digital tools, peer-to-peer learning, and further investment in women's entrepreneurship and professional networks.

During my visit, it was inspiring to see that several elements of our report had already been put into practice. For instance, Awesome Blossoms had begun

producing its own seedlings. It was equally valuable to meet Peninah, her team, and the peer educators in person. They generously took the time to show me around the farms and explain their daily work.

What impressed me most was that the impact of Safe Spaces extends far beyond individual lives. The organisation not only creates opportunities for girls and young women but also empowers the wider Mathare community to break cycles of poverty and build lasting opportunities. That is why I now serve as Secretary of the Dutch Support Safe Spaces Nairobi Foundation. I believe this approach creates sustainable, long-term impact. Through the dedication of Peninah and her team, Mathare is undergoing meaningful structural change, one that deserves the continued support of committed partners and donors.

Visit Peninah to the Netherlands

In October 2025, Peninah visited the Netherlands.

At the home of Leslie Janoe and Reinier Bouman, she met two new members of our board: Eelco Gulpen, Treasurer, and Carlijn de Waard, Secretary.

Leslie Janoe organised a brainstorming session on financing the planned Innovation and Empowerment Centre. The most urgent challenge discussed was securing funding for the purchase of the land on which the centre will be built.

During her stay, Peninah also visited Wilde Ganzen to discuss the progress of the Safe Water Project and to meet members of the organisation's staff.

In addition, a visit was made to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Board changes

- In June 2025, Alexander Weiss stepped down as Treasurer after serving on the board for four years. Responsibility for the foundation's finances was transferred to Eelco Gulpen.
- Due to the increasing demands of managing her two restaurants, Damaris Beems decided to step down as Chair and transfer the role to Jeannette Roelse, who was serving as Secretary at the time. The handover took place on 22 October 2025. At the time of writing this annual report, Damaris Beems has officially left the board.
- On 22 October 2025, Carlijn de Waard succeeded Jeannette Roelse as Secretary.
- Following the acceptance of a new professional position, Mark Hanssen decided to step down from the board effective 1 May 2026. His position will be taken over by Anna van Doorn.

Board Remuneration Statement

Members of the Board did not receive any remuneration or reimbursement for expenses related to their board activities during 2024 or 2025.

The only exception was the reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses incurred by Board Member Mark Hanssen for his visit to Nairobi in March 2025. The total amount reimbursed was €2,950.

Looking Ahead

In 2026, we will continue our collaboration with Wilde Ganzen. Together, we hope to launch a project to co-finance the construction of the Innovation and Empowerment Hub. However, before this can happen, Safe Spaces must first be able to purchase the plot of land on which its current offices are located, which is presently rented. Securing ownership of this land is of critical importance for the long-term future of Safe Spaces, and we hope this milestone can be achieved in the coming years.

The Support Safe Spaces Nairobi Foundation will continue to focus primarily on raising funds for programmes that provide education and sports opportunities for girls and young women. Because these programmes involve recurring operational costs, obtaining grant funding remains both challenging and time-consuming. In addition, grants are often awarded only once or for a limited number of years. For this reason, our efforts in the coming years will increasingly focus on building a strong base of recurring donors who can provide long-term support for our work.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all our volunteers, donors, and partners. Your commitment and support make it possible for us to continue our work with confidence and dedication.

Contact

Would you like to learn more about the Support Safe Spaces Nairobi Foundation, our work, or the ways you can contribute? We would be delighted to hear from you.

 contact@supportsafespaces.nl

 <https://www.supportsafespaces.nl>

You are also welcome to contact us if you would like to become a recurring donor, organise a fundraising campaign through Supporta, make a donation via The Social Handshake, or support the work of Safe Spaces Nairobi in any other way.

Together, we can continue to empower girls and young women in Mathare by

providing access to education, opportunities for independence, and a safer future.