

# *Amani Children's Home* and Foundation



Annual  
Report

2017



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# A Message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Every year with Amani is more breathtaking than the last. This past year we have been working to balance two objectives: stabilizing our current operational budget while also designing and implementing creative new outreach programs. It's been a year-long conversation about negotiating present projects and future initiatives, daily needs and bigger dreams, repairing old facilities and constructing new ones.

Since its establishment in 2012, Amani has survived entirely on donations from generous donors like you. A little organization with a large responsibility, we've learned to accomplish as much as possible with a very limited budget. This past year, your support covered the residential care, educational costs, and medical needs of nearly 50 at-risk youth at our center. You helped us provide a record number of scholarships to top-ranked private schools. Together we installed safer, more reliable wiring, built a gated security boundary, renovated volunteer quarters and created the first library in our area. We continued our sustainable farming initiative and launched a new bread baking program to supplement both our income and our children's diets.

In our first long-term strategic plan, we've outlined our desire to expand on-site medical care for both our children and the community. In this report we've highlighted just a few of our on-going projects and future goals. More than a children's home, we hope to be a resource for local marginalized populations regardless of age. Please join us on our journey towards financial sustainability and community-driven outreach work in 2018.

With heartfelt thanks and warmest regards,



Katharine E.T. Thompson  
Executive Director

**Board of Directors:**

Christian Brady  
Elizabeth Brady  
Edna Hogan  
Sonya Lorrain  
Patricia Paladines

# Our Mission

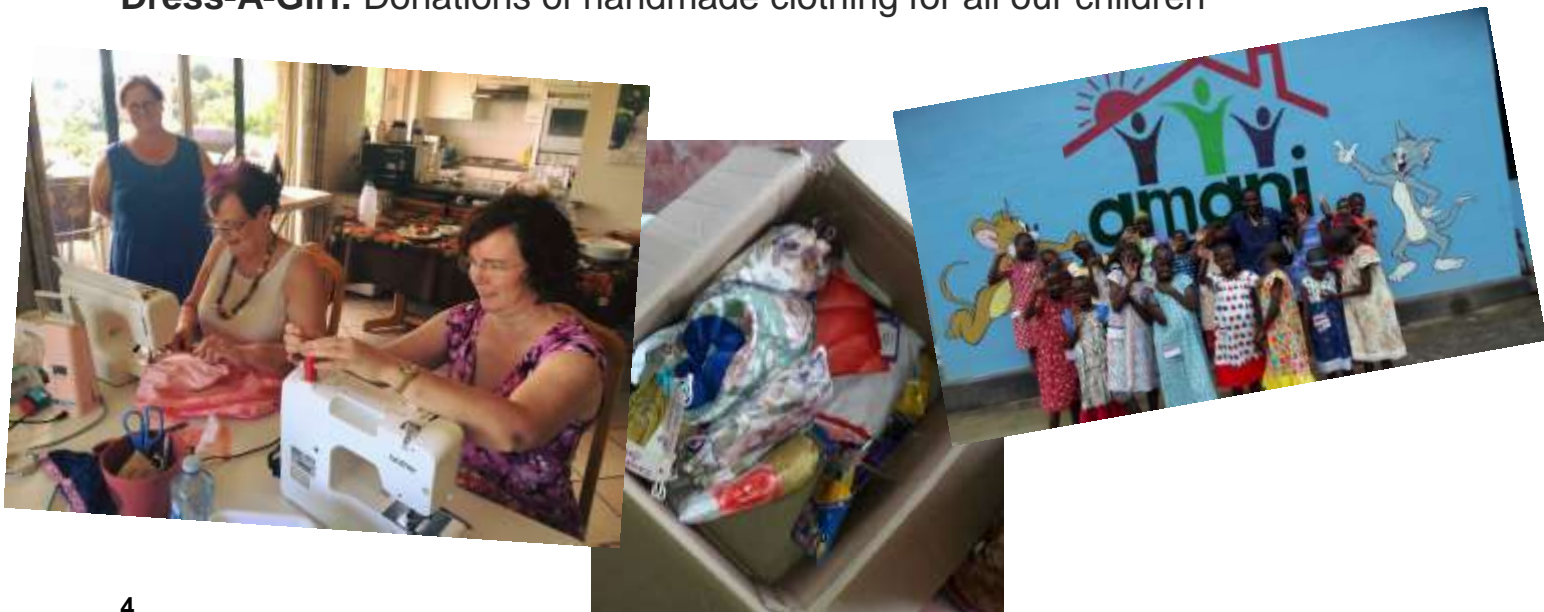
*Amani seeks not only to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children living on site, but access to a quality private education, extracurricular activities that fuel a child's personal and intellectual development, mentorship that connects children to community members, and provides them with the skills and relationships they will need to succeed in adulthood. Amani also serves the community through outreach initiatives, specifically wildlife conservation and public health educational campaigns. Through a combination of illustration and translation, Amani seeks to make scientific and medical knowledge accessible to community members regardless of language and literacy barriers.*

