

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



**HELVETAS**  
GERMANY



**WHAT  
MAKES THE UNHEARD,  
HEARD?**

**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.**

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### **About Helvetas**

Helvetas has been contributing to efforts to alleviate poverty, working to advance human rights, and fighting injustice across the globe. Poor and disadvantaged people and communities are at the center of our work. Together, we create new prospects, leveraging existing potential, strengths, and assets: we help people to help themselves. We provide humanitarian response following natural disasters and in conflict situations. We always work closely with local partner organizations from civil society and the private sector, as well as with local authorities.

Helvetas' core activities are international projects. Helvetas strives to improve the living conditions of disadvantaged people in rural areas in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. The projects focus on the working areas Water, Food and Climate; Skilly, Jobs and Income; Voice, Inclusion and Cohesion and Humanitarian Response.

The organization promotes people's fair access to vital resources and champions the protection of social, economic, political, ecological and cultural rights and duties. In Germany, Helvetas pushes for demonstrating solidarity towards disadvantaged people in the Global South.

#### IMPRINT

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Picture Credits:

Top picture: Farmer in Tajikistan  
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Middle picture: Members of an ethnic minority in south-eastern Myanmar  
© Myint Zaw

Bottom picture: Asel Arzieva, Uzbekistan  
© Buta Media

# DEVELOPMENT NEEDS RELIABLE PARTNERS

**We see wars, conflicts, the climate crisis and authoritarian tendencies everywhere we look. Away from the spotlight, at Helvetas we also see encouraging developments, for example, when women courageously raise their voices to demand rights for minorities.**

## **Right now - Together for a just world!**

The Helvetas Germany team reflects on a challenging and eventful year. The aftermath of the pandemic, global crises, and extreme weather events have changed much: for the first time in twenty years, extreme poverty is on the rise again. This means that individuals are once again facing the reality of living on less than \$1.90 a day.

Together with our partners and donor organizations, we overcame the challenges of 2023 and achieved significant successes in our projects. Through close collaboration with our local partner organizations, Helvetas Germany was able to launch three new projects in 2023.

With the project 'Resource-Efficient Food Production', for example, we are working to diversify food systems in Pakistan, thereby contributing to the country's food security. Additionally, we successfully concluded four projects last year, including the long-standing 'Culture 4 Peace' project in Myanmar, which promoted intercultural dialogue, and a project aimed at supporting agricultural value chains in Kyrgyzstan.

Our goal for 2024 is to work together on innovative ideas and approaches in international cooperation to put our vision of a just world into action and offer new opportunities to people in need.



Martin Koppa,  
Director of Helvetas Germany

*Decision-makers often do not hear voices of minorities. A strong civil society stands up for the concerns and rights of these minorities. Strengthening these voices strengthens social cohesion, political participation and democratic control.*

## **Helvetas Germany**

Helvetas Intercooperation gGmbH (Helvetas Germany) was established on November 7th, 2013 and has entered in the commercial register of the Bonn District Court under the registration number HRB 20460 on December 6th, 2013. Helvetas is denominationally neutral and politically independent and is a member of the international Helvetas network. The Helvetas network builds upon six decades of development experience and is engaged in more than 30 countries with more than 1400 collaborators. The members implement joint development programs and adhere to a common strategy including defined working approaches and thematic areas of intervention.

# RECLAIMING THE SPACE TO ACT

**The intimidation of environmental activists, the violent dispersal of demonstrations, the death penalty for homosexuality, accusations of money laundering and arbitrary lawsuits against NGOs are alarm signals: The ability of civil society to act freely is under threat and must be protected.**

“Fear and suspicion and hate – these are the values that are being injected into the society. Mistrust is growing,” said Rajagopal P.V., founder of the Indian grassroots movement Ekta Parishad, at the Helvetas Fall 2023 Symposium on civil society’s shrinking space and ability to act freely in the face of authoritarian power structures. What can we do about it? “If properly organized, we can recreate our space and create a history for the future,” says Rajagopal P.V. Solutions can only come “from the bottom, not from the top.” He added, “Never underestimate the power of the poor.”

Only 2 percent of the world’s population lives in countries where civil society is able to engage for democracy and justice without danger. In contrast, 31 percent of humanity is completely denied this, 40 percent face repression and 15 percent face obstructions in trying to do so. 12 percent live in a country with a narrowed civic space. This has dramatic consequences, because democracies are only viable in the long term if the state, the private sector and civil society can participate in public debates on an equal footing.

Whether or not we are free to express our concerns publicly depends on where we are born. Direct democracy in Germany, with its substantive votes and elections, gives German citizens many opportunities to express themselves on issues of public interest, and to negotiate and help make decisions.

## **Approaching Code Red worldwide**

On every project, Helvetas works with civil society partner organizations and strengthens these in a targeted manner. But in many partner countries, the stoplight symbol used by Civicus (an international NGO network for the protection of civil rights) to gauge the state of civil society is glowing dark orange to red. In many places, political and economic elites, resent when civil society asks critical questions and insists on the rule of law and justice. As a result, many NGOs operate in political environments where freedom of association, assembly and expression are at times severely restricted.

Many of these restrictions are insidious: a threat here and regulatory obstacles there, including hurdles for the registration of NGOs, extremely strict requirements for financial reporting, a ban on foreign funding and accusations of being an agent for a foreign country. Active citizens and journalists are being intimidated, watched, persecuted and arrested. The media are being censored. According to the organization «Reporters Without Borders» a total of 521 media professionals across the globe were arbitrarily detained in 2023.

Restrictions can also become violent when demonstrations are broken up or human rights advocates and environmentalists are killed. Elections are also a sensitive moment for democracies when opposition activists, journalists and dissidents are legally persecuted or otherwise intimidated and excluded from elections. With the resurgence of authoritarian regimes and criminal gangs, a well-known, dangerous pattern of repression of civil society is spreading across the world.



© Ah Maw Lone

With the help of art and culture, Helvetas creates space for dialogue between different social groups in Myanmar as part of the C4P project in order to give marginalized groups in society a stronger voice.

Nationalism, populism, conservatism and fundamentalism are once again making it socially acceptable to intimidate dissenters, minorities and foreigners and their organizations – and not just in countries with authoritarian regimes. Restrictions are often embedded in legislation with the monitoring, punishment and banning of civil society organizations, for example under the guise of fighting terrorism.

