

Annual Report **2025**



CO:OPERAID

Education for children in Africa and Asia

Effective aid in Africa and Asia

East Africa:
Kenya, Uganda
four projects
59,493 beneficiaries



South and South-East Asia:
Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos
four projects
21,072 beneficiaries





10,655 children
attended nursery, primary
or secondary school



**805 teenagers and
young adults** in
training or studying



61 schools
with improved
infrastructure



393 teachers received
further training

A year of new beginnings

"Nothing is as constant as change" is a famous quote attributed to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus (c. 520–460 BC). It expresses the idea that change is the only constant in life, highlighting that we have to adapt in order not to fall behind. The saying also characterises today's development cooperation landscape and thus CO-OPERAID as well. Drastic funding cuts in countries such as the USA, the United Kingdom, Germany and Switzerland also, have a profound impact on programmes in developing countries. Important support has been stopped, local partner organisations dissolved and employees laid off. We are feeling the effects of this in our project regions.

Even if smaller organisations such as CO-OPERAID are not directly affected by the cuts – we do not receive any funding from the SDC – they are still facing a test. Competition for scarce financial resources is increasing and the headwinds have grown stronger. In my opinion, the quality of the projects for which funding is requested remains crucial to success in this competitive environment. This is reflected in the concrete, visible effects of the measures we have initiated and supported. Two examples illustrate this nicely.

Bangladesh: We have sent an entire generation of children in the Chittagong Hill Tracts to school and equipped them well for a self-determined future. Now, we are carefully planning our withdrawal after almost 20 years – over the next two years, we will put the village schools for ethnic minorities on a sustainable footing.

Kenya: In the second phase of our vocational training project, which was completed at the end of December 2025, 570 young people without school qualifications – Generation Z – successfully completed training in their chosen professions. In addition to their apprenticeship certificates, all graduates were equipped with the tools they need to start their professional careers.

Heraclitus' quote also reflects the situation at our office. Half of our team in Zurich was "renewed" at the beginning of the year and quickly and competently caught up. A new kind of energy has immediately been tangible. We are facing another "renewal" in 2026. After 14 years with CO-OPERAID, Nicole Stejskal will be stepping down from her position. Katharina von Allmen will be taking her well-deserved retirement and I myself will be stepping down as president of the CO-OPERAID association 80 years old at the end of April.



I would like to thank our team and the members of the board for their great commitment and positive attitude. But above all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you, dear donors. Without your generous and loyal support, our work would not be possible!

J. Rieser

Dr Ignaz Rieser, President

Poverty reduces learning success

We now know that a child whose mother can read has a 50% increased chance of living beyond the age of five. We also know that, alongside peace, good education is a prerequisite for prosperity and sustainable economic development in a region. And it is clear that none of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals can be achieved unless we succeed in providing all children and young people around the world with a good education.

The positive development in school enrolment rates worldwide is encouraging. However, the picture is somewhat mixed when it comes to learning success, class progression and school-leaving qualifications. Comparative data shows that children from poor backgrounds have significantly worse educational indicators, regardless of the national context: they find it more difficult to progress to the next grade or graduate from school, learn less and are more likely to drop out of school at some point – probably in order to contribute to the household income.

Because education should not be a privilege, we include support for the poorest families in all our activities. We have had good experiences in areas where extreme poverty prevails with direct financial support combined with a contractual obligation to send the child to school.

The sustainability goals

CO-OPERAID's activities are guided by the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs for short. They contribute to goals 1, 2, 4 and 5. The project reports on the following pages show which SDGs the projects are geared towards.



Hope through craftsmanship

In Kenya, a school leaving certificate is required to enter vocational training in a skilled trade. Without it, there is little prospect of further education and thus of earning a decent income above the poverty line. At the same time, school dropout rates are high, especially among children and youth affected by poverty. Forty per cent of young people do not manage to secure an apprenticeship or a place at college. In Kitale and the surrounding area, CO-OPERAID offers a way out for young people trapped in a situation with no prospects: short, practice-oriented vocational training courses based on the Swiss model and accompanied by social work.