## Volunteer Projects

**Juntos Molas Mas:** Perimeter wall construction & infrastructure repairs



**Dress-A-Girl:** Donations of handmade clothing for all our children



# Financial Report

## Donations

in USD

Direct donations online & by mail	\$55,276.43
Direct donations on-site	\$ 3,916.00
Estimated worth of supplies purchased gifted on-site	\$ 990.00
Safina Center - Nature Club (supplies, salaries, travel)	\$ 5,000.00
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$65,182.43</b>

## Expenses

On-Site Staff Salaries	\$ 5,762.68
Staff Training and Capacity Building	\$ 1,000.00
Residential Care (food, hygienic supplies, etc.)	\$10,602.68
Hospital Bills	\$ 808.72
Educational (uniforms, fees, school supplies, etc.)	\$ 5,357.48
Infrastructure (building construction or repairs)	\$24,776.49
Safina Center - Nature Club (supplies, salaries, travel)	\$ 5,000.00
Business expenses (website, etc.)	\$ 100.00
Bank, transfer, and on-line collection fees (TZ)	\$ 172.67
Bank, transfer, and on-line collection fees (USD)	\$ 892.00
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$54,472.72</b>
<b>Net:</b>	<b>\$10,709.71</b>

# When Children Help Children

Lotte, a young girl from Belgium, worked hard for several months to fund-raise for Amani. She earned money doing household chores for family and friends, washing cars, helping out at a butcher shop making sausages and hamburgers, and baking home-made biscuits for sale. She even sold some of her personal belongings. Lotte didn't stop there! She also made herself more aware of the lives of children in Tanzania; she used less water when taking showers, spent less time on the computer and went to school by bicycle instead of being brought by car. Lotte's hard work paid off, she raised € 280. This meant she even bested the total raised by her older brother Seibe, who led his own fantastic fundraising effort when he was her age. Lotte not only contributed towards the purchase of new solar lights for Amani but even donated some of her toys to the children.



The students of Mrs. Miller's class at Ivy League School and Day Camp and our children at Amani wrote letters and became friends around the world. They shared letters and a skype session in which both sets of children got to share their lives, cultures, and ask endless questions! The Ivy League students conducted a yearlong fundraiser, and their donations made it possible for Amani to purchase brand new book shelves, tables and chairs for our new library. The program created lasting friendship and connected two very different communities that share the same heart.

These are only a few examples of the incredible volunteer created and driven projects at Amani. For more stories, visit our blog.

Want to become a part of our community?

Our **volunteer registration forms** are all available on our online website, and more information about booking can be found at **[africanparaiso.com](http://africanparaiso.com)**.

# Our Sponsorship Program

Amani Children's Home covers the cost of child care through sponsorships and independent donations. By pledging to support a child through our sponsorship program, you cover the per-capita costs of food, medical care, child care, extracurricular activities and staff supervision. Awarded based on merit, these scholarships cover tuition to a local private school, as well as student's basic needs, school supplies, and transport. These opportunities are truly life changers for our students. According to Unicef, in [Tanzania](#) only 62% of children finish primary school, and only 53.5% of those students continue on to secondary school. The literacy rate in Tanzania is only 67.8%. For our children, a solid primary school education is a crucial foundation to passing national exams and excelling later on in their educational career. Sponsorships ensure our children's needs, both personal and academic, are fully covered for years to come. **For more information, visit our website.**

## Nadia's Story



Nadia is a 12-year-old girl, from the Maasai tribe indigenous to the plains of southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. In 2013, she and her brother were brought to Amani by Social Welfare when their parents, both suffering from mental illness, could no longer care for them. The situation at home had become so awful that neither child ever wanted to return home.

