

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



HELVETAS



**HOW  
CAN ICE CREAM  
SHAPE A LIVING?**

**Our vision is a just world in which all men and women determine the course of their lives in dignity and security, using environmental resources in a sustainable manner.**

**“I am so happy that I no longer have to migrate to other regions for work and that I can earn money here at home instead.”**



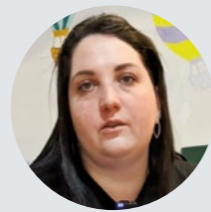
Mehedi Hasan,  
employee at an electronics store,  
Bangladesh

**“The fact that I, as a woman, repair wells is still quite unusual. But you can't give up on something just because it's unusual.”**



Hareg Mamo,  
well repair technician,  
Ethiopia

**“The women are working while many husbands are on the front lines. This makes the shelter very important, both for the children's safety and for everyone's livelihood.”**



Marina Kikot,  
mother with paid employment,  
Ukraine

**For many people, ice cream is associated with ease and enjoyment. For those who harvest the ingredients, produce it and make their living from selling it, however, it represents work and a secure livelihood. Helvetas supports fair private-sector development in 35 countries, helping to create jobs and secure people's means of living.**



© Simon B. Opladen; Title picture: © Mauricio Panozo

**Vocational training: Helvetas Kosovo promotes interactions between businesses, vocational training centers and government institutions.**

**Cover: Senobia Lázaro from Sucre, Bolivia, grew up in extreme poverty and now with her ice cream business creates jobs for dozens of women affected by violence.**



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## WHY WE ACTIVELY ENGAGE

- 8 Impact assessment
- 10 Our partner countries
- 12 Improving systems



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## WHAT WE DO

- 16 Helvetas at a glance
- 18 Ensuring basic rights
- 22 Creating new perspectives
- 26 Strengthening good governance
- 29 Alleviating suffering
- 32 Shaping Switzerland
- 33 Promoting knowledge



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## WHO MAKES IT POSSIBLE

- 36 Our finances
- 38 Our organization
- 40 Thank you

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# STANDING IN SOLIDARITY – NOW, MORE THAN EVER

Helvetas works to contribute to a more just and peaceful world. Stability and orientation are essential; now, more than ever. Helvetas has a clear compass: We work with people who cannot afford to give up hope.

### Staying the course: now, more than ever!

I became President of Helvetas four years ago. In this time, I have discovered new reasons, each and every day, to champion Switzerland's oldest development organization. Consider, for example, our strong local anchoring. Our work has always been carried out in close collaboration with local people and organizations. Or the South-South cooperation we foster, where engineers from the Nepalese suspension bridge program are now applying their expertise in Ethiopia through an initiative supported by Helvetas. What moves me the most, though, is the courage of our staff in crisis regions. Time and again, I hear: "Helvetas is present where no one else goes." This includes the remotest villages in Haiti. Or Myanmar, where political conflicts have overlapped with the aftermath of severe earthquakes. Helvetas has quickly integrated humanitarian activities into long-term development projects. But, dear reader, we can only do all this because you support us. In a world of increasing uncertainty, you have chosen to stand in solidarity with people who cannot afford to lose hope. Thank you for your dedication!

*Regula Rytz, President*



Regula Rytz, President of Helvetas



© Maurice K. Grüning

Melchior Lengsfeld, Executive Director

### Stability in uncertain times

The international order has become fragile, a fact that cannot be ignored, even in Switzerland, as has become abundantly clear in the past year. This makes it all the more important for us to work with committed individuals, organizations and small businesses in our partner countries to address the root causes of poverty, exclusion and fragility. Together, we search for ways out of poverty and advocate for fair opportunities so that people can participate socially and economically and young people are better able to determine their own future. We see our work as a contribution to a more just and more secure world. Wars are decided by those in power and enabled by inequality and social polarization. Peace cannot be decreed from above; it must be

built up from below, from within a society. Lasting peace is rooted in the everyday, in a secure environment where people's dignity and rights are upheld, and where local institutions strengthen social cohesion and facilitate economic progress. This constructive and connecting work lies at the heart of what Helvetas does. It is not spectacular. It takes time to bear fruit, and its success is never guaranteed. But there is no alternative. Your support strengthens this commitment, now more than ever. Thank you.

*Melchior Lengsfeld, Executive Director*



Helvetas is building a sustainable circular agricultural economy in a region of Vietnam together with representatives from the cocoa sector, and soon also from the coffee sector. While the bean is turned into chocolate, the cocoa pod husk can be processed into packaging for chocolate, animal feed, compost or biochar as a substitute for fertilizer and even into petroleum-free, bioplastic pallets. Cocoa producers are also establishing agroforestry gardens, where, alongside cocoa, they also grow timber and fruit trees, vegetables and grains. All of this improves soils and food security, conserves water, reduces waste and lowers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

© Patrick Rohr

**WHY  
DO WE ONLY  
MOVE FORWARD  
WHEN WE  
TURN IN CIRCLES?**

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# INVESTING WITH IMPACT

Every Swiss franc invested in development cooperation changes real-life conditions, especially when done in a targeted manner. Cost-benefit analyses help establish the priorities that most effectively strengthen people, communities and institutions over the long term.

In a context of limited resources and increasing demands for accountability, cost-benefit analyses are an essential tool that help development organizations strategically align decisions and optimize their impact.

These analyses answer strategic questions such as: “Is this intervention worthwhile? Are we doing things right, and are we doing the right things? How can we achieve more with fewer resources?” A cost-benefit analysis makes it possible to estimate the return on investment and assess costs and benefits in different ways. And in addition to the financial aspects, it highlights actual achievements: higher incomes, newly created jobs, greater resilience and more equitable access to public services and improved infrastructure. Every analysis reflects the lives of women, men and children. Lives that are improved through evidence-based decisions.

Since 2020, Helvetas has conducted more than twenty cost-benefit analyses for its own projects, as well as for external clients, in particular the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). These analyses influence the planning, management and assessment of projects in areas ranging from good governance to agriculture, vocational training and disaster risk management.

## Our expertise

Helvetas’ team of specialists supports organizations and projects throughout the entire lifecycle of a project, from design to implementation, assessment and identification of lessons learned. The analyses include cost-benefit studies, participatory impact analyses, qualitative studies such as case studies, the systematic documentation of results and experiences and tracer studies, even in fragile contexts or in areas with little available data. Additionally, project teams and partner organizations are given the tools to conduct such analyses themselves. Helvetas also participates in research projects that use randomized studies and other methods to determine which initiatives have the greatest impact.

## Investments that pay off

An example from West and North Africa shows that protecting children and young people along migration routes is an investment in stability and opportunities. Over three years, and on behalf of SDC, Helvetas gave more than 40,000 young people access to protection, psychosocial support, healthcare, education and jobs. 56,000 took part in information sessions on mobility and its risks, and 3,000 victims of violence, exploitation and abuse received specialized support. In addition, the five participating countries (Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Niger and Tunisia) harmonized their child protection systems. More than 3,000 government officials and social workers acquired specific skills to support these vulnerable young people more effectively. The average cost per child and young person was CHF 237, a remarkably efficient figure. Every franc invested helps reduce future costs, as children and young people who are less marginalized generate fewer social expenses, are better able to cope with crises and can ultimately earn their own livelihoods. Social cohesion also increases. The mobility of well-educated young people thus becomes a driver of stability and inclusive, sustainable growth.

In the Gulf of Mottama in Myanmar, an analysis confirmed the profitability of sustainable agriculture: Rice and mung bean producers now earn significantly higher incomes thanks to improved, locally developed seeds and new cultivation techniques. With a cost-benefit ratio of over 1:5 for mung bean cultivation, the return on investment is exceptionally high, generating CHF 5 for every Swiss franc invested. The analysis also confirmed that new tube wells are an efficient, cost-effective solution for ensuring access to clean water: the cost of just 0.24 kyat per liter of water (CHF 0.00009) is offset by a daily time saving of five hours for each woman who used to fetch water far away beforehand. These results demonstrate that sustainable access to clean water and healthy nutrition are not only essential for survival, but that they also make economic sense. The analysis showed that the initiative has continued to function despite the current conflict and that it is having a positive impact on people’s living conditions throughout the region.



© Patrick Rohr

Gulburak Begmataeva from the Alai Valley in Kyrgyzstan became a mountain guide with support from Helvetas, an investment that is paying off for her and her village as sustainable tourism thrives.

In the Alai Mountains of Kyrgyzstan, an assessment of a tourism project found a cost-benefit ratio of more than 1:2. The project promotes sustainable tourism as well as locally produced goods and handicrafts. Local tourism has thus experienced a significant boost thanks to support from Switzerland. This has created additional jobs and inspired entrepreneurially minded people, all of which further stimulates the local economy.