In 2025, 230 young people – 75% of them young women – successfully completed a practical apprenticeship and received the tools they need to practise their profession at a graduation ceremony. Professions such as hairdresser or seamstress were still the first choice for many women in 2025. However, motorcycle mechanics, plumbers and electricians were also included. In cooperation with local training companies, training courses that are in demand on the market are offered. Because a considerable proportion of those trained venture into self-employment, they are also equipped with the necessary commercial knowledge.

Our tried-and-tested, regular training programme combines social work support, practical experience in the training company, lessons at vocational school and preparation for entry into working life. 170 young people have completed this programme.

Single teenage mothers without a regular income are a widespread phenomenon in the region. Pregnant girls in Kenya are required by law to drop out of school. After giving birth, they find themselves in a dead-end situation and are barely able to provide for their own survival, let alone their child's future.

We therefore developed a training programme tailored to their reality, which imparts practical knowledge and skills. We expanded our local network to enable exclusively practice-oriented training in selected companies. The young mothers can take their infants along. The training period is slightly longer, lasting 18 months. Social work support is an integral part of the programme throughout this time. In 2025, 50 teenage mothers successfully completed their training.

Projects

Ujuzi Kwa Vijana
(vocational training)

Beneficiaries

2,030

Transfers
project

CHF 248,857



Elections, strikes and school dropouts

The national elections in January 2026 cast their shadow from summer 2025 onwards over Uganda. There was a very tangible, negative impact on everyday school life in Zombo as teachers across the country went on strike for over 30 days to emphasise their wage demands. Regular lessons therefore only resumed shortly before the end-of-year exams – with consequences.

A few figures are needed to illustrate the impact of the teachers' strike in one of Uganda's poorest districts: the literacy rate is 54% – and 29% for women. Over 28% of the population never attended school and only 48% of schoolchildren complete primary school. In the past, school dropout rates were 10% or higher annually.

After the strike ended in autumn 2025, most pupils did not return to school. By the end of 2025, thanks to personal appeals from successful alumni, we were able to get many of the children back to the project school. This makes the project schools an exception in Zombo: school principals in the district report the highest dropout rates in decades.

Training opportunities in the agricultural sector are obviously reasonable in Uganda's so-called breadbasket, especially since

outdated farming methods are still widespread while the majority live from agriculture. The training we offer is practice-oriented and covers the latest knowledge about organic farming, particularly in vegetable cultivation, beekeeping, chicken and pig breeding. More than 500 young farmers were supported by coaches in their daily work. The training also covered money management and access to capital. Active savings and loan groups are part of our initiative. In addition to the agricultural trainings, short practical training courses in skilled trades such as tailoring, carpentry, vehicle mechanics, hairdressing and beauty were offered in the border town of Paidha in 2025. The first 89 young people successfully completed their trainings.

Projects

Alochi Ku Somu

(primary school)

Aradu Pi Fur

(vocational training – agriculture)