Nadia began attending a local public school. She struggled. The teachers at the primary school were underqualified – they couldn't adequately prepare their students for regular exams, let alone encourage Nadia to create and explore. She wanted to learn English, but none of the teachers were bilingual. Nadia loved reading, but the school didn't have enough textbooks and pencils for each student, let alone a library. Bright and determined, her brother was awarded a sponsorship to a private school in Arusha. Nadia watched him depart at the start of each term with the other scholarship children, his trunk packed with a cleanly pressed school uniform, new textbooks and blank notebooks. Nadia grew frustrated. Working with Amani's tutor, she studied in Amani's empty classroom after school until sunset. But at public school she was stunted: her ability to learn was limited by her teachers' inability to teach.

Amani prioritizes children for sponsorship based on merit— not only by grades but by determination, discipline and attitude. Nadia was awarded a scholarship to private school in 2017. A School for Field Studies alumni family committed to sponsoring Nadia through her primary and secondary education; they have not only taken on the costs of her tuition and supplies but taken her on as a family member. With their encouragement, support and investment, she has thrived. After a year, Nadia is nearly fluent in English. Now, when she returns home from school each afternoon, she glows with confidence. She shines. She spends a lot of her free time between the shelves of Amani's new library, flipping through donated books on human anatomy and earth sciences. She's decided she wants to be a teacher one day. After all, she better than anyone knows the need for it.

# Sponsorship at Amani. Where do we stand?

## 2017 - 2018 School Year

**Girls Sponsored: 10**

**Boys Sponsored: 7**

Our sponsorship coverage has doubled in the past two years. However, there are still 25 children waiting on our priority scholarship list. These children currently attend private school, and face many of the same obstacles Nadia once did.

### What obstacles do we face?

- Only 47 per cent of all 5-year-olds are enrolled at the pre-primary school level in 2015. This ranges from 27 per cent in Manyara (our area) to 80 per cent in Mara.
- Primary school-aged children from the poorest families are three times less likely to attend school than those from the wealthiest households.
- While it is estimated that 7.9 per cent of Tanzanians are living with a disability, less than 1 per cent of children in pre-primary, primary and secondary school have a disability.
- Early marriage and pregnancy keep girls out of school. Adolescent pregnancy led to almost 3,700 girls dropping out of primary and secondary education in 2016. More than one third of all girls are married by the age of 18, but girls from poor families are twice as likely to be married early than girls from wealthier homes.
- An estimated 2 million children between the ages of 7 and 13 years are out-of-school. Almost 70 per cent of children aged 14–17 years are not enrolled in secondary education while a mere 3.2 per cent are enrolled for the final two years of schooling.
- The pupil-to-qualified-teacher ratio at pre-primary level is 131:1. This ratio is 169:1 in public pre-primary school compared to 24:1 in private schools. Most children, especially those in rural areas, enter primary school poorly prepared due to the lack of access to early stimulation, poor nutrition and the low quality of pre-primary education.

(UNICEF, 2017)

### Where can we effect change?

A child's primary school experience determines their future. From early educational opportunities (such as learning a second language and developing strong reading skills), to integration into the community beyond Amani's campus, elementary school sets the academic and social foundations a child's life will be built upon. Performance in primary school, and the national exams that are its culmination, determine what quality of secondary school a student will attend. Poor grades on a national exam can relegate a child to the lowest ranking public schools, where the drop-out rates are far above the country average. Primary school is our first and most important chance for life-lasting change.

Children progress through primary school from ages 5 to 15

Children are promoted to secondary school, which lasts 4 years

Students enter university or vocational school



# Progress in the Present: Our Library

We currently have two classrooms for nursery school. This fall, we made the decision to turn one into a library. Children from outside in the larger community lack a safe place to work on homework, to receive tutoring, and to access educational materials. Our own children previously did evening homework in our open-air dining pavilion, which is subject to power outages and rainy winds during the wet season. Furthermore, textbooks in Tanzania are simultaneously required for all public-school students and prohibitively expensive.

