Fair Trees Fund

2022 Annual Project Report

Community development • Education • Health • Safety • Sustainable forestry

Foreword

Throughout 2022, Fair Trees Fund continued its work with communities in Racha, Georgia, strengthening access to healthcare and education, supporting young women in sport, and improving the safety and livelihoods of cone pickers. The year also saw substantial progress in the Oni Hub-in initiative, connecting local architectural heritage with international learning and sustainable construction.

This report brings together the outcomes documented in the Fund's monthly board reports. It distinguishes activities undertaken in 2022 from historical results repeated in those reports and notes where year-end information was incomplete.

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About Fair Trees Fund

The Fair Trees Fund (FTF) is an NGO based in Tbilisi, Georgia. It was founded in 2009 with the vision of providing the people of the Racha region a better everyday life with increased safety, health, education, equality and prosperity, while protecting natural forest resources through sustainable management and harvesting. The Fund does this by improving the livelihoods of Georgian cone pickers, their families, and their community through various social investments. The funds for the social investments are raised through the sale of Fair Trees Christmas trees throughout Europe. Every time a consumer purchases a Fair Trees Christmas tree, a percentage of the sales price is allocated as a fixed amount directly to the Fair Trees Fund.

Committed to the 10 Fair Trade principles, FTF's work is securing better and safer working conditions, ensuring workers' rights and fair wages, and improving healthcare, education and infrastructure through sustainable investments in the Racha region.

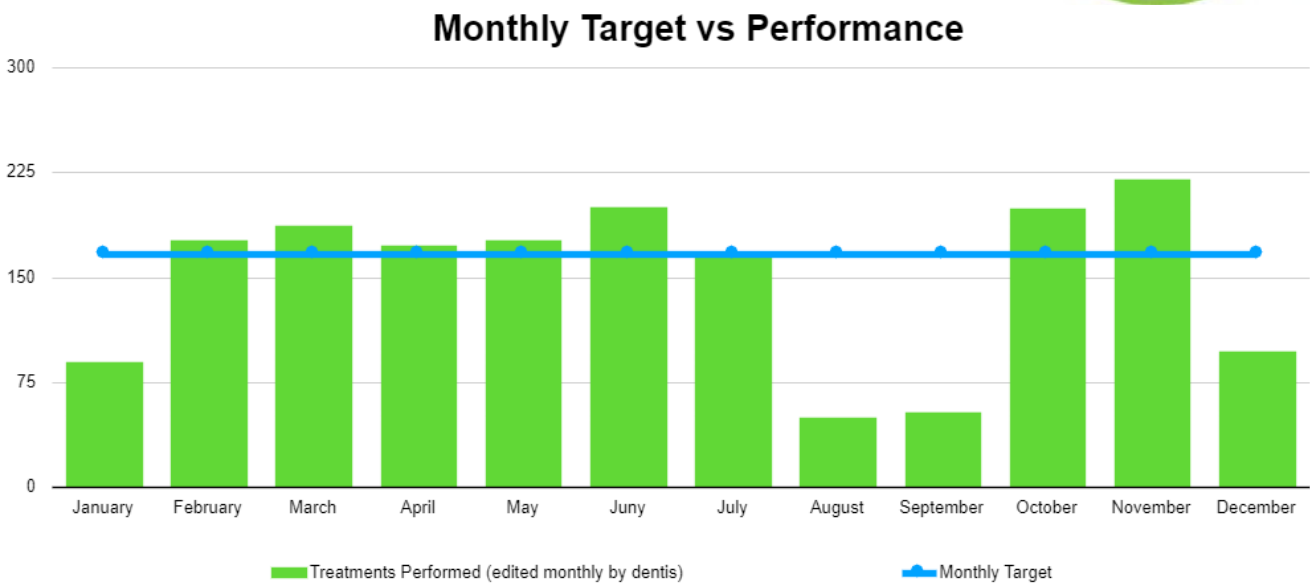
The organization consists of local staff in Georgia who handle project implementation, stakeholder relations, and various other tasks. Board members and volunteers contribute expertise from organisations across Europe. FTF also engages specialist freelancers, including international climbing experts for safety and climbing training.

1. Healthcare

1.1 Dental Clinic in Ambrolauri



Since 2016, the Fair Trees Fund has provided free preventive and therapeutic dental care to children in Ambrolauri and Oni municipalities, helping address barriers to essential oral healthcare. The initiative contributes to SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being.