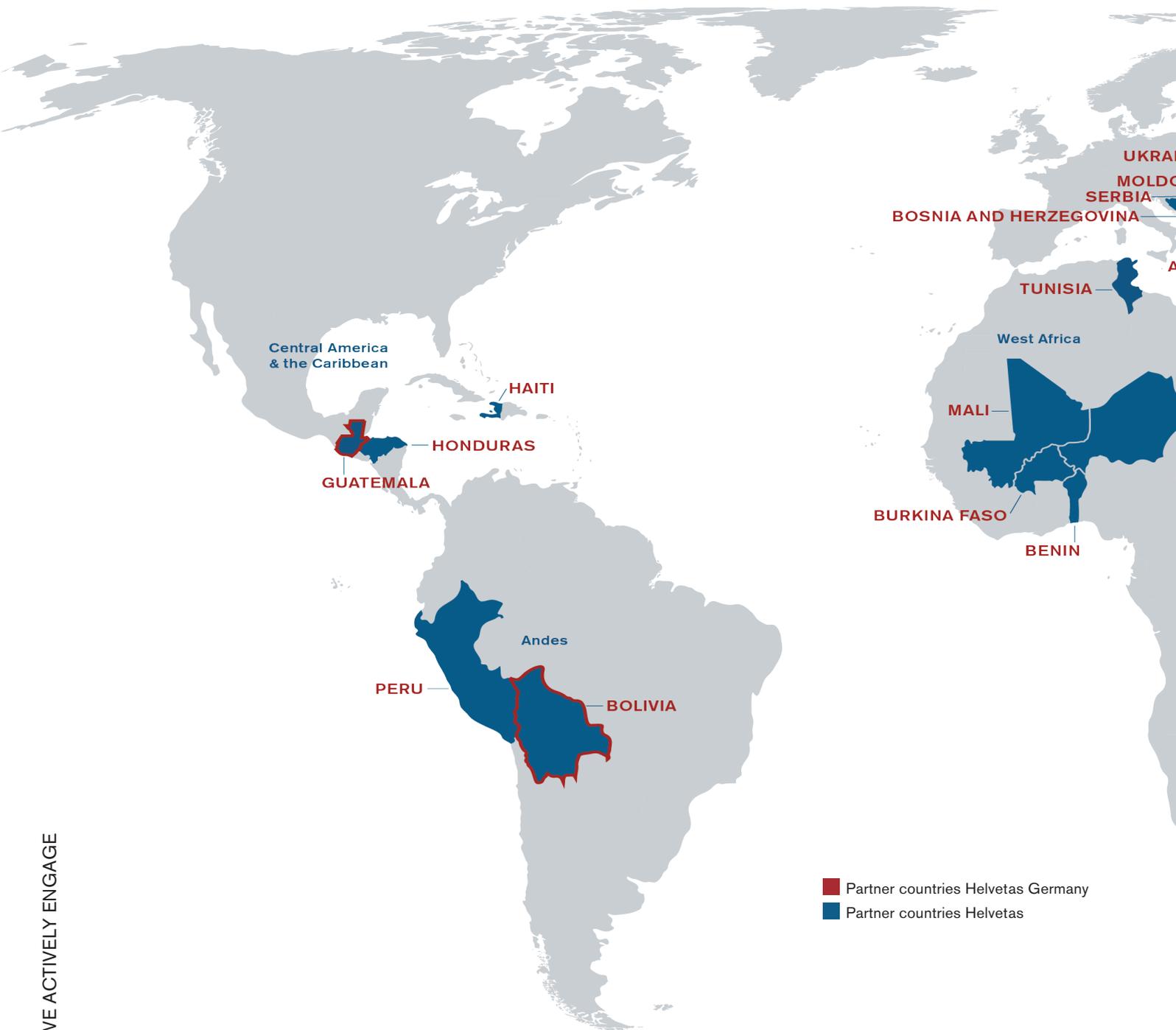
### **The strength of networking**

For Agnieszka Kroskowska, leader of Helvetas' Voice, Inclusion and Cohesion team and an expert in gender and social justice, the key to reopening a space for engagement in civil society resides in local, regional, national and international networking. This involves seeking allies not only among like-minded people, but also in government, the scientific community and the private sector. "This is how we spread the risks and, at the same time, increase our strengths and influence exponentially."

Civil society plays a pivotal role in development cooperation when it comes to social balance and political control, as well as the quality assurance of projects and partnerships. Locally organized and committed people are the ones to point out weaknesses in the political, social and economic system. They are able to voice the concerns of minorities. They negotiate rights and obligations with decision-makers. When the state and the business world refuse to engage with civil society, there is a lack of fair opportunities for the powerless and disadvantaged in a society. This is why Helvetas makes a deliberate effort to protect and, where possible, expand civil society's ability to act freely, as many examples in this annual report show.

# 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 to long-term efforts of creating fair opportunities for all.



# OUR PARTNER COUNTRIES



■ Partner countries Helvetas Germany  
■ Partner countries Helvetas

WHY WE ACTIVELY ENGAGE

# SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR FOOD SECURITY

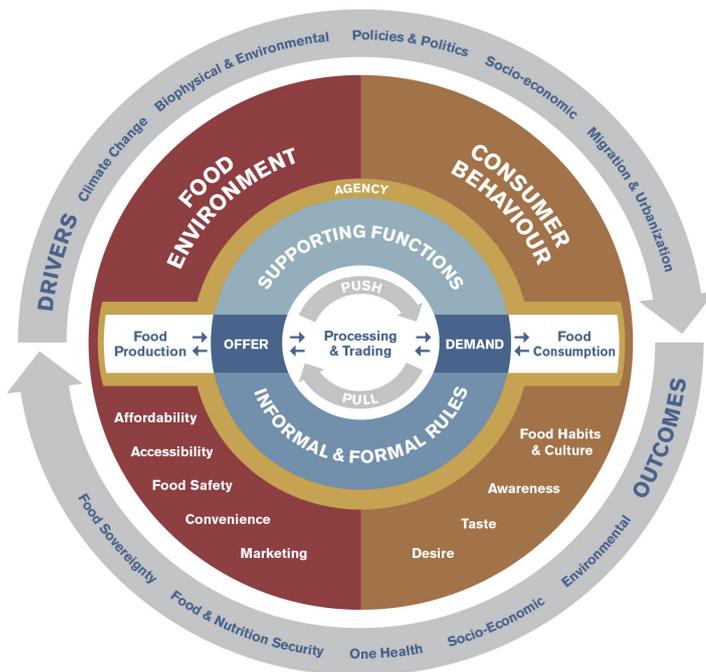
In the face of increasing challenges, sustainable solutions such as innovative cultivation methods are essential. A holistic understanding of nutrition - from production to consumption - ensures a sustainable supply of healthy food. Helvetas relies on a systemic approach and inclusive dialog to achieve sustainable change and empower vulnerable communities.

