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2016 Annual Report: Swiss Solidarity provided CHF 45 million for aid in Switzerland and abroad

Last year Swiss Solidarity supported 148 projects in Switzerland and abroad. The main aid recipients were refugees and the victims of the earthquake and hurricanes in Nepal, the Philippines and on Haiti. The annual report, published today, explains how Swiss Solidarity helped fund 22 projects for young people in need and provided one-off financial aid to 1200 families in Switzerland in 2016. All in all, Swiss Solidarity provided CHF 45,470,428 in Switzerland and abroad. During the reporting year, the Foundation Council approved the new Swiss Solidarity strategy, which focuses on getting closer to the donors, closer to the victims of disaster, and closer to the partner relief organizations.

Swiss Solidarity’s spending on international aid projects in 2016 amounted to CHF 42.1 million. This money went towards helping refugees and the internally displaced (2015 appeal), victims of Hurricane Matthew on Haiti (2016), reconstruction in Nepal (2015) and the Philippines (2013), and to individual projects in East Africa (2016) providing relief to victims of the drought. All international projects, with a few exceptions, were implemented by Swiss Solidarity’s 25 partner relief organizations. In addition to the 22 projects for young people in need in Switzerland, 3108 people received support via the social assistance fund and 17 families via the severe weather in Switzerland fund. Assistance in Switzerland amounted to CHF 3.3 million francs, which was about 7 per cent of all project spending.

CHF 17.9 million raised

Swiss Solidarity raised CHF 17.9 million in donations in 2016. This amount could be raised thanks to appeals for the victims of Hurricane Matthew on Haiti and for the victims of the drought in East Africa. SRF 3's ‘Jeder Rappen zählt’ appeal and RTS Option Musique's newly launched ‘Coeur à Coeur’ appeal in the French-speaking part of Switzerland also contributed to the sum.

Financial income from investments was about CHF 1.8 million in the reporting year, which covered a little more than 50% of net operating costs of CHF 3.4 million. The shortfall was met in part from operating reserves (CHF 570,000) and in part from the extraordinary release of 2.5% of the Typhoon Haiyan fund (around CHF 1 million).

New strategy: Even closer

At its last meeting of the year in December 2016, the Foundation Council approved the new Swiss Solidarity strategy. This aims at providing an up-to-date answer to all the major challenges the future will bring, in particular in the fields of humanitarian aid, donations, communication and foundation management. With its new slogan, ‘even closer’, Swiss Solidarity hopes to reflect the spirit of the declared aim of the UN humanitarian summit held in Istanbul - to involve to a greater extent local people and local organizations in places affected by disaster. It also intends to support innovative solutions which take better account of the needs of the disaster victims. On a new platform initiated by Swiss Solidarity, partner relief organizations can work together to develop and try out joint innovations.

In future, more information will be available to donors and it will be easier to make donations, thanks in part to the new Swiss Solidarity website, launched in May 2017.

The foundation wants to work on raising awareness among young people, in particular on fundraising days and via specific communication channels and social media. As the humanitarian arm of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (SRG SSR), Swiss Solidarity knows that its traditional fundraising methods can be counted on, such as the appeal days run in conjunction with SRG and other media; however, just like the SRG, it must keep up with the times and use digital media more widely.

The online version of the 2016 annual report and financial statement can be found here:

<https://ar.swiss-solidarity.org/>

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“Swiss Solidarity” is the expression of the solidarity of the Swiss population with the victims of disasters and conflicts. It is an independent foundation created by the SSR. Swiss Solidarity is not itself operational, but co-funds using donations from the public, businesses as well as cantons and municipalities, the projects of 25 Swiss NGOs which assist victims on the ground. The Foundation ensures the proper use of these donations through in-depth analyses and field assessments by experts in compliance with international standards for emergency aid, rehabilitation and reconstruction. In Switzerland, Swiss Solidarity supports people in need, spending of the order of one million Swiss francs per annum, in collaboration with specialised social services. In the wake of severe weather in the country, it supports individuals, communities and SMEs suffering major damage. Since 1946, Swiss Solidarity has collected more than 1.5 billion Swiss francs in donations.  
For more information, please visit: [www.swiss-solidarity.org](http://www.swiss-solidarity.org).