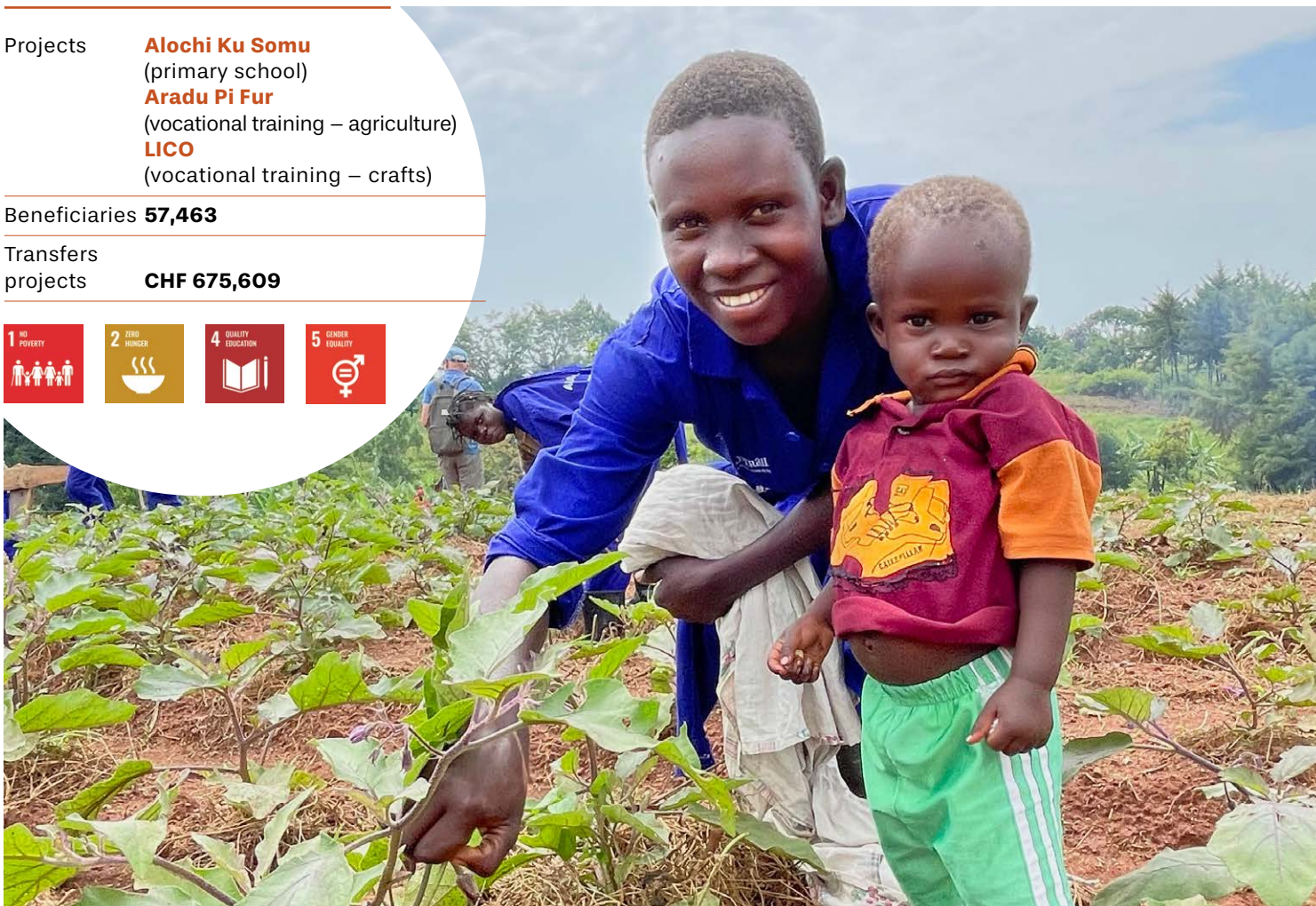
LICO

(vocational training – crafts)

Beneficiaries **57,463**

Transfers
projects

CHF 675,609



Learning despite upheaval

Hopes for positive change were high in the Chittagong Hill Tracts Special Military Administration Zone when Nobel Prize winner Muhammad Yunus took office as interim president. However, arbitrariness and instability increased. Nevertheless and thanks to CO-OPERAID's support over 1,400 primary school children from remote villages and 70 secondary school pupils attend school regularly.

While land grabbing by influential elites continued to put pressure on ethnic minorities in the project area, the security situation in the Hill Tracts project area deteriorated once again. Fortunately, CO-OPERAID acquired land for community forests as part of its work in previous years and had it legally registered as the property of the village communities. Therefore, the local communities are at least temporarily protected from displacement and expropriation.