In Moldova, an analysis pointed to the substantial impact that targeted support for small businesses can yield: At the start of the project, the 650 supported SMEs recorded revenue growth of 10%, a figure that has since risen to 30%. This translates into an additional CHF 33 million in profit by 2026. The cost-benefit ratio of 1:15 shows that more than CHF 15 in value have been generated for every Swiss franc invested. The internal rate of return, which is an appropriate metric for longer-term analyses, stands at 380%, an exceptionally high level for an economic development scenario. The analysis shows that investments in innovation, inclusion, services and business models are both a driver of competitiveness and an economically sound choice for promoting inclusive growth. By the end

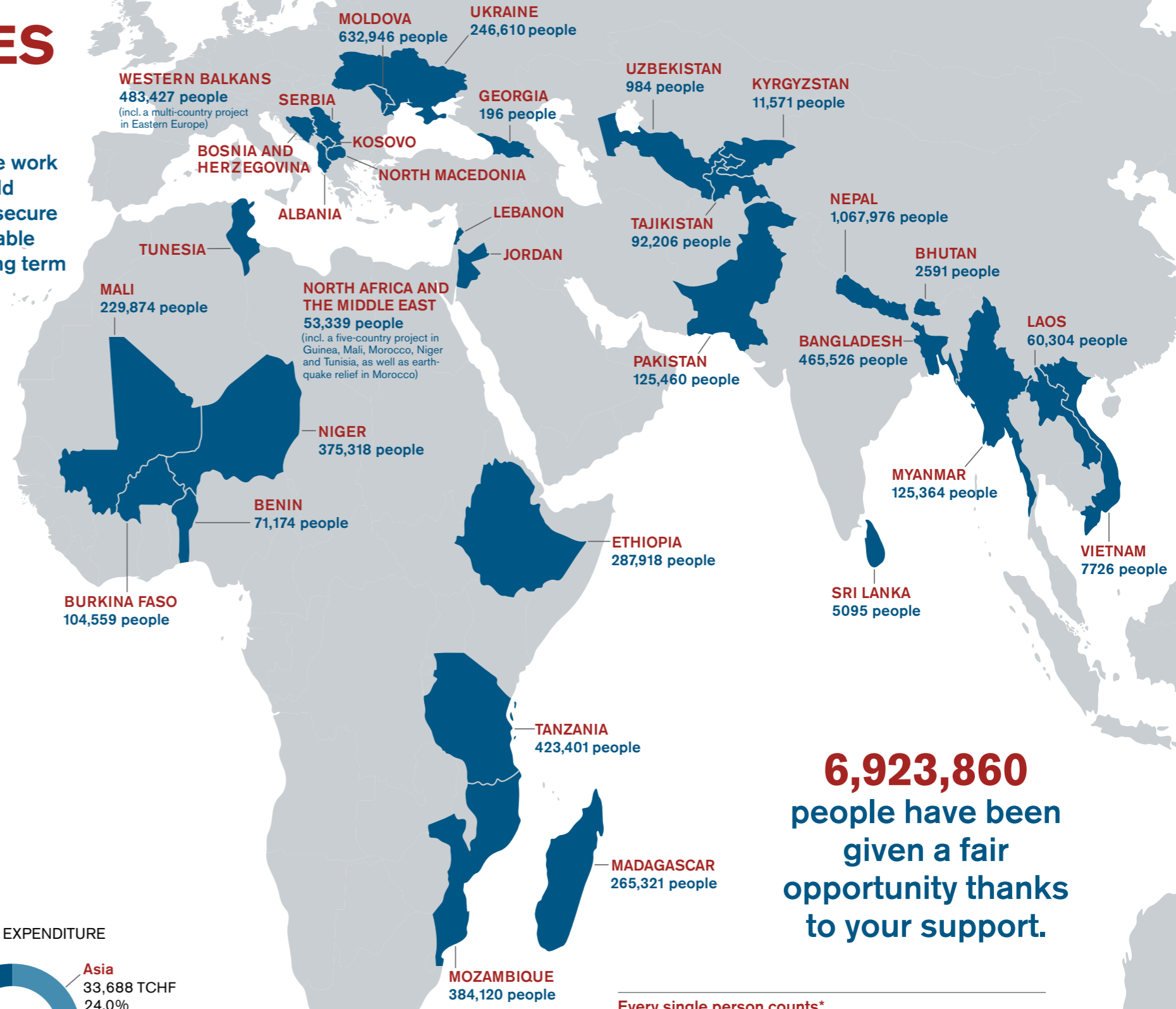
of 2025, 2,600 people (37% of whom belong to disadvantaged groups) had benefited from this initiative, a number that is expected to reach 6,000 by the end of 2026. The additional income generated through new economic opportunities and improved working conditions is estimated at CHF 12 million.

## Investing where it makes the greatest impact

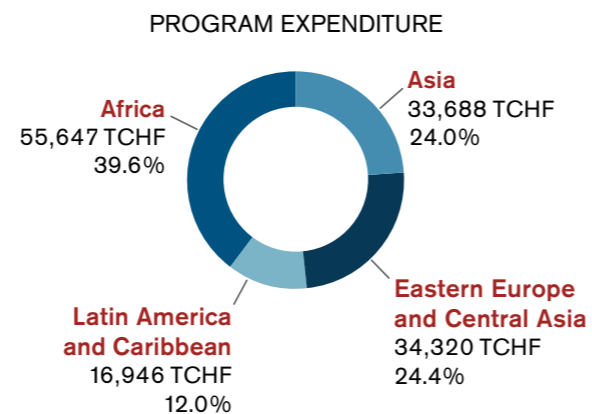
These cost-benefit analyses enable Helvetas to demonstrate that many projects, whether they address education, drinking water or climate protection, generate measurable positive effects for people and societies. In cases where results prove unsatisfactory, such analyses provide valuable guidance on where to make adjustments to achieve better outcomes. This ensures that every Swiss franc invested today becomes a building block for a more equitable and sustainable future, and this helps create fair opportunities for disadvantaged people.

# FAIR OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

Helvetas works with and for people living in poverty. We work in countries that are among the poorest in the world as well as in middle-income countries and in fragile, insecure regions. Because our experience shows that sustainable development takes time, we are committed over the long term to creating fair opportunities for all.



**6,923,860** people have been given a fair opportunity thanks to your support.



**Every single person counts\***

In every project, Helvetas collects annual data on the number of people with whom its employees and partner organizations have worked directly. This figure varies from year to year, for example when large projects begin or come to an end, or when large campaigns are implemented. The figure also varies because Helvetas is increasingly promoting systemic changes to improve rule of law capacities, the participation of the population, or public services. To this end, Helvetas is working ever more closely with civil society organizations, local authorities and the private sector. \*Due to a new results framework, the numbers can't be compared to numbers from previous years.

# CITIES FOR HEALTHY NUTRITION

Two cities in Bangladesh and Tanzania are working with Helvetas and the City of Zurich to improve their nutrition. The project creates an environment in which everyone has a fair chance to eat a healthy, balanced and satisfying diet.

In Mbeya, Tanzania, one third of all children are chronically undernourished despite the fertile farmland in the surrounding area, that makes Mbeya one of the country's largest food producers. "The challenge is that in a city, you need money to feed yourself, because there is no space for gardens," says Agnes Mahembe, Head of the Inclusive Cities for Nutrition project. There is also a lack of knowledge about what a balanced diet entails.

Helvetas Tanzania is applying a systems change approach to improve food security for the population of Mbeya. This involves an analysis of the entire value chain – from cultivation in the fields to harvesting, storage, transport, processing, sale, consumption and waste management – to identify weaknesses, develop solutions and clarify responsibilities, conducted jointly by all stakeholders. In this process, nutrition experts from Mbeya can draw on the expertise of specialists from Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh and Zurich, who regularly share knowledge and experience within a city partnership – and also inspire one another.

## Prudent transformation

In line with national policies and local government regulations in Tanzania, local government authorities are responsible for ensuring food and nutrition security

## Bangladesh: Nutrition in low-income areas

Helvetas Bangladesh is working with partner organizations to promote small-scale and vertical gardening as well as small livestock rearing in densely populated, low-income neighborhoods. In less than four years, women have increased their dietary diversity: initially, only 11% consumed at least five different types of food daily, a figure that has risen to 66% today. Additional positive effects are: women are more engaged in entrepreneurial activities, motivating one another and gaining self-confidence in the process. Moreover, cooperation between the government and local communities has improved, and nutrition has become a higher priority in local planning processes.

## Tanzania: More hygiene, less food waste

Operators of food stalls in Mbeya's markets previously lacked access to clean water for cooking as well as ways of properly disposing of their wastewater. Washing stations now give these market vendors and street food vendors, who are mainly women, the ability to process and pack the vegetables and food they sell in a hygienic manner. They receive information on hygiene regulations and food quality. A wastewater disposal system was also established. The government provides spaces for daycare centers at the markets. An initial round of ideas on how to avoid food waste at market and street food stalls is currently being tested. A new agricultural training farm has also been created to demonstrate climate-friendly farming methods.

within their jurisdictions. Inspired by the strategy for sustainable food systems of the city of Zurich – which aims to reduce food waste, promote healthy and environmentally friendly diets and support sustainable products – Mbeya's mayor, Dormohamed Rahmat, has asked Helvetas for support in renewing the city's food strategy.

Together with Helvetas, the Mbeya City Council assessed the city's food system in depth and addressed questions such as: Who is growing which foods where? How are they stored and processed? Who eats what, and why? And where can the local government influence and initiate change?

Instead of merely addressing the symptoms of malnutrition, the municipal administration has to assume broad responsibilities under the new strategy: through urban planning measures, it must now ensure that food reaches the city intact and in a timely manner, and that it can be processed hygienically and sold at fair prices. The city actively promotes climate-friendly agriculture, as well as hygiene standards. It also provides sanitation facilities, for example in markets. It must also promote healthy nutrition in public institutions such as hospitals and school canteens.



© Franz Thiel

Cooling systems such as this one for tomatoes in Tanzania help keep harvested produce fresh while awaiting transport to the market.

## Creating future opportunities

Eating habits are difficult to change, though, and transformation begins with individual choices about consumption. To encourage the population to adopt healthy nutrition habits, Helvetas and its partner organizations organize community meetings, cooking festivals, radio programs, school competitions and events featuring music and games (also known as "bonanzas"). These activities consistently focus – often subtly – on healthy nutrition and balanced meals. Celebrities promote healthy eating, and short videos on the topic are screened in movie theaters. The project regularly shares nutrition tips and recipes on existing women's and savings groups on WhatsApp.

Healthy school meals form the cornerstone of this initiative, as young children are the most affected by chronic malnutrition, which can have long-term consequences on their physical and cognitive development, concentration and education. Today, all 122 public schools in Mbeya provide healthy school meals, without exception. School meal committees at each school assess needs and costs and organize the required food supplies. However, only about half

of all families can afford these healthy meals for their children, even though they may contribute in-kind or through labor instead of money. Helvetas and the municipal administration are currently working to identify solutions to this challenge.