Pakistan, one of the most populous countries in the world with over 220 million people, faces major challenges in terms of food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty, especially in rural and semi-urban areas of Khyber province. Rapid urbanization and population growth have made food security a pressing issue as agricultural land is being converted for housing, leading to rising food prices and creating financial hurdles for low-income families. Additionally, in recent years, Pakistan has struggled with various disasters such as droughts, the Covid-19 pandemic and the devastating floods in 2022, which destroyed over 9.4 million hectares of agricultural land and crops.

This has further exacerbated the existing food insecurity in the country. This makes it clear that nutrition must be considered more comprehensively in terms of a food system approach. The food system (see Helvetas food system approach) is understood as the totality of all factors, activities and actors that have an influence on the path of food from the field to consumption. In this systemic approach, the challenges of climate change (as a driver), including scarcity of resources (droughts) with a simultaneous problematic abundance of resources, and the necessary adaptations are a critical factor. Strengthening the resilience of the food system is therefore becoming increasingly important in order to ensure a sustainable supply of healthy food. This includes innovative cultivation methods and greater diversification of food production.

This is precisely where Helvetas and its partner organization Foundation for Rural Development (FRD) have been working since 2023 as part of the "Resource-efficient food production" project. It aims to improve the cultivation techniques of smallholder farmers in rural and semi-urban areas on the outskirts of Peshawar. This involves converting home vegetable cultivation into a vertical formation in order to increase productivity and introduce resource-efficient agricultural practices. The aim is to improve the socio-economic situation of smallholder farmers and to establish vertical farming as a sustainable solution for food security in Pakistan.

## Food System Approach



WHY WE ACTIVELY ENGAGE



© Tahir Saleem, Helvetas Pakistan

Through climate-smart and yield-enhancing agricultural practices, 600 smallholder farmers and their families in urban and semi-urban areas of the Peshawar Valley are expected to improve their crop yields and incomes.

At Helvetas, we take a systemic approach to project implementation across all topics, with a focus on scalability and sustainability. Through the “adopt-adapt-expand-response” approach, we ensure that these goals are achieved. In addition, we support actors in different systems, such as the food system, to perform their functions effectively while generating positive added value for themselves, society and the environment. Helvetas has committed to eight principles for inclusive systemic change (see on the right).

By implementing this systemic approach, the Re-Food project strengthens sustainability in agricultural production and promotes an inclusive food market. A central concern of the project is also to communicate this approach to the public in order to enable replication and scalability.

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### The systematic approach is based on 8 principles

1. **Creating better opportunities for disadvantaged groups**
  2. **Developing a shared vision of change through multi-stakeholder dialogue**
  3. **Local Ownership**
  4. **Learning and adaptive management at the heart of our organizational culture and in collaboration with our partners**
  5. **Attributing the achievement of development goals with certainty (at least in part) to our interventions**
  6. **Supporting an inclusive systems approach through appropriate internal organization (structure, policies, and processes)**
  7. **Communication regarding the opportunities and challenges of systemic change**
  8. **Active discourse with a broad range of development actors for sustainable systematic change**
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# 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 lobbying.

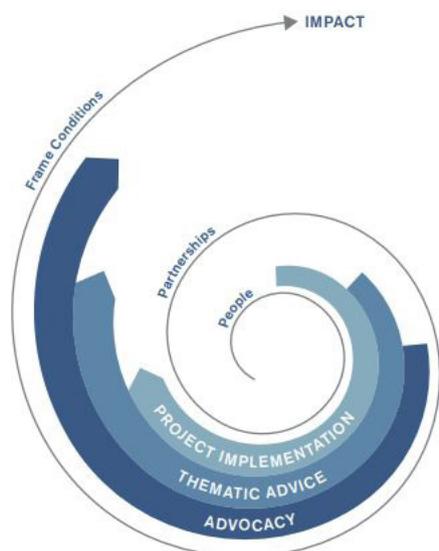


# DIVERSE COMMITMENT

In 2023 Helvetas Germany supported 16 Projects and Programs in different thematic areas in 11 countries.

## OVERVIEW PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS IN YEAR 2023

Continent/Country	Title	Funding/ Co-Funding
<b>Africa</b>		
Burkina Faso	Laafia - Health for Schoolchildren and Families	Donations
<b>Asia</b>		
Kyrgyzstan	Greentour - Sustainable Tourism in Kyrgyzstan	EU
Kyrgyzstan	Livestock & Tourism - Value Chain Promotion Livestock and Agriculture	GIZ
Laos	C4N «Connecting for Nutrition»	EU
Myanmar	Culture 4 Peace	EU
Nepal	GRAPE Implementing Green Resilient Agricultural Productive Ecosystems	Donations
Pakistan	Re-Food Resource Efficient Food Production in Pakistan	BMZ
Pakistan	Flood Emergency Response in Pakistan	Donations
Tajikistan	TRIGGER - Towards Rural Inclusive Growth and Economic Resilience	GIZ
Sri Lanka	inSPIRE - Incubator Space for Promoting Information Right and Freedom of Expression	EU
Uzbekistan	Support to economic reforms and sustainable economic development in regions of Uzbekistan	GIZ
Vietnam	Circular Economy Cocoa: From Bean to Bar	EU
Vietnam	L4A - Landrights for All	EU
Vietnam	Promoting improved living conditions of banana producers and environmental protection in Northern Vietnam	BMZ
<b>Latin America</b>		
Bolivia	Humanitarian aid and recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic	Donations
Bolivia	Integrate - Economic empowerment of Venezuelan families	Donations



## HOW WE MAKE AN EFFECT

Through projects, technical advice, and advocacy Helvetas initiates, promotes and guides systemic change.