More than 1,400 children from remote settlements regularly attended classes at 34 village schools. And although the transitional government changed the curriculum at rather short notice, it was possible to adapt the school materials to the new learning objectives and content and successfully teach them: 90% of fifth-graders obtained the national school-leaving certificate. The 2025 curriculum change was also challenging for the 75 secondary school pupils studying in the dormitories. Thanks to targeted

remedial teaching during the summer holidays, all those who took the secondary school leaving examination were successful.

Another success: the 14 village schools, which were definitively handed over to local communities in 2025. It is no longer CO-OPERAID and the Humanitarian Foundation, but the village communities themselves that are responsible for running the schools and paying the teachers' salaries. At the core of this success are two components: the systematic empowerment of the village school committees as well as the increased communal income from the mango orchards planted earlier on.



Projects **Rowa Kyang** (primary school)
Upashak (secondary school)

Beneficiaries **9,516**

Transfers projects: **CHF 183,780**



The joy of learning well

In some places, it makes sense to provide targeted support to schools with the poorest performance records. At Sameakki Mean Chey, we do just that – and we see how our proven approach can promote the joy of teaching and learning in the long term. This is immediately reflected in better learning outcomes and class promotion rates.

Schools with a high proportion of pupils affected by severe poverty in Cambodia find it difficult to guarantee good teaching and enable successful school careers. Most lack sanitary facilities, covered nursery rooms or a child-friendly playground. And the schools are remote and far away from the local education authorities. That is why our approach combines a contribution to a solid school infrastructure with regular further training for teachers, school management teams and school committees. In addition, there is targeted remedial teaching for the weakest pupils and school libraries equipped with relevant learning materials. The poorest families can count on a modest financial contribution if they contractually commit to sending their children to school regularly. A rucksack with the necessary school supplies or a bicycle for the longest journeys to school provides effective relief in other situations.

In the second of a total of three years of our commitment to the selected nine primary schools and twelve kindergartens, school

enrolment rates remain high and the nearly 1,800 children attend school regularly. Their academic performance is steadily improving and almost 100% of the children passed their mid-term exams.

The strongest force for sustainable improvement in school quality, even beyond the end of the project, are the local school committees. Not only do their members know the most vulnerable families, visit them regularly and ensure that the children attend school without interruption, they also repeatedly succeed in obtaining the necessary resources for school maintenance locally.

Projects **Komar An II**
(primary school)

Beneficiaries **10,944**

Transfer projects **CHF 141,932**



A perspective

Those who live in the women's shelter in Savannakhet have been through terrible experiences. The women receive comprehensive medical and psychological care there and learn what they need to build a self-determined future.

The 40 or so residents of the women's shelter have experienced exploitation in its worst forms. It takes time, care and patience to make a new start. To prevent their stories from repeating themselves, we provide practical vocational training leading to a state-recognised diploma and support in entering the world of work. We also ensure that particularly vulnerable children and young people attend school.

Our scholarship programme "Talents" enables particularly gifted young people in our Asian project regions to receive vocational training or a university education if their impoverished families lack the financial means to do so.

Projects **Okad Thisong** – Education and training for victims of human trafficking
Talents – Scholarships

Beneficiaries **612**

Transfers projects **CHF 42,876**



In 2025, 60 youths from Bangladesh, Cambodia and Laos were able to continue their education or studies thanks to a scholarship from CO-OPERAID. We promote training courses that are in demand in their respective geographical context. The scholarship-beneficiaries are selected by our local partner organisations. They are supervised during their training. Their families also make modest contributions.

The local partner teams

Our carefully selected local partner organisations are key to the successful implementation and positive impact of our commitments. Many years of implementation experience are just as indispensable as clear monitoring and financial processes and open cooperation on an equal footing.