Helvetas has considerable experience in encouraging people affected by poverty to launch income-generating initiatives through the provision of advisory services, trainings and seed capital. This yields thriving community gardens, small-scale livestock farming and the direct sale of produce to schools. Helvetas also works with municipal social services to support low-income families in financing school meals. In addition, schools are supplementing the necessary ingredients for children's lunches through their own gardens. As we all know, homegrown food simply tastes better.

The food security situation has improved in Mbeya as well as in Cox's Bazar, but not all objectives have been achieved yet. Behavioral change takes time.

This project is a cooperation between the city of Zurich and the cities of Mbeya in Tanzania and Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. Zurich contributes substantially to the project costs and also acts as a strategic and technical partner to the two partner cities.

# WHAT IS THE RECIPE FOR SUCCESS ON A PRODUCTION LINE?



North Macedonia is suffering from excessive emigration. Young people in particular are seeking their fortunes abroad, as career prospects remain limited at home. Working together with the North Macedonian Chamber of Commerce and the government, Helvetas has, on behalf of SDC, launched a dual vocational education system inspired by the Swiss model. This initiative has successfully connected what was once a highly theoretical professional education system with the private sector and thereby given young workers hands-on experience and access to the domestic labor market. Since 2021, 15,000 young women and men have begun apprenticeships at more than 1,000 companies.

# WHAT WE DO

Helvetas implements development and humanitarian aid projects. We ensure basic rights, create new perspectives and strengthen good governance. We also provide technical advisory services, develop subject-specific expertise and engage in political dialogue and advocacy.



## Ensuring basic rights

### Water, food and climate

In 2025 **3,766,002** women and men gained sustainable access to water, sanitation, proper hygiene, better nutrition and natural resources, or have benefited from larger harvests and improved climate resilience. Together with Helvetas, they installed solar-powered wells and latrines, built roads and bridges and learned important hygiene rules and new, climate-adapted cultivation methods.

## Creating new perspectives

### Skills, jobs and income

In 2025 **1,083,051** young, mostly disadvantaged women and men gained access to education and vocational training, found a job, or started their own business with Helvetas' support. At the same time, **6,733** small and medium-sized enterprises have gained better access to markets, created jobs for disadvantaged people and begun to offer sustainable products and better services.

## Strengthening good governance

### Voice, inclusion and cohesion

In 2025, with Helvetas' support, **837,303** women and men learned techniques to better demand their right to basic public services and to resolve conflicts. Helvetas also worked with local authorities and partner organizations to counsel and support **1,235,679** women and men in planning their safe, responsible and profitable labor migration.

## Alleviating suffering

### Humanitarian response

In 2025, Helvetas supported **56,993** people in distress meet their most pressing basic needs. In its projects, Helvetas supported a total of **629,386** people in areas afflicted by natural disasters, crises and conflict in gaining access to water, sanitation, education and retraining courses. Helvetas combines short-term emergency aid with longer-term development measures to enable people to rebuild their livelihoods as swiftly as possible.



Jilo Boru from Samaro, Ethiopia, is a member of a new dairy cooperative that enables women to refrigerate the milk from their goats and cows and to sell it at better prices.

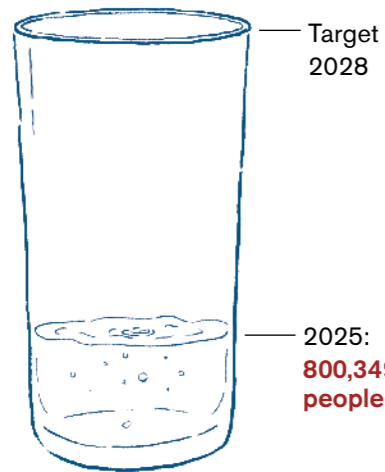
**3,496,475** women,  
**3,256,537** men and  
**170,848** people of  
diverse genders improved  
their livelihoods and  
living conditions.

# SCHOOL GARDENS AND WEATHER DATA

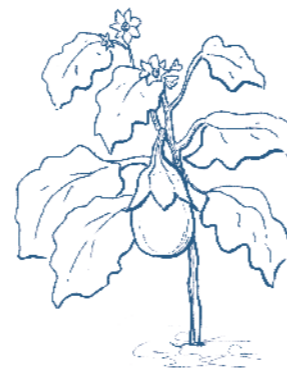
Only those who have access to clean water, toilets and knowledge of hygiene, who can eat a balanced diet and who can protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, can break free from poverty. Working together with affected communities, partner organizations, government authorities and private companies, Helvetas develops solutions that give people a fair chance to thrive.

## An early warning system for La Paz

Our target for 2025–28: **3,000,000** people have gained access to basic drinking water by 2028.



The approximately 750,000 residents of La Paz, the third largest city in Bolivia, live at 3,600 meters above sea level, in the canyon of the Rio Choqueyapu. Climate change is endangering residents through the increased risk of heavy rainfall, flooding and landslides. Helvetas is supporting the city authorities, on behalf of the World Bank, in improving early warning systems and disaster preparedness. Using satellite and weather data, risk and hazard analyses, as well as warning protocols and a clear communication strategy, the population is now alerted more quickly about weather risks and informed of protective measures. A risk map identifies where additional measures are needed to protect the population.



## Vegetables in school

In Burkina Faso, Helvetas has combined water and hygiene projects with waste recycling and school gardens. Waste is collected and sorted. Old paper is turned into new paper. It is also compressed into briquettes as an ecological alternative to wood charcoal. Twelve school gardens, each measuring 625 m<sup>2</sup>, have been established and are being run with support from Helvetas. They have grown into small-scale agricultural enterprises. In 2025, they supplied school cafeterias with 5.6 tons of vegetables grown and tended by the students themselves.

Helvetas helps to achieve the following Agenda 2030 goals:

- 1 No poverty
- 2 Zero hunger
- 6 Clean water and sanitation
- 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- 12 Responsible consumption and production
- 13 Climate action
- 15 Life on land

“Like everyone else, I used to think that I could use as much water as I wanted. Now I know we must use it carefully. Many of us depend on it.”

Gladys Tello Merino, Abancay, Peru



In Abancay, Peru, public services, economic growth and infrastructure development are lagging behind the pace of urbanization. Climate change is also reducing water supplies. With the knowledge that this valuable resource must be used sparingly and distributed fairly, the population, government authorities and private companies are jointly protecting the river catchment area that supplies the city with water, and – together with Helvetas – they are ensuring equitable access for all.

## Consolidating knowledge

The challenges of water and sanitation projects vary from country to country due to geographic, cultural, political and economic conditions. Over the past year, Helvetas teams from **Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras and Peru** have systematized numerous case studies and consolidated their expertise in integrated water management, water security and hygiene in both urban and rural contexts. This pooling of knowledge has resulted in the publication “Inspiring Experiences: Water, Justice and Policy-Making,” which was published to ensure that future projects will benefit from the combined expertise of these four countries.



## Thinking in landscapes

Northern Madagascar is home to internationally prized cocoa beans. To better protect the region from climate change and poverty-driven deforestation, 2,000 cocoa producers are diversifying cultivation on their plots in alignment with agroforestry principles. This strengthens the watershed, livelihoods and biodiversity. Mandated by Seco, Helvetas is supporting these producers in meeting international export standards and obtaining official land certificates to increase their own legal security. Helvetas connects producers, government authorities and the private sector to ensure the effectiveness of these measures.



## Safe water supply

People living on the coast of **Bangladesh** are affected by global warming in several ways: rising sea levels, cyclones, storm surges and flooding are pushing salt further inland, damaging soils and contaminating the groundwater. This harms agriculture, nutrition, health and incomes. Working together with a local organization, Helvetas is supporting the construction of sanitation facilities and water access points for more than 1,800 students and teachers across six schools, as well as 106 water points that provide almost 22,000 people with safe drinking water. Through an integrated approach, Helvetas strengthens both people and supply systems so that they are more sustainably protected against the impacts of climate change.

## A second look at impacts

In **Nepal**, 400 women and men answered water-related questions before and after a project, such as: In the last four weeks, how often...  
 ...did you worry about not having enough water for your needs?  
 ...have problems with water caused you to feel ashamed or excluded?  
 ...did you have to change what was being eaten?  
 ...did you go to bed thirsty?  
 Before the project 98.25% rated their water insecurity as high, moderate, or low. By the end of the project, the picture had reversed: 97.5% of the 400 personnes reported that they were no longer or only marginally experiencing water insecurity.

## Regulating the flow of water

On behalf of SDC, Helvetas supported the decentralization of the water supply in **Haiti** and examined different management models. The consensus that emerged was that the combination of a user committee and a professional management for the technical, commercial and financial aspects of water supply is the most widely accepted and efficient governance model. This division of responsibilities increases accountability and oversight and facilitates the flow of information and the handling of complaints. By contrast, approaches that do not involve users are more likely to lead to conflicts and even interruptions in the water supply.



## Weather information

In the barren highlands of Amhara in **Ethiopia**, Helvetas and a Norwegian project are working together to ensure that farming families receive, understand and use weather information. The national meteorological service provides localized three-day weather forecasts via WhatsApp. Helvetas supports farmers in planning their cultivation, irrigation and harvesting accordingly. Local rainfall measurements are used to verify and continuously improve the forecasts. In the long term, this information also influences the redesigning of current irrigation systems.

More about our Water, Food and Climate working area: [helvetas.org/basicrights](https://helvetas.org/basicrights)

984,447

people worked with Helvetas in 2025 to protect their livelihoods against the long-term impacts of climate change.