Helvetas combines three mutually reinforcing intervention mechanisms: We implement development and humanitarian response projects; we provide technical advice and build thematic competences; and we engage in awareness-raising, policy dialogue, and advocacy. This is how we initiate, support, and influence systemic change that improves the lives of people in the short and long term, strengthens our partners, and fosters conducive frame conditions.

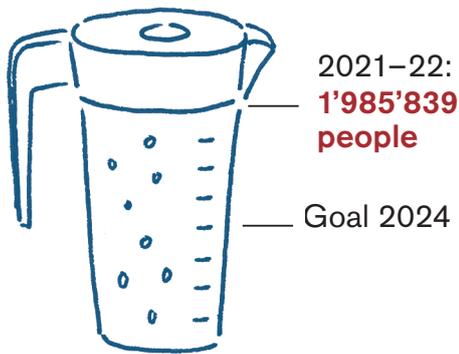
# HEALTHY DIET AND LAND RIGHTS

Billions of people are born in countries without access to clean drinking water, a balanced diet or the ability to protect themselves from the consequences of climate change. Together with partner organizations, Helvetas is working to create new opportunities for millions of people.

## Cohesion for better nutrition

Our goal for 2021–24:

**1 million** people have gained direct access to safe drinking water



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

Expanding food security is the focus of the Laotian development agenda. With the EU-funded “Connecting for Nutrition” project, Helvetas is working with the Maeying Huamjai Phatana Association in **Laos** to increase the participation of civil society organizations in preventing, combating and mitigating malnutrition and undernutrition among marginalized and vulnerable populations, thus strengthening its role in promoting inclusive and sustainable development. The project brings together different stakeholders and promotes their joint action to improve the availability, access and utilization of food at the local level. Within this framework, civil society organizations carry out activities on topics such as regional production and consumption of nutritious food and the management of natural resources.

## Resilience in rural areas

Together with the GFA Consulting Group, Helvetas is working in **Tajikistan** to improve integrated water resource management and increase agricultural production in order to strengthen economic resilience in the Zarafshon and Vakhsh regions. The “TRIGGER” project supports the Tajik government in implementing water-related measures and promotes climate-conscious management of river basins. Watershed organizations and councils are being established and strengthened in order to improve governance in the water sector. At the same time, agricultural businesses receive support through training in efficient irrigation techniques in order to optimize water use in agriculture and make food production more resilient to water scarcity.

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



**17** Partnerships for the goals





**605'338**  
people gained  
direct access to water  
from a newly built  
or rehabilitated source.

**312'187**  
in Africa

**210'201**  
in Asia and  
Eastern Europe

**82'950**  
in Latin America

Sayon Samaké,  
Mali

© Fatoumata Diabate

## When water insecurity means anger and shame

No tool so far measures the emotional toll of water insecurity. Helvetas is closing this gap with the HWISE Scale.

### What exactly does HWISE measure?

The Household Water Insecurity Experience (HWISE) scale measures people's experiences and feelings in relation to water access: its availability, accessibility in the past four weeks, how reliably it flowed, and how it was used. The scale comprises 12 experiences that go beyond standard drinking water access questions. The goal is to get at the difficulties when there is a lack of water, such as not being able to wash the hands or to prepare food. What is special is that HWISE also asks about feelings and perceptions, such as worry, anger or shame. How often did you worry because there was no water? Or how often did you have to change your plans because of

water problems? How often didn't you have enough water to drink?

### Why are these findings important?

Progress in access to drinking water is usually measured by provider side indicators like infrastructure or per capita availability. The HWISE findings go beyond this, to provide insights into user experiences. They show how water insecurity affects people's wellbeing – from diseases and mental health to general quality of life. On this basis, political measures can be developed to ensure equitable access to reliably flowing drinking water. HWISE does more than measure the flow of water; it measures how comprehensively the human right to water and sanitation is actually fulfilled. Helvetas will use HWISE as a strategic indicator to monitor the effectiveness of water and sanitation projects.

### Can you give us an example?

In Nepal, Helvetas implements water connection on premises. HWISE surveys revealed that water insecurity declined from 21.7% to 1.3%. The scale showed the details: 71% of households reported specific worries about water problems. Since they have had their own tap, the figure has dropped to 15% after project intervention. This indicates an increased level of well-being – and that this is directly linked to the availability of water and our interventions.



**Madan Bhatta** is Team Leader of the Integrated Water Resource Management Program with Helvetas Nepal.



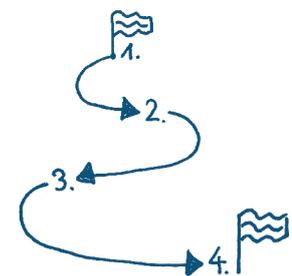
Our experience has shown that water-saving irrigation technologies such as short furrow irrigation and drip irrigation not only save a considerable amount of water, but are also very popular with farmers. As part of the TRIGGER project, the introduction of these technologies is being specifically supported by creating demonstration areas with different crops. This practical introduction has shown farmers how they can make their water use more efficient, which not only conserves water resources but also improves yields.

# FOR PARTICIPATION AND COHESION

Many people have no real voice in their own country. The alarming trend in recent years towards more authoritarian regimes, often supported by populist rhetoric and nationalism, is increasingly shrinking the space for civil society. Helvetas is committed to making everyone's voice heard, promoting good governance, preventing conflict and harnessing the positive effects of migration on development.

## Culture for Peace

The multi-ethnic state of **Myanmar** faces major challenges in promoting inclusive and sustainable peace. The Helvetas project "Culture for Peace (C4P)" therefore aimed to make a sustainable contribution to a pluralistic, inclusive and peaceful society. In an environment of cultural, religious and ethnic diversity and a fragile transition towards more democracy, the project supported civil society organizations to play a central role in intercultural dialogue, anti-discrimination and diversity. The project has successfully brought together civil society organizations, interfaith groups and artists, who are among the most marginalized groups within society, while creating five lasting networks and robust partnerships that give actors a stronger voice.