Bangladesh
HF
Humanitarian Foundation,
Bandarban
www.hf-cht.org




Cambodia
SOFDEC
Society for Community
Development in
Cambodia,
Kampong Chhnang
www.facebook.com/sofdecngo/



Laos
Sengsavang
Savannakhet
<https://sengsavang.org>



Kenya
CRK
Child Rescue Kenya, Kitale
www.childrescuekenya.org



Uganda
CEFORD
Community
Empowerment For Rural
Development, Arua
<https://ceford.or.ug>



LICO
Life Concern, Paidha



NDNNGOF
Nebbi District NGO Forum, Nebbi
<https://nebbingoforum.org>



CO-OPERAID Association

CO-OPERAID is a non-profit, politically and religiously independent humanitarian organisation. Its business is managed by an office with five employees. The board of directors contributed voluntary work to the organisation. We would also like to thank Chantal Dysli (photography), Levente Fall (IT) and Mara Siegenthaler from THONIC (graphic design) for their voluntary work. The top body of the organisation is the general meeting. It took place 7th of May 2025. As a ZEWÖ-certified organisation, we guarantee compliance with all 21 standards – from good governance and accounting standards to the use of donations and communication. The annual report, annual financial statements and project information are published truthfully, promptly and transparently. Our texts are written by humans, the images are authentic and we portray people we know personally.

Office 2025



The operational team from left to right

Réka Fall (since 2022), Finance and Administration,
Katharina von Allmen (since 2023), Head of Fundraising and
Communication, **Anabel Wörner** (since 2025), Fundraising
Manager, **Nicole Stejskal** (since 2012), Managing Director,
Stephanie Theis (since 2025), Project Manager

Board of Directors 2025

In 2025, CO-OPERAID asked some fundamental questions such as: Are we doing the right thing today? Are we doing it the best possible way? Where and how could we possibly improve the quality of primary education and vocational training without increasing our budget? Where is renewal and change needed, and what do we need to let go of, even if we are reluctant to do so? The board has set the course as follows: We are gradually phasing out our small scholarship fund "Talents". Our withdrawal from Laos will be completed by the end of 2026, and after almost 20 years of involvement, we will withdraw from the Chittagong Hill Tracts at the end of 2028. In addition, the go ahead for developing two pilot projects in Nepal was given at the last board meeting of the year.



Dr Ignaz Rieser
(since 2019)
President
Business Economist



Stefan Issler
(since 2023)
Vice-President
Economist



Anna Bugmann
(since 2025)
Programme Manager
SDC



Sophia Rommel
(since 2025)
Research Assistant



Thomas Stadtmüller
(since 2023)
Forestry Scientist



Urs Vögeli
(since 2019)
Lawyer

A solid year

The financing of charitable work has quickly become a major challenge worldwide. Declining funds are meeting ever-increasing demand, and competition for financial resources has intensified rapidly.

The 2025 results should be viewed against this backdrop. Fortunately, we were able to finance our ongoing projects through our fundraising activities in 2025 and secure important commitments for the coming years.

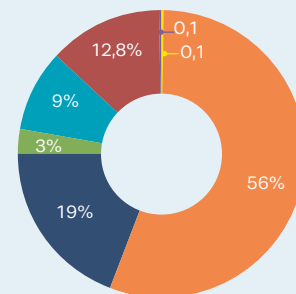
On the income side, earmarked support from foundations, municipalities, Swisslos funds, churches and associations is particularly significant. However, unrestricted donations are no less important for CO-OPERAID: they provide us with the necessary capital reserves that we need as an organisation to raise project-related donations. This means they have a two to fourfold impact.

On the expenditure side, 11% of total costs were incurred for fundraising and communication – i.e. for raising funds. 8% of the total funds used were spent on administration. This means that the ZEWO requirements were also met in 2025 and, as in previous years, the largest share of the funds raised – 81%– was used directly to finance projects.