Féguens Joseph, nursery worker, ranger and singer, Haiti

## “Even infrastructure has to be climate-resilient”

**Mozambique** is often struck by cyclones. On the northern coast of the country, communities are learning how to make their water supply systems resilient to storms.

### Ricardo Mendes, how does climate change show itself in Mozambique?

In the Nampula region, cyclones, heavy rainfall and increasingly unpredictable weather patterns are becoming more frequent. These storms not only destroy homes but also fields and crops, thus affecting people’s livelihoods. They also push seawater inland, which leads to widespread salinization. We are helping communities to better prepare for such storms.

### How so?

We are working with the local authorities to develop emergency plans for extreme weather events,

among other measures. Our project trains emergency committees who inform the local population when a storm is approaching. This allows people to be evacuated more quickly and brought to safety. And after a cyclone, hygiene measures are even more crucial than usual, so we also teach people about this. This is essential for preventing outbreaks of diseases such as cholera.

### Is that enough?

No, critical infrastructure also needs to be climate-resilient and storm-resistant. In these rural areas, houses are built from wood, which is the most readily available material. We support families in using more durable timber so that homes are more likely to resist collapse. Cyclones also damage latrines and sanitation facilities.

When wastewater enters drinking water systems, the risk of disease increases. For this reason, we train local artisans to build wind-resistant latrines and to drill wells in locations that geological surveys have identified as the most suitable for a sustainable water supply. This infrastructure is designed to withstand strong winds, thereby preventing drinking water from being contaminated or becoming inaccessible during storms.



Ricardo Mendes is responsible for the “WASH-Resiliente” project, implemented in the Nampula Region of Northern Mozambique.

# INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Social and political engagement requires economic prospects. But many young people are born in countries with few opportunities to attend school or find employment. Working together with its partner organizations, Helvetas helps ensure that fair access to schooling, training and employment is not left to chance.

## The art of persuasion

The Swiss dual vocational education system is considered an international gold standard. Helvetas uses elements of this system across the world, adapting them to local contexts. What is often forgotten is that governments and businesses must be convinced of the system's value to anchor it sustainably. In September 2025, together with 60 decision-makers from ten countries, Helvetas toured vocational training centers, vocational schools, industry associations, companies, government authorities and continuing education institutes across Switzerland. The aim of the tour was to demonstrate that investment in apprentices pays off in three main ways: It is cost-effective for the public system, it is economically beneficial for participating companies, and it creates prospects for young people.

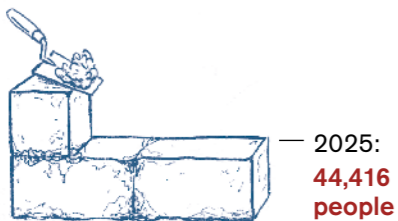


## Hidden gems

In the Phongsaly district in northern Laos, Helvetas is strengthening the rural economy through an ecotourism project that is creating new sources of income for ethnic minorities. The local population, Helvetas and partner organizations are jointly developing visitor attractions and services. These build on agricultural and forest-friendly value chains developed over many years by Helvetas, such as harvesting tea from trees that are over 400 years old, a unique cultural and ecological experience for guests. The goal is, that the coming boom in tourism will be sustainable, and benefit everyone.

Our target for 2025–28:

**240,000**  
people have improved their professional and social skills by 2028.



Helvetas helps to achieve the following Agenda 2030 goals:

- 2** Zero hunger
- 4** Quality education
- 5** Gender equality
- 8** Decent work and economic growth
- 10** Reduced inequalities
- 12** Responsible consumption and production



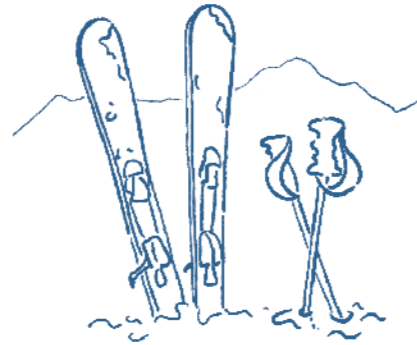
**“Biochar made from agricultural waste is a much better business than wood charcoal. It is tax-exempt and it’s legal.”**

Jumanne Mtayomba, Morogoro, Tanzania

Wood charcoal is still being produced in Tanzania, despite being prohibited. The population relies on it for cooking, and many people earn an income by producing it. On behalf of the EU, Helvetas is combating deforestation in the Morogoro region using various approaches. People like Jumanne have learned to produce biochar from agricultural waste; today, they run businesses with employees. Women who used to sell charcoal have been encouraged to establish “food forests” in their gardens based on agroforestry principles, growing vegetables, legumes, grains, fruit and timber trees side by side. Instead of wood charcoal, they now sell their surplus harvest. Rangers monitor protected forests and sensitize communities to ensure that people do not cut down any more trees.

## Education, even in times of crisis

Despite ongoing conflicts and natural disasters, approximately 12,000 children in two regions of **Myanmar** continue to have access to education, due to the efforts of local communities and some 300 volunteer teachers. In temporary learning spaces, they deliver core learning, support mine risk awareness, integrate emergency preparedness into lessons and provide basic psychosocial support to children. In partnership with the Italian NGO Cesvi from Alliance2015, Helvetas is strengthening community-based education networks and expanding digital teacher training initiatives in areas where access to formal education remains constrained.



### Winter tourism

Sustainable tourism can increase the economic competitiveness of entire regions. In the area around the city of Karakol in **Kyrgyzstan**, a winter tourism project implemented by Helvetas on behalf of Seco shows how once isolated SMEs now work together in networks. Through brief trainings, the entrepreneurs received customized advisory services that fostered mutual trust and the cross-selling of each other's products. This helped increase SME revenues by approximately 33%. In cooperation with a local university, urban planning is being improved, and the tourism curriculum includes sustainability and monitoring. Karakol is officially on its way to becoming a "green destination."

More about our Skills, Jobs and Income working area: [helvetas.org/newperspectives](https://helvetas.org/newperspectives)



### Incentives for better trainings

In **Ethiopia**, a training project has enabled 7,000 young people – including people with disabilities, single parents and internally displaced people – to secure a regular income, and has transformed the vocational training system as a whole. Helvetas fully reimbursed training providers and vocational schools only when trainees actually obtained employment or successfully started an own businesses. With new curricula, teaching materials and clear qualification standards, this approach is now being adopted by the government of the Amhara region, which has established a dedicated employment fund for this purpose.

## An attractive professional world

To combat youth unemployment in **Albania**, the Albanian government and SDC commissioned Helvetas to create a better alignment between vocational education, the labor market and the country's future workforce. The program was a resounding success: Over the past twelve years, 19,000 young people have found employment and 12,000 have completed vocational trainings. By developing career guidance services, training career counselors and providing useful materials, the project has helped establish a sustainable career guidance system that thousands of young people have used to make well-informed decisions about their future education and career path.



### Waste as a resource

A circular economy helps preserve resources and yields new income opportunities. In **Nepal**, young people are developing environmentally friendly business ideas with support from Helvetas in order to launch their careers as entrepreneurs and employers. As one example, two start-ups are now making shoe soles using plastic waste, which has led to the creation of over one hundred jobs. Old fabrics are also being transformed into new textiles that are reinserted into the production cycle.

© Franz Thiel



**183,527**  
people increased their income in 2025 with Helvetas.

Hagire Analaye, graduate of a vocational training program, Ethiopia

## "We are now including basic skills in vocational trainings"

Budget cuts in development cooperation make it difficult for Helvetas to allocate funding to basic education programs.

### Sabrina Würmli, why do budget cuts affect basic education?

Less money means that we have to strictly prioritize. There's no nice way to say this. Donors have withdrawn, especially from West Africa. We try to cushion the cuts by integrating fundamental reading and writing skills into vocational training projects and by focusing even more on young people who have dropped out of school for a number of reasons.

### What does that mean in practice?

Due to flexible and alternative forms of education, such as bridging programs or catch-up courses, young people can resume their learning journey at any time through our vocational training initiatives.

In Mozambique, we have had good experiences with learning modules delivered directly in the workplace, which have not required much additional effort. Lifelong learning is becoming increasingly relevant everywhere, as labor market requirements are changing rapidly due to the digital and green transitions. As a second cushioning measure, we are strengthening education initiatives during humanitarian crises, when schooling is often not a priority.

### Even though it's incredibly important.

Yes. According to UNESCO, 251 million children and youth worldwide are currently not in school. Many of them live in areas affected by hunger, war, unrest and climate change, and where the economy has collapsed. Education plays many vital roles in such situations: it strengthens a sense of community, creates space for different viewpoints and promotes

critical thinking. This is all the more important in crisis situations.

### What motivates you to keep going?

I have always cared deeply about the inclusion of people who have fallen through the cracks. Today, when I meet young women in Ethiopia from very poor backgrounds who never learned to read and write but who then catch up, who complete a vocational training, and who start their own businesses and employ others, then I know that it's worth staying the course.



Sabrina Würmli is the leader of the Skills, Jobs and Income team at Helvetas.

# LAND USE RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATION

Millions of people are born in countries without access to basic services, where economic conditions, conflict, violence and climate change force many women and men to leave their homes. Together with its partner organizations, Helvetas helps ensure that people can make their voices heard and live in security.

Our target for 2025–28:

**390,000**  
people assert their rights as citizens by 2028 and obtain access to improved services.



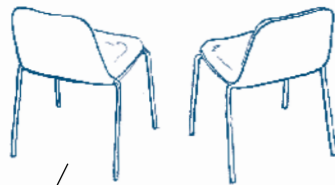
## Land rights

Land governance and land rights are essential to sustainable development. However, competing interests can make land use and access difficult. Helvetas supports grassroots organizations in Laos that educate rural and ethnic communities, especially women, about basic land rights, promote responsible agricultural practices, advance participatory forest management and help resolve land conflicts. To date, more than 17,000 women and men affected by poverty and marginalization have received information, and 5,000 have subsequently sought tailored advice and support.