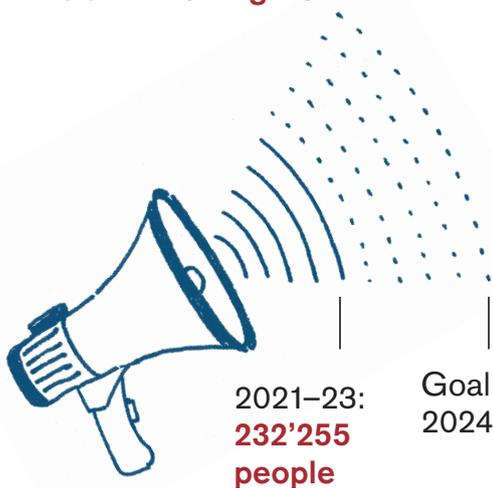


## Land rights and participation

In **Vietnam**, Helvetas worked with local partners as part of the "Secure Land Rights for All" project to help ethnic minorities, particularly women, to assert their land and forest rights in the country's northern provinces. A digital platform supports those affected in finding solutions to land conflicts, sharing information and seeking advice. In addition, the project strengthened the voice and skills of civil society organizations to resolve land rights conflicts, conduct policy analysis and advocate, thereby improving their position, reputation and recognition in the public sphere.

Our target for 2021–24:

**500'000**  
people will have been empowered to raise their voice and claim their rights



Helvetas helps to achieve the following Agenda 2030 goals:

- 5** Gender equality
- 10** Reduced inequalities
- 11** Sustainable cities and communities
- 16** Peace, justice and strong institutions

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

## Extreme weather events force people to move to slums

The consequences of climate change are clearly visible in Bangladesh. With their livelihoods destroyed, many migrate to the nearest city to earn a living. Migration is therefore an adaptation measure to climate change and extreme weather events. In the past mostly men migrated, but recently women have also begun to leave in search of new livelihoods.

### What impact does climate change have on migration?

We distinguish between gradual and sudden climate events. For example, there are slow-onset events such as slowly rising sea levels followed by the salination of groundwater and flooding of fields. In this case, men usually look for income opportunities in a city and return after a few months. We call this seasonal migration. Migration in this context is an adaptation measure to climate change. And then there are sudden extreme events like cyclones that lead to the displacement of thousands of people because their livelihoods have been destroyed. They often do not return home but try to live in the slums of large cities. What we observe is that people undertaking climate-induced migration usually don't cross borders because that requires resources. Those who have nothing or have lost everything stay in the country, but move to cities, usually into the slums.

### Are women and men affected differently?

Women, youth and elderly people are all affected differently. Women staying behind often face hardship, additional burdens

and social insecurity. And they bear the health risks of climate change. For example, often they are the last to drink or they consume salty water. When they migrate, they need to adapt to the new life without family support, sometimes experiencing domestic violence or sexual harassment.

### What is Helvetas doing to support affected women?

Following the principle of "nothing about us, without us," we encourage women to form groups – such as mother's parliaments – to advocate for their rights: clean water, sanitary infrastructure, agricultural services, etc. They are so successful that younger people are now following their example and making their needs known to the relevant authorities. Women also receive training so that they can earn money to build a livelihood. We encourage them to overcome stereotypes and become drivers or motorcycle mechanics. This was frowned upon at first, but it is slowly gaining acceptance. Helvetas is also working with local administrations to improve the situation of the family members who have been left behind.



Tajmary Akter is Program Manager for Gender and Social Equity with Helvetas Bangladesh.

## Integration for a strong community

Over 7 million Venezuelans left their home country in 2023 due to various socio-political factors. Many of them found refuge in **Bolivia**. However, the living conditions on the ground are challenging: overcrowded housing, poor water and hygiene conditions, poverty and limited access to health and educational facilities. Women and girls are particularly at risk of being trafficked and abused. Together with the local foundation Munasim-Kullakita, Helvetas therefore supports Venezuelan families in Bolivia in tackling an integration process in a holistic way. Through economic and social empowerment, greater social inclusion is promoted. In addition, the families and especially the women gain greater control over their lives and their decisions, which enables them to exercise their rights and improve the quality of life not only for themselves, but also for their environment and their family. At the same time, the project pursues an equal opportunity and intercultural approach, which aims to create a space for learning, exchange and innovation, resulting in a stable and strong community. tourism practices.

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### CHALLENGE

Helvetas has always worked in fragile contexts where governments and authorities do not have the resources or the will to look after their own populations in the face of conflict and climate crises. And this is where most people live in extreme poverty. They have a right to fair opportunities and secure livelihoods. Thus, Helvetas remains a reliable partner in fragile countries. In order to be "fit for fragility,"

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**6643**

local governments and councils  
have been involving citizens  
more actively in their decision-  
making since 2023

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**4271**

in Africa

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**2287**

in Asia and  
Eastern Europe

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**85**

in Latin America

In the state of Kayin in south-eastern Myanmar/Burma, ethnic minorities are often excluded from political, civil and cultural rights. The C4P project is therefore committed to ensuring that marginalized groups are given a voice and can thus contribute to a diverse and inclusive society.

# PROMOTING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

While agriculture continues to employ the most people in developing countries, the importance of non-agricultural activities such as crafts and tourism is growing. In order to create secure jobs, it is crucial to promote the local economy and digital transformation. This is the only way to create enough attractive and secure earning opportunities for women and men worldwide.

## Tourism for economic development

Our target for 2021–24:

**320,000**  
women and men will have attended a vocational education and training



2021–23 result:  
**152,122 people**

Goal  
2024

In 2023, Helvetas and Mascontour GmbH launched their targeted efforts to promote sustainable economic development in the Fergana Valley, Uzbekistan, through comprehensive tourism development initiatives. This region holds significant potential to strengthen its tourism sector to drive economic growth and create employment opportunities. The project is part of a broader framework that aims to strengthen the local economy by capitalizing on the region's unique cultural, natural and agricultural heritage and is implemented in cooperation with GIZ and other local and international partners.

By improving the skills and capacities of local tourism service providers, diversifying the tourism offer and improving promotional activities, the project aims to position the Fergana Valley as a unique and attractive destination for international tourists. This initiative not only supports economic growth, but also promotes cultural exchange and sustainable development in the region.