With your support, we were able to transform our free room into the first library in our town. We started by commissioning big, wide tables for homework and fifty child-size chairs. We ordered shelves to house freshly donated books and desks for newly purchased laptops. We hired local painters to transform the walls into field guides, covering empty space with flowers, acacia trees climbing towards the ceiling, bearing monkeys and birds on their branches. We allowed our oldest children to help pick the inspirational quotes that now decorate the walls. Donors from all over Long Island, especially Hampton Bays Public Library, contributed to our collection of fiction books. Donations from Ivy League Private School allowed us to purchase Swahili-English bilingual books and a full collection of textbooks for preschool through standard seven. This will allow us to foster a reading-culture within our center, and the larger community.



# Progress in the Present: Wildlife Club

The Amani Foundation leads wildlife- & environment-centric programs to promote curiosity, citizen science, and a sensitivity to nature within local communities. Visiting national parks is prohibitively expensive for most Tanzanians. Our children and others like them have no access to their country's parks, local libraries, or resources to foster an inquisitive outlet about the natural world. With the encouragement and generous support of the **Safina Center**, our program took major leaps and bounds forward in 2017!

## Wildlife Club

Amani purchased teaching materials (including school supplies and books) and to cover translation costs for several weeks of nature-focused classes. These programs included collaborations with other children's education institutions and trips to local wildlife habitats. The goal of this club was to expand upon basic scientific concepts taught in school, and to introduce wildlife-focused classes that inspired a sensitivity to nature. The response was overwhelming positive, with many children reporting these lessons were the highlight of their weekly schedule.

## Key Highlights:

We collaborated with the **Wild Nature Institute** to implement "Juma the Giraffe" curriculums— a Swahili based lesson set that teaches megafaunal adaptations and basic science skills. These lessons, guide by the incredible Lise Levy, were our most popular. The Wild Nature Institute has helped us recruit Tanzanian volunteers interested in continuing Wildlife Club activities. Lesson plans covered scientific concepts such as the water cycle, biomes, trophic levels, etc. Lesson plans also included applied conservation concepts such as water conservation, habitat loss, and illegal hunting. Students learned through a mixed-methods approach that incorporated movies, art, games, and lectures. We also worked with Rodger Legister (in the states) and Elineema Nassary of the **Science Center Arusha** (in Tanzania) to teach astronomy and geology lessons.

Students practice "field" observational skills by filling out "Nature Journal" worksheets that served as single pages of a field guide. Students watched wildlife documentaries and observed animal behavior as part of our little scientist program! We also created kid-friendly wildlife field guide coloring books and translated them into Swahili. Our year ended with field trips to conservation areas to practice our science skills in the wild! We're deeply grateful to **Shutterbug Science**, led by Dr. Catherine Markham at Stony Brook University, who helped inspire and shape our materials!

Thank you to the Safina Center, who made this work possible.



### Maasai Movie Program:

Amani Children's Home staff assisted me in launching a documentary-based outreach program in the local Maasai villages. Twice per week During October and November, we traveled to remote homesteads and set up projectors to show nature movies. We hired a KiSwahili and a KiMaa translator to facilitate discussions and answer questions. The movie nights were a huge success, gaining an ever-growing audience and community support. The Maasai favored movies that featured recognizable species, such as lions and elephants. We generally showed 2-3 documentaries per visit. The English narration was not a barrier to comprehension, and audience members reported feeling like they understood and enjoyed the presentations. Movies proved a cost-effective and enjoyable way to disseminate information among illiterate community members of all ages.

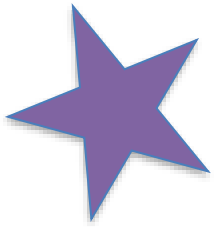


### Our 2017 Intern



Leila Esmailzada is a recent graduate of Stony Brook University with a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and is currently working on her Master's in Public Health. As an undergraduate student, she studied abroad in Madagascar where she researched food security in rural villages. Leila has a background in conservation and a strong interest in empowering communities through education. As a wildlife education intern, she assisted in creating the wildlife education program for the children, while also incorporating the larger community.

Special thanks to Juma Hussein and Gideon Mawenya for teaching and translating all program long!