## Sensible taxation

Tax revenue is used to fund services such as schools, roads, social services, playgrounds and public transportation. But correctly calculating and effectively collecting the necessary taxes often runs into various kinds of challenges. On behalf of SDC, Helvetas is providing support to 44 municipalities in Serbia to improve their tax calculation and collection procedures as part of an administrative reform. This has required building the technical and human capacities to assess property values and monitor tax revenues. This also necessitated fostering an understanding among the population and property owners about the new tax assessments. Due to weaknesses in the decentralization process, Helvetas also supported the harmonization of laws and regulations at the national level.

Target 2028



2025:  
258,875 people

Helvetas helps to achieve the following Agenda 2030 goals:

- 1 No poverty
- 5 Gender equality
- 8 Decent work and economic growth
- 10 Reduced inequalities
- 11 Sustainable cities and communities
- 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions
- 17 Partnerships for the goals



“We want our company to help bridge the gap between the Tamil and Muslim populations living here.”

Nishanthini Kanesamoorthi,  
Batticaloa, Sri Lanka



In post-war Sri Lanka, social enterprises bring together young people from different ethnic and religious groups. These enterprises grew out of a long-term Helvetas initiative that brought together youth from diverse backgrounds to promote reconciliation across the country. To create economic opportunities, Helvetas supported the establishment of such enterprises staffed by people from all communities. Due to budget cuts by various donors, Helvetas was forced to end all projects in Sri Lanka by the end of 2025 and to close its office there after 49 years.

995,784

people informed themselves on their rights as migrants and the related dangers of migration with Helvetas in 2025.



Sharmin Akter (left) and Sagor Mridha, Migration counselor, Bangladesh

© Patrick Rohr

## Making politics accessible

As in Switzerland, elected zonal councilors in **Ethiopia** incorporate their constituents' concerns into the political process and hold the administrations accountable. But this is something that has to be learned. Together with Helvetas, elected officials and government representatives are building up these skills, with tangible results: a corruption scandal was uncovered thanks to increased vigilance and this newly acquired knowledge. Additional classrooms and roads to markets were commissioned. At the behest of one zonal council, an administration organized and financed childcare facilities for their elected officials who are also mothers, so that they can fulfill their duties as elected representatives.



## A successful combination

A sustainable tourism project in **Bhutan** shows that when citizens – in this case, women and youth – are given the opportunity to engage in entrepreneurial activities, they take a greater interest in the decisions of local authorities that may affect them as business owners. They participate more quickly in political processes to voice their concerns. Findings show that it pays to create a deliberate link between entrepreneurship and democratic participation in projects.

## Tax fairs

People in **Bangladesh** have a say in the allocation of public funds, but they often don't know how to make their voices heard. That is why Helvetas supports communities and local grassroots organizations in exercising their rights and responsibilities. This includes intervening when budget items are vaguely formulated, as well as advocating for specific community needs. Implementing these legitimate demands requires tax revenue, which many people are reluctant to pay. To demonstrate why paying taxes matters, government entities host tax and service fairs at which they feature services funded through tax revenues.

More about our Voice, Inclusion and Cohesion working area: [helvetas.org/governance](https://helvetas.org/governance)

## ALLEVIATING SUFFERING

# CASH ASSISTANCE AND WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS

Between wars and fragile contexts around the world, as well as floods, droughts and hurricanes, people's suffering often lasts longer than the attention the media pays to these disasters. In 2025, donors, foundations, Swiss Solidarity and many other funders generously supported hundreds of thousands of people in need, helping them to reorient themselves and rebuild their homes and livelihoods.

**“The selfless help provided by the team touched me deeply.”**

After the earthquake in **Myanmar** on March 28, 2025, Helvetas was one of the first aid organizations on the ground. This also meant that it was able to relay important information to other NGOs to accelerate the provision of emergency relief.

**Kamlesh Vyas, what do you remember most about the first days following the earthquake?**

At first, the situation was chaotic. Communication had broken down and access to many areas was blocked. We worked with local partners and operated out of hotel rooms in Mandalay, the epicenter of the earthquake. By the second day, we were able to get started, and by the third day – working in close coordination with other organizations – we delivered our first emergency aid. We initially assisted

over 2,000 households, followed later by an additional 5,200, providing water, food, hygiene items, locally sourced materials for emergency shelters and even cash.

**Why cash?**

Cash assistance can help support the local economy wherever local markets are functioning after a disaster. It is also efficient and entails minimal logistics and no storage costs. But, above all, it preserves people's dignity, as it gives them the freedom to decide for themselves what they need most urgently.

**Did the earthquake affect projects that were already underway?**

We were implementing several development projects in the affected region that we had to suspend for a few weeks. The local organizations and partners we work with were also impacted. Staff members – including those outside the emergency response team – stepped in without hesitation and canceled their vacations, even though

Myanmar's New Year's festival was approaching. Many of them were themselves affected by the earthquake, and yet, they helped people who had lost even more than they had. This selfless commitment on the part of the entire team moved me deeply.

**How do these experiences ultimately flow into Helvetas' work?**

We want to train our team in Myanmar further so that they can respond even more effectively to earthquakes as well as floods. We want to show our staff how they can better protect themselves in such situations. We also want to integrate this know-how more systematically into our projects.



Kamlesh Vyas is an expert in humanitarian aid and relief at Helvetas.

Helvetas helps to achieve the following Agenda 2030 goals:



More about our Humanitarian Response: [helvetas.org/humanitarianresponse](https://helvetas.org/humanitarianresponse)

### Rays of hope in times of crisis

Flash floods during the 2025 monsoon season in **Pakistan** have killed more than 1,000 people and displaced hundreds of thousands. Helvetas directly supported 6,500 people with tools, beds and water filters. Across six districts, in 13 Afghan refugee camps, Helvetas established 58 non-formal education centers for girls and boys and enrolled 3,480 children in school. Helvetas gives great emphasis to inclusive, gender-equitable and community-based education services in fragile contexts.



### Market analyses identify gaps

For a variety of cultural and religious reasons, women in Rohingya camps in **Bangladesh** have very few opportunities to earn a livelihood. A market analysis showed that gardening, tailoring and sewing are acceptable activities because they can be carried out at home; however, the analysis also shows that it is not sufficient simply to distribute sewing machines and provide brief trainings. For this reason, Helvetas offers modular, hands-on training programs that also cover topics such as marketing, pricing and business planning. Only in this way can refugees become entrepreneurs in the medium term.

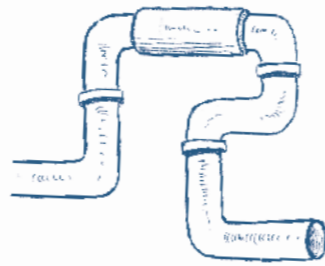


### Seeds for the future

In the conflict-affected region of Tigray in **Ethiopia**, Helvetas is supporting 23,000 people to improve their livelihoods, despite conflict and drought. In 2025, families received a crossbreed of goats and sheep known as shoats that require less water and feed. They also received 32 tons of certified, drought-resistant wheat seed and six tons of teff millet seed. Organized into seed cooperatives, in the future the communities will be able to produce climate-adapted seeds themselves. Locally produced compost is helping improve soil fertility and in turn is increasing food security.

### Reintegration

Together with the State Employment Service of **Ukraine** and the Federation of Employers, Helvetas conducts nationwide labor market analyses that provide sound insights into employment trends during wartime. They help the employment department better align its services to meet both the needs of war veterans, people with disabilities, displaced persons and young people, as well as the requirements of companies. Job placement, training and workforce planning have improved. In 2025, the employment department advised 18,000 veterans, 4,000 of whom then found jobs. The findings from these data-driven analyses are also channeled into labor market policy.



### Repaired lifelines

In 2025, Helvetas, with support from Swiss Solidarity, restored destroyed water supply systems in **Ukraine** that serve more than 58,000 people, far exceeding the initial targets. This was made possible through close cooperation with local communities and authorities. Overall, the engagement of Helvetas and its partners spans 122 municipalities, where 57 water and sanitation systems have been repaired, enabling people to continue to live at home or to return there, despite the war.

### Beyond emergency aid

Thanks to partner organizations in Alliance2015, Helvetas was able last year to support people in countries where it does not have a long-standing presence. Families affected by the earthquakes in **Turkey** and **Morocco** were able to rebuild their livelihoods with Swiss support. Helvetas also helped affected families in **Gaza** gain access to safe drinking water.

“Everything was destroyed, even the lab data and patient records. It was so sad. Now we can finally give people proper care.”

Suguique Pedro André, Mecúfi, Mozambique



In December 2024, Cyclone “Chido” destroyed the homes and livelihoods of 455,000 people in the Cabo Delgado region in northern Mozambique. It also razed local health centers. Helvetas quickly provided emergency relief and supported the reconstruction of 13 health centers in 2025, which included restoring their water supply, electricity and furniture. Bracing structures were added to protect the buildings from future strong wind situations. Thanks to Helvetas’ long-standing hygiene awareness efforts, the population responded appropriately after the storm, thereby preventing outbreaks of severe diseases such as cholera.

© Ricardo Franco

# A MEGAPHONE FOR MARGINALIZED PEOPLE

In 2025, Helvetas obtained consultative status with the UN. This allows us to raise the concerns of local partners and communities in our partner countries at the UN level, thereby giving their voices greater weight and reach.

It was a long road to obtaining consultative status with the UN. All the more reason for Helvetas' Human Rights Advisor Archita Faustmann to be pleased. This status opens the door to meetings of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of the UN's six main bodies. Archita Faustmann knows how important this space can be for giving a voice to the people involved in Helvetas projects. She illustrates this with the example of a water and hygiene project in a country where, in some regions, it is deeply rooted in the culture that women must stay at home during menstruation – and, thus, without access to water or sanitation facilities.