**“Only in a cooperated way between all the stakeholders and with market actors can we have more profits for local businesses”**

Dildora Khudaynazarova,  
D-Tour

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

Helvetas helps to achieve the following Agenda 2030 goals:



## The Fergana Valley Community Tourism Network (CTN-49)

Tourism is an important sector for Uzbekistan's economy and has increased significantly since the 2017 reforms, but challenges remain. In the Fergana Valley in particular, the tourism potential is not being fully exploited due to poor infrastructure, a lack of service quality and regional competition. To overcome these challenges, the innovative community tourism network CTN-49 is being set up in the Fergana Valley. This network enables broad participation of the population in the entire region.

### What is the CTN-49?

CTN-49 is a growing community tourism network in the Fergana Valley with over 30 local tourism businesses ranging from artisans to guides. It offers international visitors authentic off-the-beaten-track experiences and promotes local economy and culture. After the successful pilot phase, CTN-49 is seeking registration as an NGO to strengthen cooperation between Namangan, Andijan and Fergana provinces and establish the Fergana Valley as a cultural destination that complements well-known Silk Road cities and promotes cross-border cooperation with Kyrgyzstan.

### What exactly is Helvetas doing?

The Fergana Valley is at the heart of Uzbekistan's traditional arts and crafts, and local artisans play a central role in CTN-49. For centuries, the artisans of Namangan, Andijan and Fergana provinces have not only continued to hone their skills, but have also tacitly passed these traditional techniques down through generations. As part of Helvetas' work, these master artisans are now being supported to better reach the international

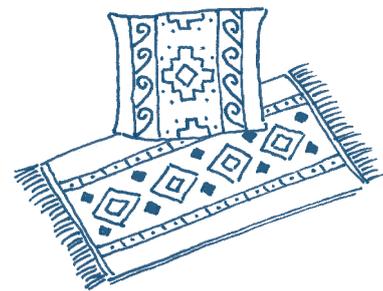
market, both through the direct sale of goods and through the development of tourism products that provide services and travel experiences for international visitors. Through further training, product development, marketing training, website development and support to participate in international craft fairs, the artisans will gain better and wider international recognition with the opportunity to create more local jobs in the craft sector.

### What is the projects approach?

With this project, Helvetas is pursuing a holistic "place making" approach to tourism development. This involves creating deeper connections between people and places through targeted training and workshops. Helvetas supports various actors in the tourism sector, such as tour operators and craft-people, in the areas of innovation, sustainability and customer service.

### What is the objective?

The aim is to convey the beauty of the Fergana Valley to international tourists so that they not only visit a part of it, but engage with the entire region. A paradigm shift in tourism marketing is to be achieved through close cooperation with the public and private sectors, supported by targeted marketing measures such as brochures, videos and a stronger online presence. The initiative thus not only supports economic growth, but also promotes cultural exchange and sustainable development in the region.



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### CHALLENGE

Around 281 million migrants, refugees and forcibly displaced persons worldwide live in a country other than their country of birth - including many children and young people. They are barely protected from exploitation and have no access to education. They need protection and access to schools or education so that they can develop their potential and be empowered. However, many countries, especially fragile ones, lack the resources to care for migrant children and integrate them into the national education system. This is where organizations like Helvetas provide important support by working with ministries, local authorities, educational institutions, business associations and private companies to find solutions.

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**„The CTN is where I can gain more experiences, more knowledge and new professional acquaintances. My hope is that in two years we'll see the Fergana Valley as a popular tourist site with a great flow of visitors from many places in the world, and all of this depends on this new knowledge and networking. “**

**Asel Arzieva, Mazzali Travel**



# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	31.12.2023 in EUR	31.12.2022 in EUR
<b>A Current Assets</b>		
I Receivables and Other Assets	447.718	443.833
II Cash in hand, checks, bank balances	1.439.152	1.326.154
<b>B Deferred income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Assets</b>	<b>1.886.870</b>	<b>1.769.987</b>
<b>Equity and Liabilities</b>		
<b>A. Equity</b>		
I Subscribed Capital	25.000	25.000
II Revenue reserves (Earmarked reserves)	196.795	246.967
III Accumulated loss (Net profit)	28.549	-118.425
<b>B. Special item for project funds</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>122.090</b>
<b>C. Provisions and accruals</b>		
Other provisions	42.237	36.429
<b>D. Liabilities</b>	<b>1.594.289</b>	<b>1.457.926</b>
<b>E. Deferred income and accrued expenses</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Equity and Liabilities</b>	<b>1.886.870</b>	<b>1.769.987</b>

### SOURCE OF FUNDS



- Institutional Donors  
(EU, Federal Foreign Office, BMZ)
- Other  
(Foundations, Other Subsidies, Private Donations...)

### USE OF FUNDS



- Country Programs
- Administrative Office in Bonn

**PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT**

INCOME	2023 in EUR	2022 in EUR
1. Subsidies	3.196.814	2.295.726
2. Other operating income	326.707	201.490
3. Donation proceeds	3.562	7.502
4. Expenditure for project sponsorships	-2.790.223	-1.862.602
5. Personnel costs	<b>-581.429</b>	<b>-601.268</b>
a) Wages and salaries	-478.487	-505.805
b) Social security contributions	-102.942	-95.463
6. Amortisation of intangible assets of fixed assets and property, plant and equipment	0.00	-414
7. Other operating costs	-58.647	-106.752
8. Other interest and similar income	25.00	0
<b>Annual net loss (previous year: annual net profit)</b>	<b>96.802</b>	<b>154.530</b>
Profit carried forward	-118.426	20.823
Allocations to earmarked reserves	50.173	15.281
<b>Accumulated loss (PY: net profit)</b>	<b>28.549</b>	<b>118.425</b>

**Revision**

BDO AG, Bonn, has audited the financial accounting and the balance sheet and income statement for the financial year from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. The audit did not lead to any objections.

The financial statements are presented here in EUR, rounded, without decimal places.