The Ambrolauri clinic provides free preventive and therapeutic dental care to children in Racha, reducing barriers to oral healthcare. The clinic recorded 1,786 dental treatments in the year-end table, compared with a target of 2,000 (89% of target). This is a provisional total: December data covered only the period through 14 December. The clinic reached 1,168 treatments by July, slightly ahead of its cumulative target, but activity fell to 49 in August and 53 in September when summer holidays and renovation of the school building limited services largely to emergencies. Provision recovered to 199 treatments in October and 220 in November, demonstrating renewed demand once normal operations resumed.

2022 expenditure (account 2110, Dental Clinic): GEL 41,250.00 (EUR 13,407.78).

2. Education

2.1 Students' Scholarship Program



The Fair Trees Fund Students' Scholarship Program supports talented and motivated young people from Racha who face financial barriers to higher education. By helping students from rural communities pursue their academic ambitions, the initiative advances equality of opportunity and contributes to SDG 4: Quality Education. In 2022, the programme continued to support students' academic progress and expanded access through the approval of six new scholarship applications. This was an important achievement, allowing additional students to receive financial support and continue their studies. Beyond direct financial assistance, the programme encourages academic commitment, independence and long-term professional development. Its sustained investment in the next generation helps strengthen the human capital and future prospects of the Racha region.

2022 expenditure (account 2310, Scholarships): GEL 77,605.00 (EUR 26,515.08).

2.2 Cooperation with Act4Transformation



The partnership connects international volunteering with community-based education and development activities in Racha. The partnership brings international volunteers into FTF projects and local community organisations to support learning, tourism and project delivery. FTF hosted its first German volunteer from March through August 2022. During the placement, the volunteer supported Racha 2020 football activities, Oni Hub-in events and project monitoring, while also collaborating with Ambrolauri's Tourist Information Centre. This generated practical assistance for ongoing projects and established a new working relationship with the tourism centre. Initial discussions and concept development for tourism-related cooperation followed, although no completed tourism project was reported for the year.

Financial note: No separately booked expenditure under the "Act of Transformation" account group appears in the 2022 workbook; this does not establish the total cost of the volunteer partnership.

3. Quality of Life

3.1 Girls Football Club "Racha 2020"



Established with FTF support in 2020, the club promotes girls' access to sport, challenges gender stereotypes and develops local coaching and participation opportunities. FTF supports the club's coaching and management to expand girls' participation in organized football and challenge gender barriers in sport. The club expanded to 68 members after six girls joined in October, continuing to provide organised football and regular coaching for girls in Racha. It finished the first phase of the Women's League 2 championship in second place. Reported wins included 9–0 against Akhaltsikhe in June, 15–0 against Zugdidi Phenix in September, and 3–0 against Batumi in the final November match. FTF continued financing coaching and management salaries through 2022, while asking the club to develop a financially sustainable operating model. Donated sportswear and outside contributions also supported participation.

2022 expenditure (Promoting Girls' Football category): GEL 23,617.96 (EUR 7,711.70). This includes football-related education courses, the club contribution, and meetings/transport.

3.2 Fair Wage and Support for Cone Pickers

Following the failure of the 2021 cone harvest, FTF maintained a Fair Trade-oriented income-support arrangement for affected cone pickers. The board reports describe a monthly payment of €88.21 per picker beginning in October 2021, linked to voluntary contributions to social projects. The financial workbook separately establishes the total 2022 expenditure for this support. Cone pickers also supported vulnerable home-care beneficiaries, including by delivering firewood.
2022 expenditure (Contribution to Subsistence Income, account 2410): GEL 26,725.38 (EUR 8,483.15). This is the recorded annual amount, separate from the monthly payment rate quoted above.

4. Safety

4.1 Safety and Climbing Standards



FTF developed safety procedures and practical training for professional cone pickers, including climbing, rescue, first aid and occupational health. The Board approved the first edition of the tree-climbing standards and industry code of practice, while the accompanying workbook continued to be refined. First-aid training with the Georgian Red Cross took place on 3–4 September, followed by practical safety and rescue-chain training on 11–15 September. The reported participants passed their examinations and had their certificates updated. Medical examinations identified one cone picker as unfit to climb, for whom insurance-supported treatment and income assistance were arranged.
2022 expenditure (Safety category): GEL 79,204.17 (EUR 27,196.58). This includes insurance, climbing training, equipment, development of safety standards and related costs.