Source of funds

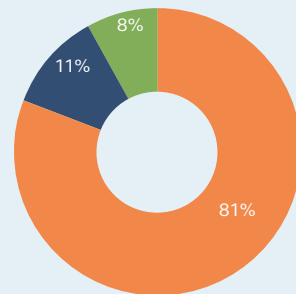
This annual report presents an abridged version of the annual financial statements. Detailed annual financial statements are available for download at: www.co-operaid.ch/de/download

Foundations	1,065,482
Municipalities, cantons	360,000
Institutions	49,232
Private donations	173,368
Sponsorships	237,439
Bequests and event donations	2,999
Membership fees	2,080
TOTAL CHF	1,890,600



Expenditures

Project expenses	1,575,380
Fundraising and communication	224,202
Administration	159,770
TOTAL CHF	1,959,352



Balance sheet as at 31 December 2025

Assets	2025	2024
Current assets	2,042,664	2,128,425
Liquid funds	2,012,146	2,092,503
Current receivables	8,736	6,598
Prepaid expenditures and deferred charges	21,782	29,324
Capital assets	3,459	11
Total assets	2,046,123	2,128,436
Liabilities		
Short term liabilities	11,361	24,008
Current liabilities	6,981	14,172
Deferred income	4,380	9,836
Fund capital	1,403,499	1,508,735
Designated funds Africa	540,923	768,563
Designated funds Asia	594,269	437,063
Designated funds transnational	268,307	303,108
Total designated liability and fund capital	1,414,859	1,532,743
Organisational capital	631,264	595,693
Free reserves	276,818	246,818
Accrued free capital	354,446	348,876
Profit carried forward	348,876	341,339
Allocation/release to free reserves	-30,000	-25,000
Annual result before allocation do organisational capital	35,570	32,537
Total liabilities	2,046,123	2,128,436

The 2025 annual financial statements were audited and approved by BDO on 24th March 2026. "During our audit, we did not encounter any circumstances that would lead us to conclude that the annual financial statements do not provide a true and fair view of the net assets, financial position and results of operations in accordance with Swiss GAAP FER and do not comply with the law and the Articles of Association."



24th March 2026

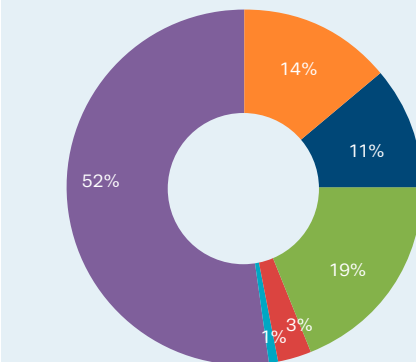
Transparency

To ensure transparency and comparability of finances, the accounting follows the standards of Swiss GAAP FER and Swiss GAAP FER 21.

Operating statement 1 January to 31 December 2025 in CHF

	2025	2024
REVENUE		
Restricted donations	1,593,232	2,151,903
Private donations	0	11,147
Sponsorships	141,950	150,240
Legacies and event donations	0	0
Public sector	359,800	395,300
Foundations	1,050,482	1,479,862
Institutions	41,000	115,354
Unrestricted donations	297,368	398,822
Private donations	173,368	220,268
Sponsorships	95,488	124,125
Legacies and event donations	2,999	34,904
Membership fee	2,080	1,370
Public sector	200	200
Foundations	15,000	10,000
Institutions	8,232	7,955
Total revenue	1,890,600	2,550,725
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Projects	-1,575,380	-1,684,735
Transfers to projects	-1,304,235	-1,415,513
Personnel costs	-227,264	-234,798
Travel costs	-15,335	-13,426
Material costs	-17,374	-16,682
Maintenance cost	-10,923	-4,316
Depreciation	-249	0

Use by country

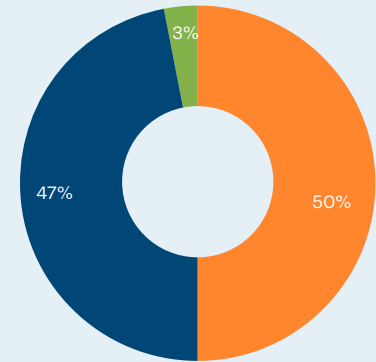


Bangladesh	183,780
Cambodia	141,932
Kenya	248,857
Cross-country	44,793
Laos	9,264
Uganda	675,609
TOTAL CHF	1,304,235

The graphs show the funds transferred to the projects in the reporting year. The actual use of funds on site may differ from this.

