

MEDIA RELEASE

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Swisscontact: Annual Report 2023 and new Foundation Council members

Far-sighted development cooperation more important than ever

International development cooperation in 2023 was marked by major upheavals. Swisscontact is convinced that has never been more vital for development cooperation to exercise foresight and adapt promptly to changing circumstances. In 2023, a total of 139 projects were successfully carried out in 41 countries. Swisscontact's Foundation Council is now even stronger after gaining three new members from the private sector.

Poverty is not the only problem facing people in emerging and developing countries: armed conflicts and natural disasters resulting from climate change are also on the rise. Philippe Schneuwly, CEO, comments on this in the editorial of the Annual Report: "As an organisation dedicated to development, we recognise that foresight is key to preventing long-term dependencies. At the end of the day, it's about the dignity of local populations. They want to be self-sufficient, and we strive to afford them this opportunity. For this reason, we are committed to strengthening abilities and systems, even in fragile contexts, so that people can – as far as possible – be liberated from the shackles of poverty." Thomas D. Meyer, Foundation Council Chairman, points out that development cooperation certainly is possible even in fragile contexts and politically unstable countries such as Myanmar or Niger, if the projects are adapted to the new circumstances. It is precisely in these countries that Swisscontact is creating a new hope for the civilian population and the private sector, says Meyer.

Promotion of vocational education in Ukraine

In its Annual Report, Swisscontact presents a project that promotes the training of tradespeople in the construction industry in Ukraine. The programme, which Swisscontact is implementing on behalf of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and in partnership with Geberit and Sika, was launched in 2020 and has already achieved considerable success after just three years: From 2020 to 2023, 25 local vocational schools in 21 districts were supported, with an emphasis on training sanitary installers. Trainees, master craftspeople and vocational school teachers were given better classroom infrastructure. The technical content was supplemented with courses on finding employment, innovative technologies and business planning, while coordination between vocational schools and the sanitary sector was strengthened. Due to the good results achieved, the programme

has now been expanded to include 29 training locations at which plumbers, façade insulators, welders, electricians, tilers, and concrete workers are trained.

Strengthening the Foundation Council

In 2023, Swisscontact's Foundation Council gained three new members from the private sector. They are: Peggy Grüninger, Hoffmann-La Roche, Isabel Dalli-Wyniger, Novartis, and Christoph G. Meier, Nestlé; all three represent partner companies with which Swisscontact has collaborated over many years.

To the 2023 Annual Report: www.swisscontact.org/report2023

Swisscontact is an independent non-profit development organisation established in 1959 by representatives of the Swiss private sector and civil society.

Our development work focuses on unleashing the potential of private initiatives in developing and emerging countries. We foster sustainable and inclusive economic development with the objective of improving the quality of life for all.

Our work is based on three foundational pillars: We strengthen the competencies of individuals so they can improve their income and their opportunities for employment; we enhance the competitiveness of businesses to help them grow and become more resilient; we promote socio-economic systems that favour comprehensive development for widespread prosperity.

The organisation is currently active in over 130 projects in 41 countries with around 1400 employees. It is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland.

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