**SOURCE AND USE OF FUNDS STATEMENT RELATED TO THE TRANSPARENT CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVE COMMITMENT**

Source of Funds in EUR	Ideational	Special Purpose Project Funding	Total
Donations Received	3.562	0	3.562
<b>Subtotal (income fundraising)</b>	<b>3.562</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3.562</b>
Project Contributions			
- Private grants	346.951	559.231	906.181
- Government grants	0	2.290.632	2.290.632
Other operating income	0	326.732	326.732
<b>Subtotal (Income from services provided)</b>	<b>346.951</b>	<b>3.176.595</b>	<b>3.523.546</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>350.513</b>	<b>3.176.595</b>	<b>3.527.108</b>
<b>Use of Funds in EUR</b>			
Other interest and similar income	250,00	0	250,00
<b>Subtotal (Expense use of funds)</b>	<b>250,00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>250,00</b>
Expenses project funding	0	2.790.223	2.790.223
Expenses wages and salaries	368.397	213.032	581.429
Other operating expenses	58.403	0	58.403
<b>Subtotal (Expense from services provided)</b>	<b>426.800</b>	<b>3.003.255</b>	<b>3.430.305</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>427.050</b>	<b>3.003.255</b>	<b>3.430.305</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-76.537</b>	<b>173.339</b>	<b>96.802</b>

# COMMITTED AND OPEN-MINDED

As part of the Helvetas network, the Helvetas Germany team, together with 1,400 other employees worldwide, is committed to helping people live self-determined lives in dignity and security.

## HELVETAS GERMANY'S TEAM IN BONN



**Martin Koppa**  
Director Helvetas Germany



**Naja Christin Mayer**  
Programme Manager Grants



**Eva Schulte-Vennbur**  
Programme Manager Service Contracts



**David Bexte**  
Advisor Food Systems and Nutrition



**Ulrike Menzenbach**  
Finance Manager



**Christina Hoffmann**  
Junior Programme Manager



**Maja Zirojevic Bužo**  
Controller International Accounting

## RELATED ORGANISATIONS AND ACTORS

The following organizations, individuals and institutions are considered related parties to Helvetas Germany: ADT Project Consulting GmbH / AFC Consulting Group / AMBERO Consulting GmbH / Association of German Foundations / BENGGO, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) / Culture for Peace (Berlin) / Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) / Engagement Global / European Union (EU) / Federal Foreign Office / FAKT Consult for Management, Training and Technologies / German Welthungerhilfe e.V. / Gemeinsam für Afrika e.V. / GFA Consulting Group / Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation / Helvetas USA Inc. / INVOLAS Institute for Vocational Education and Training, Labour Market and Social Policy / ICON Institute GmbH / Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (zivik-Programm) / International Centre for Migration Policy Management (ICMPD) / Partnership for Transparency e.V. / Stichting European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism (ECEAT) / WINS Consult

## Ensuring basic rights

### Water, food and climate

In 2023 **3'352'436** women and men gained sustainable access to water, sanitation, proper hygiene, better nutrition and natural resources, and they 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 2023 **650'683** 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, **16'654** 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 2023, with Helvetas support, **109'106** women and men learned to demand their right to basic public services and resolve conflicts. Helvetas also worked with local authorities and partner organizations to help **1'340'363** women and men plan for their safe, responsible and profitable labor migration.

## Alleviating suffering

### Humanitarian response

In 2023, Helvetas supported **384'536** people affected by the war in Ukraine, cyclones in Bangladesh and Myanmar, earthquakes in Syria, Morocco and Nepal, and many people in forgotten crisis areas elsewhere. Helvetas combines short-term humanitarian aid with long-term development cooperation so that people are able to rebuild their daily lives quickly and not remain dependent on aid.

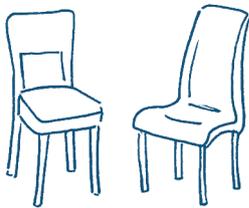


Juliana Gonzalez in Guatemala went almost 50 years before she could draw clean water from a tap at home. This is an opportunity for the whole family

**5'837'124**  
people have been  
given a fair  
opportunity thanks  
to your support

# FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND A COURAGEOUS MEDIA

Billions of people are born in countries where basic public services are not accessible to all. Economic circumstances force women and men to migrate to make a living. Millions of people are leaving their homes due to conflict, violence and climate change. With partner organizations, Helvetas helps to ensure that people can make their voices heard and live in safety.



## Project with an impact

The dialogue between generations in **Kyrgyzstan** fosters self-confidence in young people and gives older people an understanding of young people's concerns. Helvetas has developed teaching materials for this purpose, including modules for young people's upcoming career choices. The result has been so positive that Uzbekistan has adopted the method, and a project team from Sri Lanka has visited Kyrgyzstan to see what the success of this project is based on.

## Engaged citizens

Youth participation in **Nepal's** political life is minimal. Helvetas and its project partners are therefore bringing together young people through "Youth Panels" in rural municipalities across two provinces. Panel members receive comprehensive education on the political system and opportunities for participation. This gives them the space to actively advocate for, and to contribute to, much-needed reforms, working closely with local government entities. Concurrently, local government representatives learn how to work with the Youth Panels and develop activities that benefit the entire population.



## Media and civil society

As part of **Bhutan's** democratic transition, Helvetas is supporting civil society to become more active and more politically involved. This includes promoting the media and training journalists, as free media constitutes an important pillar of a functioning democracy. Today, media professionals in Bhutan report more often on civil society organizations and their concerns. An article about the difficulties faced by small grassroots organizations was even awarded a media prize in 2023.

Helvetas helps to achieve the following Agenda 2030 goals:

5 Gender equality



10 Reduced inequalities



11 Sustainable cities and communities



16 Peace, justice and strong institutions



«Mental and physical violence is terrible. I don't want other women to have to experience what I went through.»

Vongphet Khamvongsa, 62,  
Legal advisor, Laos



Domestic violence is widespread in Laos. Together with a local partner organization, Helvetas has trained 120 local legal advisors, most of whom are women who were affected by violence themselves, and has set up legal clinics staffed by female lawyers and students as volunteers. This gives women a point of contact and enables them to assert their rights. Village mediation committees are also being set up, and law students, the police, investigating magistrates and judges are being educated about women's rights.