“Awareness-raising during a project can bring about a change in attitudes and gradually improve the situation of women at the local level,” says Archita Faustmann. But at some point, “appropriate legal frameworks are also needed at the local and national levels,” though this often fails due to resistance from relevant actors. Raising such issues at the UN level through ECOSOC status can have a major impact on a project's success. “In this way, the voices of people in our projects are heard more clearly.”

### Highlighting injustices, setting an example

With consultative status, Helvetas is able to organize side events at the UN, take part in UN meetings and



Thanks to Helvetas' ECOSOC consultative status, people who participate in our projects are able to make their voices heard.

invite people affected by its projects – such as these women – to testify. “Their concerns are taken more seriously at this level,” says Archita Faustmann. Affected people also feel encouraged when an international network supports them.

Helvetas can suggest written or oral recommendations in this setting. If the government in question is willing to address the issue being raised, Helvetas offers its support in implementing the recommendations.

In addition to pointing out problems, it is equally important to share best practices from projects. For example, particularly effective climate or nutrition projects that are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030

Agenda can serve as a model for other initiatives. Participation in such processes also makes Helvetas' work more visible. However, decision-making power remains with the affected people, stresses Archita Faustmann: “We only take up issues that partner organizations bring to our attention.”

### Added value

Many accredited NGOs in Geneva specialize in human rights and advocate for civil and political rights. Organizations such as Helvetas, which implement development and humanitarian projects on the ground, are less commonly represented. Helvetas can now increasingly bring civil society concerns to the agenda, at a time when the space for taking action is becoming more and more restricted in many countries.

# WHAT IS MEASURABLE— AND WHAT ISN'T

Are we doing the right things, and are we doing them right? Helvetas aims to demonstrate its results in a transparent and traceable way. Measuring impact is important, but also demanding. Openly acknowledging what is not working is essential.

Project successes must be credibly demonstrated, for example, through impact studies and cost-benefit analyses (pp. 8–9). Performance indicators show how many water systems are being built or how many young women have been able to learn a profession because of the project, but the results of these efforts are equally important to measure. In other words, how many young women actually increased their income after completing their training? How much healthier are people when they drink clean water? And how much overall benefit – in areas like income and health for everyone – has the project generated in the long-term?

### Shaping science

These complex impact indicators may be much more demanding to collect, but they are crucial. A commonly cited example comes from Benin, where a scientifically monitored study in 2012 demonstrated that, contrary to expectations, schoolchildren were not healthier even after wells had been dug at the schools. The reason was that the water drawn from the wells was stored in open containers, which the children contaminated with their hands while drinking from them.

Helvetas publicly addressed this failure, and this elicited a strong response within professional circles. The finding highlighted not only the importance of education and hygiene but also of impact studies



A routine process of sharing is important for identifying the progress of a project early on and making any necessary adjustments.

and the discussion of failures and opportunities for improvement. Measuring impact is complex and costly, and few donors provide sufficient funding for it. This is why Helvetas also collaborates with universities worldwide to conduct specific studies, for example as part of a student's master's or doctoral research project. We also engage with the scientific community to incorporate the latest insights from impact research into our projects.

### How can we measure changes in people's mindsets?

“There are limits to impact measurement,” explains Kai Schrader, Helvetas' expert in monitoring and assessment. “We are trying to

bring about systemic change, so that people take initiative on their own, organize themselves, contribute ideas and claim their rights,” he says. “But how do you measure that? Strengthening civil society is a goal that can't really be quantified.”

This means that we need other means of assessment. For example, halfway through a project, it is very helpful to talk with all actors – donors, authorities, local decision-makers and village communities – about what is going well, what is less successful and how things could work better. “These are enormously important learning moments for everyone. Such discussions and any necessary adjustments to project goals are only possible when you have a genuine culture of trust,” says Kai Schrader.

Digitalization also helps. Consider databases and online communication channels, for example. “If we record what small farmers are planting and where, we can provide more targeted support during droughts and find out what has thrived despite any water shortages,” explains Kai Schrader. “This way, we can develop recommendations for the future.” Everybody wins.

**Knowledge is what we use in our work. Learning is how we increase or enhance our knowledge. Innovation is how we leverage knowledge and learning to significantly increase impact.**



# WHO MAKES SAFE WATER THE NORM?

Benin has made great strides in supplying water to urban areas, but in the less densely populated Sahel region in the north, only half of the population has access to safe drinking water. Helvetas is supporting local authorities to plan decentralized water systems and helping to ensure their sustainable, long-term operation and maintenance. In 2025, the focus was on providing water and toilets in schools, combined with hygiene education for children and awareness-raising on the taboo subject of menstruation.

© Simon B. Opladen

# GENEROUS DONATIONS AND STRUCTURAL REFORM

Private donations, bequests and grants from foundations amounted to CHF 47.4 million in 2025, more than in previous years. This reflects strong solidarity with people in the Global South – now, more than ever – and trust in Helvetas’ work. Together with additional contributions of CHF 125.2 million from the SDC and other institutions, total revenues amounted to CHF 172.6 million. After deducting all expenses, the 2025 financial statements recognize a surplus of CHF 2.3 million.

### Strong base for the future

From a financial perspective, Helvetas looks back on a positive year that saw very generous donations in 2025 from private individuals and foundations in Switzerland and the United States. This represents a strong vote of confidence in our work. The challenging global situation and the significant budget cuts that many countries have made to development cooperation, including Switzerland, have sparked in many people a sense of responsibility that translates into great solidarity with those affected by poverty and conflict. We are deeply grateful for this support. At the same time, through strict cost controls, Helvetas has managed to eliminate its structural deficit without neglecting forward-looking investments. In light of the expected future budget cuts by public donors, it is important that we are financially well positioned to face the challenging times that lie ahead.

### Financial audit

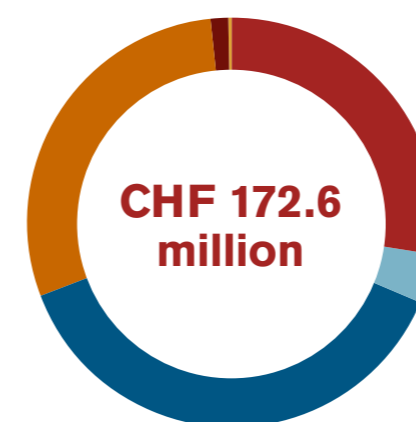
KPMG audited the accounts and financial statements and approved these on May 12, 2026. Their audit report and the complete 2025 financial report can be viewed at the offices of Helvetas, Weinbergstrasse 22a, 8001 Zurich and downloaded from our website [helvetas.org/financialreport](https://helvetas.org/financialreport)

The financial statements are presented in thousands of Swiss francs (TCHF). Due to the selected number format, there may be rounding differences between individual amounts and totals.

## BALANCE SHEET

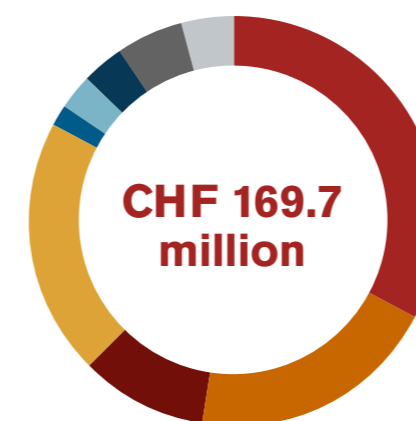
ASSETS	31.12.2025 in TCHF	31.12.2024 in TCHF
Cash and cash equivalents	60,662	61,512
Marketable securities	22,448	20,095
Receivables	3,162	4,715
Net assets in project countries	14,225	19,781
Prepayments and accrued income	10,600	9,020
<b>Current assets</b>	<b>111,097</b>	<b>115,122</b>
Financial assets	33	33
Tangible fixed assets	471	486
Intangible assets	994	762
<b>Non-current assets</b>	<b>1,498</b>	<b>1,280</b>
<b>Assets</b>	<b>112,595</b>	<b>116,402</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Short-term accounts payable	5,398	5,403
Accrued expenses and deferred income	62,818	70,939
Short-term provisions	201	0
<b>Short-term liabilities</b>	<b>68,417</b>	<b>76,342</b>
Long-term provisions	749	931
<b>Long-term liabilities</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>931</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>69,166</b>	<b>77,273</b>
<b>Fund capital</b>	<b>11,680</b>	<b>9,707</b>
<b>Liabilities incl. fund capital</b>	<b>80,845</b>	<b>86,980</b>
Unrestricted capital	14,095	13,372
Restricted capital	17,654	16,050
<b>Organizational capital</b>	<b>31,749</b>	<b>29,423</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>112,595</b>	<b>116,402</b>

## ORIGIN OF FUNDS



- Income from fundraising 27.5%
- Program contribution SDC 4.1%
- Mandates SDC 37.6%
- Mandates other organizations 29.3%
- Income from advisory services 1.4%
- Other operating income 0.1%

## USE OF FUNDS



- Africa 32.8%
- Asia 19.9%
- Latin America and Caribbean 10.0%
- Eastern Europe and Central Asia 20.2%
- Program coordination and support 1.8%
- Project expenses advisory services 2.7%
- Project expenses Switzerland 3.2%
- Fundraising expenses 5.4%
- Administrative expenses 4.0%