## Spotlight: An Interview with our new Conservation Educator



**Natamsha Charles** has led Wildlife Club in 2018.

**A brilliant conservationist and rising star in Tanzania, we feature her profile below.**

My name is Namtasha Charles, I am 22 years old. I have recently completed my studies at the University of Dar Es Salaam 2017 where I was pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Science and Conservation. I got my secondary education at Maasae Girls' Lutheran secondary school.

### Q and A:

**1. Why did you become interested in conservation?**

I grew up in a relatively small village with impressive biodiversity and as a result I developed an appreciation for nature. Visiting national parks created a love for animals in me and as I grew up. I learnt about extinction and the current loss of biodiversity. I have always been fascinated by nature, plus I enjoy learning and finding out solutions to present problems.

**2. What are you most passionate about?**

*I am most passionate about wildlife and conservation, working in the wild protecting wildlife and the environment.*

*I am most passionate about changing the way people think about wildlife and its education in general: making people understand that you have to protect wildlife for your life, not for other people. Teaching them to think through problems that make them think beyond simply memorizing facts.*

*I am so passionate about such a seemingly small thing probably because this is **not** a small thing, this is the most important thing one can learn or do. I mean, every problem, every solution, every practice, every mindset, most of it begins with the gaining of knowledge. I believe that everyone needs to realize that power and use it for the greater good.*

**3. What are your career goal?**

My career goals are to be working with wildlife and protecting the environment.

**4. What have you accomplished at Amani during your volunteer?**

During my stay and volunteering time at Amani I have accomplished a number of things: going above and beyond my job description. I created my own lessons to provide education about wildlife, conservation and environment to the children as per my profession. As a sister to the kids I spent my time teaching them sports like volleyball. I offer advice to the girls on how to handle themselves and reach their goals. I feel much better about myself when I am doing something that is directly or indirectly helping the children's well-being, I hope the children feel the same way about me. I also believe that this has been the opportunity for me to interact with people from varied backgrounds who have one common goal to help the children at Amani in achieving their goals.

# Progress in the Present: Sustainable Farming & Entrepreneurship

In 2015 Amani purchased farm land. Since its inauguration, the farmland has been blossoming with benefits. This year, we added a storage silo to ensure our staple crop of corn can be preserved safely throughout the year, insulating us from food shortages and price spikes.

Amani has two gardens that provide vegetables for our children's diet and surplus crops to sell at the local market. Profits from these crops are then used to purchase other dietary staples for the children's home. We used funding to repair and improve garden infrastructure, add higher-quality soil and fertilizers, and plant high-yield vegetables.

These gardens are part of a larger goal: through staff empowerment and small on-site projects, Amani aims to become completely self-sustainable. This way, Amani can continue its mission with financial and managerial security for decades to come.



# Goals for Tomorrow: Health Education

Our 2017 health interns laid down the foundational work for launching health outreach in the community surrounding Amani. Sarah Mincer and Ashley Schuette drafted the proposals for work towards a health clinic on site. As part of our five-year plan, Amani seeks to add a full-time registered nurse and clinical facilities to our campus. In doing so, we will be able to meet our children's health needs, as well as those of the larger community.

We house a number of children with diverse medical needs, and currently lack a nurse's office in which we can treat them. Building a facility onsite would help ensure our children get quick, quality care right on campus.

Nyasi and the nearby villages lack community health education. Many community members have expressed interest in learning about disease prevention and child health. By spreading awareness and rather than stand-alone medical treatment, the Amani can help to improve the health of the community by building a foundational and prophylactic knowledge of how common illness are caught and spread, how to prevent them and how to treat them. This puts the knowledge of health and care in the hands of community members, rather than sequestered in a clinician's office.

Ashley and Sarah also created a booklet about puberty and hygiene, that will be part of a larger curriculum at Amani. As many of our children are rapidly growing up, we believe that equipping our youths with clear and accessible knowledge on their health and bodies is vital. Amani aims to not only care for children during their childhoods but to prepare them for a successful transition to adulthood.

## Our 2017 Interns



Sarah is a graduate student studying biological anthropology at Stony Brook University with degrees in biology and anthropology from Vassar College. While at Vassar, Sarah worked with Partners in Health to support maternal health in Haiti and different sites in Africa. She also worked locally with Planned Parenthood and the Community Center to provide education, fundraising, and resources for HIV/AIDS testing and awareness.