# VALUABLE PARTNERSHIPS AND FORGOTTEN CRISES

Whether due to earthquakes, the war in Ukraine, fragile contexts around the world, droughts, or hurricanes people's plight usually outlasts the attention they receive from the media. Donors and foundations have generously supported people in need in 2023. They helped thousands of people to start anew and rebuild their homes and livelihoods.

## Legal residence status

More than seven million Venezuelans have left their home country in recent years due to the desperate political and economic situation. **Peru** is their second most chosen destination after Colombia. However, migrants entering the country are denied access to health services and education. Peru lowered the hurdles for residence permits for a short period in 2023. During this period, Helvetas supported single mothers in particular in obtaining legal papers so that they can live without fear and have better prospects of finding fairly paid jobs.



## A forgotten crisis

Long-lasting crises fall out of the spotlight of international attention. Consider, for example, the situation of the Rohingya refugees in **Bangladesh**, for whom there are still no signs of a solution. The refugees have been dependent on support since 2017, and Helvetas is still active in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. On March 5, a fire broke out in a camp once again, and 12,000 people lost their few belongings. Volunteers trained by Helvetas were able to save lives and fight the fire. In addition, two destructive cyclones have hit Cox's Bazar in 2023. Here, too, Helvetas provided emergency aid for thousands of people.

## Emergency aid, Year two

The heavy rains and subsequent floods in **Pakistan** in 2022 destroyed entire stretches of land and livelihoods. Little emergency aid reached the outlying regions due to washed-away roads and bridges. Together with partner organizations, Helvetas provided affected populations across the entire country with essential support such as food supplies, water filtration, blankets and warm clothes for the winter. With the destruction of agricultural land and irrigation systems, they also distributed vegetable and wheat seeds so that affected families could resume farming and reduce dependence on food aid. Since the floods, Helvetas has also commissioned the repair of 40 schools, provided access to clean drinking water for 445,000 people through water filters in community facilities, and delivered water supplies for 90,000 individuals with tanker trucks. Help is still needed even after the floods have receded, because a lack of support means that reconstruction will take years.

Helvetas helps to achieve the following Agenda 2023 goals:

1 No poverty



2 Zero hunger



3 Good health and well-being



6 Clean water and sanitation



10 Reduced inequalities



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

## «Education in emergencies is crucial for the future of children»

After the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan, thousands of people, many of them children, fled to Pakistan. Children have a right to education, and even in emergency situations, they must be able to go to school

**In emergency situations immediate focus is on providing essential humanitarian support such as shelter, food and healthcare. Education seems to be neglected. Why?**

Education is considered a secondary concern that requires stability and longer-term planning. There are challenges in providing education to refugees, such as language barriers, a lack of infrastructure and qualified teachers. Armed conflicts and political instability further complicate efforts. As a result, long-term investments in education are often overlooked in favor of immediate relief efforts

**Why is education in emergencies so important?**

Education in emergencies is crucial for the future of refugee and migrant children. It provides stability, protection from risks such as child labor and early marriage, and it allows children to develop skills for their future. Education also contributes to the overall recovery of affected families and communities. By ensuring access to education during emergencies, Helvetas and its partners can safeguard the

well-being and development of children and youth.

**What can be done to secure education in emergencies?**

First, there should be an immediate assessment of the educational backgrounds and needs of refugee and migrant children. This includes understanding the differences in curricula and languages. Based on the assessment, catch-up curricula and language courses can be developed to bridge the learning gaps. Collaboration with local authorities is vital to address capacity gaps in the educational sector of the host country. This often involves having to increase the capacities of the local education system to accommodate refugee children and provide training for teachers. Establishing temporary learning spaces in displacement camps or damaged schools can also create a safe learning environment. Providing educational materials and psychosocial support is necessary for the continuity of education. By prioritizing and securing education in emergencies, we can provide the building blocks for a brighter future for affected children.



**Asad Salim** is Nationaler Program Officer for Helvetas Pakistan.

### CHALLENGE

**What should we do when humanitarian aid suddenly has to be provided, but Helvetas is not on site? Helvetas was faced with this question on September 8, 2023, when the 6.8-magnitude earthquake in Morocco afflicted thousands of people, causing enormous damage. Over 2,000 people lost their lives and at least as many were injured, some of them seriously. Thanks to the proven cooperation in the Alliance2015, Helvetas was able to provide emergency aid quickly through its French partner Acted.**



## Planning ahead

The escalation of conflict in the Middle East is also changing Helvetas' work in the region. To be prepared, Helvetas has been looking for, and talking with potential partner organizations since autumn, for example in southern **Lebanon**, so that it can launch humanitarian projects quickly if the conflict spreads. As always, in fragile contexts, it is important to navigate the political situation carefully and to be able to act credibly as an independent humanitarian organization.



## Alleviating the effects of war

With the end of the fighting in Tigray in northern **Ethiopia**, organizations like Helvetas are finally able to once more provide emergency aid in this war-torn region. The short-term goal is to improve the food and income situation with emergency aid. Agricultural aid includes seeds for vegetables and grains as well as goats and sheep for breeding. Farming families and cooperatives are being strengthened so that they can once again provide for themselves. Support for women's savings groups also helps to foster social cohesion.

**«Ever since the war started, I have not been feeling secure anymore in my home city. I visit the collective heating point to warm up and charge my phone»**

Olesya Semenenko from Charkiw, Ukraine

ТІЛЬКИ  
ЗАРЯДИТИ  
ТЕЛЕФОН

Thanks to donations from the Swiss population and funds from Swiss Solidarity, Helvetas has created places in Ukraine where people can warm up in winter and charge their electronic devices. Together with partner organizations, Helvetas is also supporting small and medium-sized enterprises to adapt their products and services to the war situation. Craftspeople can borrow tools from repair hubs and a “repair ambulance” is on the road almost daily to deal with emergencies and make initial repairs to newly damaged homes.



**2023**, the Helvetas network received generous donations of over **45**

**Mio.** and provided services amounting to almost **115 Mio.** Euros.

This means that **1484** Helvetas employees around the world, together with around

**1100** partner organizations have enabled over **2.8 Mio.**

women and men in **35** countries to build a life without poverty.

**Would you also like to enable poor and disadvantaged women and men to lift themselves out of poverty and create prospects for themselves?**

HELVETAS Intercooperation gGmbH

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