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

INCOME	2025 in TCHF	2024 in TCHF
Membership fees	1,936	2,056
Donations	42,915	42,464
Inheritances and legacies	2,502	1,894
<b>Income from fundraising</b>	<b>47,352</b>	<b>46,415</b>
Program contribution SDC	7,160	8,000
Mandates SDC	64,897	59,115
Mandates other organizations	50,533	45,539
Income from advisory services	2,457	3,583
Other operating income	185	196
<b>Income from services provided</b>	<b>125,231</b>	<b>116,432</b>
<b>Operating income</b>	<b>172,583</b>	<b>162,846</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Africa	-55,647	-52,421
Asia	-33,688	-32,782
Latin America and Caribbean	-16,946	-15,030
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	-34,320	-35,505
Program coordination & support	-3,136	-3,713
<b>Project expenses international programs</b>	<b>-143,738</b>	<b>-139,452</b>
<b>Project expenses advisory services</b>	<b>-4,589</b>	<b>-5,571</b>
<b>Project expenses Switzerland</b>	<b>-5,437</b>	<b>-6,280</b>
<b>Fundraising expenses</b>	<b>-9,139</b>	<b>-9,443</b>
<b>Administrative expenses</b>	<b>-6,828</b>	<b>-6,490</b>
<b>Operating expenses</b>	<b>-169,731</b>	<b>-167,236</b>
<b>Operating result</b>	<b>2,852</b>	<b>-4,390</b>
Financial result	1,419	3,519
Other result	28	56
<b>Result before change in fund capital</b>	<b>4,299</b>	<b>-814</b>
Change in fund capital	-1,973	2,091
<b>Annual result before allocation to organizational capital</b>	<b>2,326</b>	<b>1,277</b>
Allocation / usage		
- Unrestricted capital	722	2,026
- Strategy acceleration fund	1,615	-730
- Social fund	-11	-19

# COMMITTED AND INFLUENTIAL

Helvetas is a politically and denominationally neutral association, supported by 92,000 members, benefactors and donors. Board members engage on an unpaid basis and support Helvetas with generous private donations.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

 <b>Regula Rytz</b> , President, Bern, historian, former National Councillor, consultant, since 2021	 <b>Peter Niggli</b> , Vice President, Zurich, journalist, author, expert in international deve- lopment, since 2015	 <b>Danièle Castle</b> Chésèrex VD, facilitator Cercle de Legs, founder and owner Genevensis, since 2023	 <b>Jörg Frieden</b> Fribourg, Dr. oec. publ., development economist, President of the Board of SIFEM, since 2018	 <b>Spring Gombe</b> , Konstanz D, biologist, founder policy/ strategy group, since 2023
 <b>Felix Gutzwiller</b> Zurich, social and preventive medicine physician, former National and States Council- lor, President of prio.swiss, since January 2025	 <b>René Hostenstein</b> Schaffhausen, Dr. phil. I, expert in development and former Swiss ambas- sador, since 2020	 <b>Chinwe Ifejika Speranza</b> Zurich, Prof. Dr. for Geography and Sustainable Development, Institute of Geography, University of Bern, since 2023	 <b>Robert Mardini</b> Châteline GE, engineer EPFL, Director General of the Geneva University Hospitals (HUG), former Di- rector General of the ICRC, since September 2025	 <b>Peter Messerli</b> Bern, Director Wyss Academy for Nature, Prof. for Sustainable Development, University of Bern, since 2020
 <b>Shobhini Mukerji</b> New Delhi (India), develop- ment economist, Executive Director of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) – South Asia, since June 2024	 <b>Dina Pomeranz</b> Zurich, Associate Professor of Applied Economics, University of Zurich, since 2020	 <b>Dominique Schmid</b> Worblaufen BE, lic. rer. pol. MBA/EMBA, indep. consul- tant, Board member and strategic Project Manager at several companies, since 2021	 <b>Ueli Winzenried</b> Bern, Betr. oec. HWV, SEP GSB Stanford (CA), Business consultant Burkhalter Attorneys in Bern/Zurich, since 2019	

The **General Assembly**, the organization's highest body, meets once a year. It elects the members of the Board of Directors and approves the guiding principles.








The **Board of Directors**, the highest executive body, is responsible for the organization's strategy and for approving the annual budget.

The **Management Board** is responsible for planning and implementing the projects, programs and actions within Switzerland and abroad.

The **Advisory Board** provides support and guidance to the management board on issues related to development policy.

Potential conflicts of interest of members of the Board of Directors and the Management Board are listed in the financial report.

## MANAGEMENT BOARD









 <b>Melchior Lengsfeld</b> Executive Director	 <b>Celestine Krösschell</b> Deputy Director (since August 2025), Director International Programs
 <b>Barbara Dietrich</b> Director International Programs	 <b>Esther Haldimann</b> Director Advisory Services
 <b>Judith Schuler</b> Director Marketing and Communications, since August 2025	 <b>Thomas Truninger</b> Director Finance and Controlling
 <b>Kathrin Indermaur</b> Director People and Culture (in annual rotation with Manuela Häfeli, start- ing each August)	Retirement: Stefan Stolle, Director Marketing and Communications (July 2025)

## RELATED PARTIES

Besides the members of the Board of Directors and the Management Board of Helvetas, related parties include the following organizations: Alliance2015, Brussels • Alliance Sud, Bern • cinfo, Biel • Knowledge Management for Development KM4DEV, Zurich • KOFF Die Schweizer Plattform für Friedensförderung, Basel • Max Havelaar-Stiftung (Schweiz), Zurich • NGO-Plattform der Schweizer Entwicklungsorganisationen, Bern • Platform Agenda 2030, Bern • RECI Swiss Network for Education & International Cooperation, Vicques JU • Sustainable Coffee Platform, Bern • Swiss Solidarity, Geneva • Skat Foundation, St. Gallen • Swiss NGO DRR Platform, Wabern BE • Swiss Water Partnership, Zurich • Swiss Water & Sanitation NGO Consortium, Zurich.

The subsidiaries HELVETAS Intercooperation gGmbH, Bonn and Helvetas USA Inc., Minneapolis are included in the consolidated financial statements.

## ADVISORY BOARD

 <b>Sibel Arslan</b> Basel, lic. iur., National Councillor	 <b>Bettina Balmer</b> Zurich, physician, National Councillor, since December 2025
 <b>Mario Fehr</b> Zurich, lic. iur., Member of the government of the Canton of Zurich	 <b>Giorgio Fonio</b> Mendrisio TI, economist, trade union secretary, National Councillor
 <b>Claudia Friedl</b> St. Gallen, Dr. sc. nat. ETH, National Councillor	 <b>Niklaus-Samuel Gugger</b> Winterthur ZH, social entre- preneur and management consultant, National Councillor
 <b>Franziska Roth</b> Solothurn, special needs teacher, States Councillor	 <b>Laurent Wehrli</b> Glion VD, lic. ès lettres, National Councillor

**Regula Rytz and Peter Niggli** represent the Board of Directors in the Advisory Board.

# NAVIGATING CHANGE WITH GREATER AGILITY

The FAI Foundation in Ticino supports not only particular projects but also programs, meaning a series of coordinated projects that pursue the same strategic goal, such as, for example, good governance.

The Fondation Assistance Internationale, or FAI, believes that social cohesion, shared responsibility, empowerment and self-determination make for a fairer and more sustainable world. "At a time when democratic achievements are truly under threat, the participation of people and communities in local decision-making is more important than ever," says Giacomo Ghielmi, director of this Ticino-based foundation. It is important to generate interest in good governance, understood in the broadest sense, and to devote energy and funding to it. "Most importantly, young people must be able to participate more in decision-making processes. The same also applies to urban residents, for example with regard to urban planning, as more and more people come to live in cities." Governance is necessary for democratic participation, to strengthen local actors and to combat corruption.

"Not many organizations focus as intensively on good governance, participation and inclusion as Helvetas," says Ghielmi. "We value its professional work and expertise." This is why Helvetas is an important partner for FAI. Ghielmi believes that "development cooperation projects tend to be more solid and sustainable when they are accompanied by sound governance processes."

Beyond particular projects, FAI is increasingly financing entire programs consisting of series of coordinated projects that all pursue the same strategic goal. Program funding allows Helvetas to work more flexibly in a rapidly changing world. "As a donor, we create room to learn from mistakes together and improve the quality of our work, as we commit funds over a longer period than usual, because strengthening institutions and processes takes time," Ghielmi explains, adding that he regrets that more foundations do not resort to program-based funding.



**Giacomo Ghielmi** is the Director of the Fondation Assistance Internationale, FAI.



Carmen Julia Duran (l) and Sarah Nava (c) participated in an ideaathon to generate suggestions on how to bring people in Sucre (Bolivia) together and enhance city life. Gabriela Sahonero (r), the city's Head of culture, supports these participatory efforts to make the city more liveable.

## THE SDC PROGRAM CONTRIBUTION

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) provides an annual fixed contribution that covers up to 30% of Helvetas' international program. With this funding, Helvetas can implement important projects independently and flexibly. However, Helvetas relies on more than twice that amount (70%) in donations and grants from foundations to actually carry out its program. So, with support from SDC, every CHF 70 in donations becomes CHF 100 for Helvetas projects. The SDC's careful review also ensures that the funds are used effectively. Many of the projects mentioned here are co-financed by the SDC program contribution.