5. Environmental Protection

5.1 Forestry Education and Career Outreach



The Fund encourages young people in Racha to understand forest management, ecology and careers in forestry. This initiative introduces Racha students to sustainable forest management, forestry careers and relevant higher-education opportunities. The initiative introduced local school pupils to forestry education and sustainable forest management through school information sessions in Oni and Ambrolauri and a field event in Tlughi forest on 22 July. Visiting German forestry students and specialists demonstrated field methods and discussed forest ecology and career pathways. The activities established contact between local learners and international forestry expertise. Partners expressed interest in further outreach, but recurring activities were not confirmed because local coordination capacity was limited.

6. Oni Hub-in



The Oni Hub-in project was initiated in 2022 through cooperation between the Institute of Architecture and Culture at the Royal Danish Academy, VAADS University, Danish flooring manufacturer Dinesen, the Fair Trees Fund and local partners, with support from Oni Municipality and the New Democracy Fund. It promotes the sustainable development of Racha by connecting traditional Georgian wooden architecture with contemporary design, sustainable timber use and international educational exchange. The project seeks to preserve architectural heritage while building practical skills and new opportunities for regional development.

In 2022, three seasonal schools brought together more than 60 students in total.

The Spring School took place in Racha, where students explored traditional wooden buildings, local construction knowledge and the relationship between architecture and the rural landscape. The Summer School took place in Denmark, extending the Georgian–Danish educational exchange and exposing participants to further approaches to design and sustainable construction. The Autumn School returned to Racha, allowing students to develop their practical and collaborative work in the local context. Together, the schools created a platform for intercultural learning, hands-on experimentation and long-term academic cooperation.

The students' work was presented in two exhibitions: one in the village of Sori in Racha and another at the Royal Danish Academy in Denmark. These events connected the work with local audiences and gave Georgian architectural heritage international visibility. The three schools and two exhibitions established a foundation for the project's further development and demonstrated how educational partnerships can support heritage preservation, practical skills and sustainable regional development.





7. Organisational Development and Funding

7.1 Ambrolauri Office and Infrastructure

FTF pursued a centrally located facility for staff, equipment storage, safety training and possible future social-enterprise activities. FTF pursued a lease of a 293 m² building in Ambrolauri to create a more permanent base for administration, storage, training and possible social-enterprise activities. An application was submitted and the city council authorised the mayor's office to proceed with the lease process. This represented administrative progress toward securing infrastructure, but the latest report did not confirm a signed lease or an operational office.

7.2 Securing Further Funding

In 2022, the Fund and its partners explored grant opportunities to extend existing programmes. The monthly reports describe applications and discussions concerning the Oni Hub-in initiative, early childhood education and further community activities. Applications and expressions of interest are not presented as secured awards unless confirmation was documented.