Ashley is a senior studying Nursing at Stony Brook University. During the summer of her first year at Stony Brook, Ashley studied abroad in Tanzania. There she split her time working as an intern at both a children's home and at a hospital. Ashley worked on health projects while in country and saw that there was a need, and desire for HIV/AIDS, family planning, and menstruation health programs.

# Lighting up the Future: Solar at Amani

Much of Amani's electrical circuitry is outdated and falling into disrepair. A faulty panel sparked an electrical fire in November 2017 and made clear the urgency of our need to replace and update our wiring. Through a contract with Solar Power Providers, we replaced the paneling, circuitry and light fixtures throughout our campus, making our utilities safer, more efficient, and more reliable. We purchased and installed a back-up battery system, so that when the electrical grid in our region fails (which is often) we can still power our phones, computers and wi-fi modems to continue managerial and administrative work. Furthermore, this new circuitry is compatible with solar power.



However, at present, Amani lacks sufficient lighting to cover our campus. This is a safety concern as well as practical one: our cooks prepare the children's dinners using flashlights, and homework time ends when the sun goes down. At present, electricity is one of our biggest expenditures. Switching over to solar power would allow us to 1. cut utility costs 2. have a safer and more reliable source of electricity and 3. expand the hours during which our children can read, do homework, and prepare for exams.

A full overhaul of Amani's electrical system and replacement with state of the art solar equipment would total \$20,067. Integrating solar energy infrastructure into Amani Children's Home growth is part of a larger global movement, one that carries enormous implications for the future of African people, land, and economies. In 2018 we hope to raise funds for a full solar installation. We hope you'll join us in our journey to self-sustainability, ensuring the future of our center and our work.

# A Heartfelt Thanks from Our Tanzanian Team

Greetings to all our friends,

2017 has been perhaps the most successful year since the establishment of Amani Children's Home. We progress more quickly towards goals and milestones, work is easier and the burden lighter. For the first time since 2012, we have had enough food for the whole year without fear of shortages, a record number of children have been able to get a better education through sponsorship program, we've increased the security of our campus by building a wall around the entire area of the center. In ability, reach and infrastructure, we are growing.

These goals aren't reached alone. Every accomplishment has been a team effort, from individuals here in Tanzania and all over the world who has seen the importance of a good education, safe living environment, and reliable healthcare.

Each of you was a missing piece in building Amani Children's Home into a home for our children, and I hope that most of you will continue to be part of the Amani Children's Home not only in 2018 but for the many years to come ahead of us.

Nothing in this work gives me as much comfort as seeing the children of Amani with smiles on their faces. Their smiles give me the impression that they feel us to be their family, Amani to be their primary home and that they feel safe and sure of their futures. It's people like you who make these smiles possible. That's why we have used this opportunity to express our gratitude to each of you who gave of your saving and yourselves and decided to help Amani's children.

May God bless you all for extending your **help, care** and **love** to the Amani Children's Home and Foundation.

Gideon Mawenya, Site Manager

**Without our Tanzanian staff – all of our leaders and administrators, our dedicated child caretakers, social workers and educators, and our cooks and groundskeepers – none of this would be possible!**



# We Need Your Help

As you've seen, Amani Children's Home *cannot continue* without your support. Over the next several years, we hope to become an entirely self-sustaining institution through profits from our organic farms and private school. However, we need you now!

Visit [www.childrenofamani.org](http://www.childrenofamani.org) to donate today. We deeply appreciate pledge commitments. These reoccurring monthly donations allow us to predict our income more accurately and plan with confidence towards the future!

## Volunteer & Help Make a Difference: Learn More



- Volunteer with fundraising campaigns and financial management
- Volunteer with communications and online design
- Volunteer in a different way: \_\_\_\_\_

Please visit our website [www.childrenofamani.org](http://www.childrenofamani.org) or call us at 631-522-3217. Send this form by mail to executive director's office:  
Katharine Thompson  
Global Health Institute: N-201 Social Behavioral Sciences Building  
Stony Brook University, Stonybrook New York, 11794

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Annual Report 2017

*Let's be friends!*  

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