## WE THANK ALL DONORS, FUNDERS, CLIENTS AND PARTNERS

**Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**  
Project and program contributions

### Cantons, Cities and Municipalities

FEDEVACO Fédération vaudoise de coopération  
FGC Fédération genevoise de coopération  
Office for Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein  
SID, Sicherheitsdirektion des Kantons Bern  
Cantons of Aargau, Basel-Stadt, Graubünden, Obwalden, Schaffhausen, Thurgau, Valais, Zurich, Republic and Canton of Neuchâtel  
Bernex, Bettingen, Fribourg, City of Lancy, Maur, Münsingen, Protestant congregation of Unterseen, Riehen, Sorengo, Vevey, Zug, Zurich

### Foundations, associations and other nonprofit organizations

Albert Jenny Stiftung  
Alfred and Eugénie Baur Foundation  
Alfred Richterich Stiftung  
Alois und Irma Weber-Goldinger-Stiftung  
Alstom Foundation  
Bessere Zukunft Stiftung  
Büchi Foundation  
Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation  
CHARISMA Stiftung für nachhaltige Entwicklung charity: water  
Choupette Stiftung  
Coop Sustainability Fund  
Däster-Schild Stiftung  
Drink & Donate and Viva con Agua Switzerland  
Eckenstein-Geigy Foundation  
Ehmann-Stiftung Savognin  
ESPERANZA – kooperative Hilfe gegen Armut  
Fastenaktion  
FIKA

Fondation Agnès Delachaux  
Fondation Assistance Internationale – FAI  
Fondation Cordama  
Fondation Hubert Looser  
Fondation Loom  
Fondation Philanthropique Famille Sandoz  
Fondation SMARTPEACE  
Fondazione Teofilo Rossi di Montelera e di Premuda  
FOSIT, Federazione delle ONG della Svizzera italiana  
Foundation for the Third Millennium  
GCERF, Global Community Engagement & Resilience Fund  
Gebauer Stiftung  
Gemeinnützige Stiftung Accentus

One Drop Foundation  
René und Susanne Braginsky-Stiftung  
Rütli Foundation  
Somaha Stiftung  
Stiftung Abantu  
Stiftung Corymbo  
Swiss National Bank  
Temperatio Foundation  
Tsadik Foundation  
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UK Online Giving Foundation  
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Krebs und Herde Landschaftsarchitekten BSLA  
Lindt & Sprüngli (International) AG  
Locarnese Ente Acqua (Locarno, Losone and Muralto)  
SIGE, Service Intercommunal de Gestion  
Spross Ga-La-Bau Ltd  
STC, Switzerland Travel Centre

Asian Development Bank  
Asociación Alterna ONG  
BMELH, German Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity  
BMZ, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany  
CARITAS Switzerland  
CRS, Catholic Relief Services  
Czech Republic Ministry of Interior  
DAI Global UK Ltd  
DANIDA, Danish International Development Agency  
Dar es Salaam University College of Education  
DFAT, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA, EU)

**"Thanks to their long-standing partnership, Helvetas and the Fédération genevoise de coopération are well-positioned to break new ground and bring about lasting improvements in the living conditions of their program participants."**

Catherine Schümperli Younossian, Secretary-General of the Fédération genevoise de coopération, FGC

Gemeinnützige Stiftung Symphasia  
Georg Fischer Water Foundation  
Happel Foundation  
Hermann Foundation  
Irène M. Staehelin Stiftung  
J&K Wonderland Foundation  
L'OCCITANE Foundation  
Laguna Foundation  
Laudes Foundation  
LED, Liechtenstein Development Service  
Leopold Bachmann Stiftung  
Light a Single Candle Foundation  
Linsi Foundation  
Medicor Foundation  
Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation

WIR TEILEN: Fastenopfer Liechtenstein  
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Top Team Sanitär Installations GmbH  
VERLINGUE AG  
Walter Matter SA  
Züger Frischkäse AG  
Zweifel Holding AG  
**Other Funding Agencies and Clients**  
ADA, Austrian Development Agency  
Adaptation Fund  
AECID, Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo  
AFD, Agence française de développement  
AICS, Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo

Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation  
Eawag  
ECHO, EU  
EDUFI, Finnish National Agency for Education  
Enabel, Belgian Development Agency  
EPFL, École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne  
FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
Farmahem Doeel  
FCDO, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, UK  
FoBBIZ, Swiss Forum for Skills Development and International Cooperation  
Foundation for the Conservation of Biodiversity (BIOFUND)  
Foundation myclimate  
GEF, Global Environment Facility  
Geneva Water Hub  
GFRAS, Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services  
GIZ, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH  
GRET, Groupe de recherche et d'échanges technologiques

## THANK YOU

HEKS/EPER Swiss Church Aid

Help – Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe e. V.

Humanity International

ICIMOD, International Center for Integrated Mountain Development

IDB, Inter-American Development Bank

IFAD, International Fund for Agricultural Development

iGravity AG

Infras

ISW, International Secretariat for Water

LIFT Livelihoods & Food Security Fund UNOPS

Lindt Cocoa Foundation

Luxembourg Development Agency

Max Havelaar Switzerland

Mercy Corps Europa

NDICI – Global Europe

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

Norwegian Trust Fund

OCHA, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

PATRIP Foundation

People in Need

Pestalozzi Children's Foundation

Plan Binacional de Desarrollo de la Region Fronteriza Peru – Ecuador

POBIC, Ass. Nazionale Promozione Opere Benefiche Interventi Caritatevoli

Red Solidaria Honduras

Reismühle Nutrex

SECO, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs

SIDA, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

Skat Consulting Ltd.

Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property

Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa

Swiss Solidarity

Swiss Water Partnership

Swisscontact

Tanzania Teachers' Union TTU

The Development Fund/ Utviklingsfondet

UN Habitat

UNCTAD, UN Trade and Development

UNDP, UN Development Programme

UNICEF

United Purpose

University of Zurich

UNOPS

UNPBF

Urbaplan

USAID, U.S. Agency for International Development

Vaillant GmbH

WFP, World Food Programme

WHH, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e.V.

World Bank

WWF

### Partnerships, Alliances and Networks

Adam Smith International

AFC, Agriculture and Finance Consultants GmbH

AGUASAN Community of Practice

Alliance for Water Stewardship

Alliance Sud

Alliance2015 (Acted, Ayuda en Acción, CESVI, CONCERN worldwide, HELVETAS, People in Need, Welthungerhilfe)

Basel Institute of Governance

Beam Exchange

Better Cotton Initiative

Canopy Lab

Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) of the University of Bern

Charter4Change

Circular Economy Switzerland

Civicus

CLEAR Centers Anglophone Africa and Francophone Africa

Conflict Sensitivity Community Hub

DCED, Donor Committee on Enterprise Development

DESPRO

ETH Zürich NADEL

fair unterwegs

FIAN Switzerland

FIBL, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture

FOEN, Federal Office for the Environment

Fondation Hirondelle

Ford Foundation

FSEA, Swiss Federation for Adult Learning

GCF, Green Climate Fund

Gesellschaft Schweiz-UNO

GFA Consulting Group

GNDR, Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction

GWC, Global WASH Cluster

HAFL, School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences

Handicap International Federation

ICON-INSTITUTE Consulting Group

ILO, International Labour Organization

Institute of Development Studies

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

ISEAL

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature

Klimaallianz Schweiz

KM4DEV

KOFF, The Swiss platform for peacebuilding

LOGIN Asia

Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Institute of Business and Regional Economics

Making Cents International

mascontour GmbH

Mesopartner

Millennium Water Alliance

NetHope

NGO-Plattform Menschenrechte Schweiz

NIRAS A/S

NORRAG, Network for international policies and cooperation in education and training

OPM, Oxford Policy Management

PEDRR, Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction

PHZH, Zurich University of Teacher Education

Platform Agenda 2030

PROVIA, Global Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation

RAI, Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative

RECI, Swiss Network for Education & International Cooperation

Rés EAU

Robert Bosch Stiftung

RRI, Rights and Resources Initiative

RWSN, Rural Water Supply Network

Save the Children

SDC Gender Equality Network

SDC Network Climate, DRR and Environment

SDC Peace Governance and Equality Network

Search for Common Ground

SEEP Network

SEVAL, Schweizerische Evaluationsgesellschaft

SFIAR, Swiss Forum for International Agricultural Research

SFRAS, Swiss Forum for Rural Advisory Services

SFUJET, Swiss Federal University for Vocational Education and Training

Solidar Suisse

SOS Kinderdorf International

South Pole

SPTF, Social Performance Task Force

SSF, Swiss Sustainable Finance

Sustainable Rice Platform

Swiss Alliance against SLAPP

Swiss Coalition for Corporate Justice

Swiss Fair Trade

Swiss KM Thinktable

Swiss National FAO Committee (CNS-FAO)

Swiss NGO DRR Platform

Swiss NGO Platform

Swiss Red Cross

SWISSAID

Swisspeace

Terre des Hommes

Textile Exchange

UEBT, Union for Ethical BioTrade

UNCAC Coalition

UNFCCC, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNGC, UN Global Compact

University of Bern

University of Zurich, Department of Economics

University of Zurich, Department of Geography

Value Chain Capacity Building Network

WASH Agenda for Change

Ximpulse GmbH

ZHAW, Zurich University of Applied Sciences

Zoï Environment Network

The list includes institutional donors and clients (from CHF 5,000 upwards) as well as partners.

“The river water was making us sick, but we had no other options. The village well has changed many things for the better.”

Emebet Mekonnen, Birbir, Ethiopia



Clean water means a fair chance for a healthy life or an uninterrupted education. Would you also like to contribute to equal opportunities worldwide and make healthy lives a reality?

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Helvetas is ZEW0 accredited.



**... 95,927**

smallholder farmers have adapted their farming practices to the effects of climate change, increasing their productivity per hectare thanks to sustainable and climate-resilient practices shared by Helvetas.

**... 800,349**

people now have access to safe drinking water within a 30-minute roundtrip walk thanks to Helvetas.

**... 713,791**

people report reduced travel time to essential services such as markets, schools, and health centers thanks to new bridges and roads.

**... 58,079**

people, mostly youth, enrolled in new or better vocational skills trainings supported by Helvetas.

**In 2025 ...**

**... 22,007**

people acquired green skills for careers in renewable energy and the circular economy through vocational training supported by Helvetas.

**... 2,363**

partner organizations, of which 94.5% are local partners, worked alongside Helvetas to create fair opportunities worldwide.

**... 344,842**

people who have worked with Helvetas noted improved social cohesion in their area.

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