8. Financial Insights

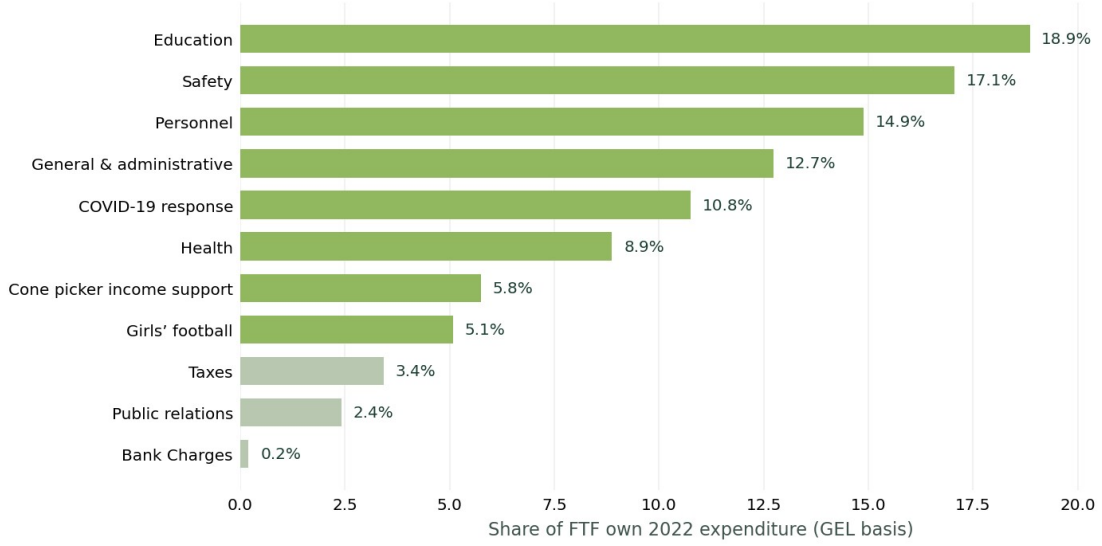
8.1 Project Expenditure in 2022

This section replaces the provisional financial information with the 2022 figures in the Fair Trees Foundation accounting workbook compiled from Q1–Q4 2022. Expenditure is reported in both Georgian lari (GEL) and euros (EUR), using the amounts recorded in the source workbook. Programme expenses below are selected ledger amounts and should not be added to the category totals again. Funds administered on behalf of the Royal Danish Academy for Oni Hub-in are presented separately and excluded from FTF's own expenditure and percentage calculations.

Project / programme	2022 expenditure from the accounting workbook
Dental clinic (2110)	GEL 41,250.00 | EUR 13,407.78
Student scholarships (2310)	GEL 77,605.00 | EUR 26,515.08
Girls' football programme (category total)	GEL 23,617.96 | EUR 7,711.70
Cone picker subsistence income (2410)	GEL 26,725.38 | EUR 8,483.15
Safety and climbing (category total)	GEL 79,204.17 | EUR 27,196.58
Oni Hub-in (Academy-administered; excluded from FTF own expenses)	GEL 281,074.61 | EUR 90,954.76
COVID-19 response (category total)	GEL 49,974.76 | EUR 14,316.88

8.2 Expenditure by Category

The percentages below represent each category's share of FTF's own expenditure, calculated in GEL. They do not include the Royal Danish Academy funds. EUR amounts are those recorded in the quarterly reports, not conversions made at a single year-end exchange rate.



Detailed 2022 expenditure by category

Expenditure category	GEL	EUR	Share
Education	87,574.35	30,017.48	18.85%
Safety	79,204.17	27,196.58	17.05%
Personnel / salaries	69,131.37	22,816.61	14.88%
General and administrative	59,133.03	19,137.83	12.73%
Covid-19 Response	49,974.76	14,316.88	10.76%
Health	41,250.00	13,407.78	8.88%
Cone picker income support	26,725.38	8,483.15	5.75%
Promoting girls' football	23,617.96	7,711.70	5.08%
Taxes	15,889.65	5,224.97	3.42%
Public relations	11,255.45	3,908.93	2.42%
Bank Charges	944.14	288.17	0.20%
Act4Transformation	0.00	0.00	0.00%
Extraordinary adjustment in Denmark	-174.53	-50.00	-0.04%
TOTAL FTF OWN EXPENDITURE	**464,525.73**	**152,460.08**	**100.00%**

8.3 Funds Administered on Behalf of the Royal Danish Academy

The 2022 records also include GEL 281,074.61 (EUR 90,954.76) administered for the Royal Danish Academy in connection with Oni Hub-in. These amounts are disclosed for completeness, but they are not FTF's own programme expenditure and are excluded from the category chart and expenditure shares above. The combined total appearing in the original annual accounting report is GEL 745,600.34 (EUR 243,414.84).

Reconciliation of 2022 recorded expenditure

Scope	GEL	EUR
FTF own expenditure	464,525.73	152,460.08
Royal Danish Academy, administered funds	281,074.61	90,954.76
Combined recorded amount	**745,600.34**	**243,414.84**

Accounting scope and limitations

This expenditure analysis is based on Michael's 2022 consolidated workbook and its four underlying quarterly reports. The amounts include a net negative adjustment of GEL 174.53 (EUR 50.00), recorded under extraordinary items in Denmark. The workbook does not contain a complete 2022 income statement, opening/closing balance sheet or reliable year-end surplus/deficit; therefore no total income or net result is asserted here. Displayed numbers are rounded to two decimals, so minor rounding differences may occur.

Editorial note: Photographs illustrate the projects; some may be archival. Financial figures are drawn from the 2022 Q1–Q4 accounting workbook and exclude Royal Danish Academy administered funds from FTF own expenditure totals.

Make Christmas Trees Fair Trees, protecting people and forest

www.fairtreesfund.com