	2025	2024
Administration	-159,771	-116,097
Personnel costs	-134,272	-97,622
Travel costs	-68	-170
Material costs	-19,009	-16,429
Maintenance cost	-6,275	-1,876
Depreciation	-146	0
Fundraising and Communication	-224,202	-390,850
Personnel costs	-126,246	-177,928
Travel costs	-591	-1,340
Campaigns/events	-82,411	-195,605
Material costs	-8,774	-12,693
Maintenance cost	-6,043	-3,284
Depreciation	-138	0
Total expenses	-383,972	-506,946
Operating results	-68,752	359,045
Financial result	-3,189	-2,841
Extraordinary revenue	2,276	0
Change in fund capital	105,236	-323,667
Annual result before allocation to organisational capital	35,570	32,537
Internal fund changes free reserve	0	-25,000
Allocation to free reserves	-30,000	0
Free capital acquired	-5,570	-7,537
	0	0

Use by topic



Primary education	654,526
Vocational training	616,097
Scholarships	33,612
TOTAL CHF	1,304,235

Long-term, reliable and pragmatic

In 2025, the much-discussed shift in social values very quickly became very real: sudden cuts led to hasty project closures and staff reductions at various Swiss aid organisations. This occurred against a backdrop of increasing inequality, rising poverty and a growing need for support. In this environment, our long-term, impact-oriented commitments, our reliability and the security this provides are a major advantage for our local partners.

Comparative statistics clearly show the end of the era of growth in development cooperation: shrinking budgets are meeting higher demand. We view the increasing poverty in its pronounced form with concern, knowing that it greatly hinders children's educational success.

Because we are primarily involved in structurally weak contexts with widespread poverty, all our primary school projects include not only traditional elements such as improving school

infrastructure and training and further education for teachers and school administrators, but also a pragmatic component aimed at strengthening the economic situation of the poorest families. This is precisely why we work with our partner organisations to offer practical, market-oriented vocational training courses for young people from precarious backgrounds.



Thanks to your support

Your donations give teachers the knowledge they need to improve learning outcomes in the classroom. They encourage local communities to take responsibility for their schools and their children's education. They help schools become child-friendly and learning-friendly places, making learning enjoyable. And they enable young people without a school-leaving certificate to break out of the cycle of poverty through context- and practice-oriented vocational training. Thank you for supporting us.

Imprint:

Text and editing: Katharina von Allmen
Photos: CO-OPERAID, Chantal Dysli
www.chantaldysli.ch
Graphic: Viviane Wälchli



WITH YOUR DONATION, YOU ENABLE:

- **Access to education for all children:** provision of school materials, school uniforms and bicycles for a manageable journey to school
- **Improving the quality of education:** further training and workshops for teachers, school administrators and school committees
- **Improving school infrastructure:** desks and benches, as well as PCs, whiteboards and blackboards for kindergartens and primary schools. Improvements on school environments such as toilets, handwashing stations, playgrounds
- **Involvement and empowerment of parents:** establishing parent representatives for school committees, improving the economic situation of the poorest families, providing direct financial assistance where necessary
- **Vocational training and access to income:** Vocational training courses and supported entry into the world of work for teenagers and young adults without school qualifications

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT OUR WORK:

- With a donation to IBAN CH 81 0900 0000 8000 0444 2
- With a donation via www.co-operaid.ch
- By sponsoring primary school or vocational training from £600 per year
- Include CO-OPERAID in your will with a bequest

Thank you very much!



Your donation
in good hands.

CO-OPERAID

Kornhausstr. 49, P.O. Box, 8042 Zurich
Tel. +41 44 363 57 87
info@co-operaid.ch
IBAN: CH 81 0900 0000 8000 0444 2
BIC/SWIFT: POFICHBEXX



www.co-operaid.ch



www.linkedin.com/company/co-operaid



www.facebook.com/company/co-operaid



www.youtube.com/COOPERAID

