In the year 2018, HEKS/EPER together with its local partner organizations assisted over a million people — both in Switzerland and in 32 other countries around the world.

Through its development cooperation work HEKS/EPER continued its long-term poverty alleviation and food security projects in favour of peasant families and deprived people; HEKS/EPER provided humanitarian aid for refugee families in Syria and in Iraq, as well as in Uganda and Bangladesh. And, under its church cooperation programmes, HEKS/EPER supported the diaconal work of its church partners in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

In Switzerland, the five Regional Offices and the Business Office for French-speaking Switzerland assisted asylum seekers, recognized refugees and other socially underprivileged people with legal advice, and promoted social and professional inclusion for young people, the unemployed and migrants.

HEKS/EPER helps people in need — and makes big changes from small beginnings. Learn more from the Online Annual Report at www.heks2018.ch

## BIG CHANGES START SMALL

HEKS/EPER mounted the third edition of the «Taking a stand» campaign in 2018. Given the ongoing global refugee crisis, a broad coalition of charities, social institutions and private persons urged politicians and the public to take a stand for a Switzerland of solidarity, one that offers protection and sanctuary to people in need and receives them with openness.

The highlight of the campaign was the intercultural folk dance fair (Volkstanz-Chilbi) at Zurich’s main train station, while the crowning finale was the submission to the Federal Council of the petition «For safe and legal escape routes into Switzerland».

The campaign was accompanied by «Organización Femenina Popular» (OFP) Gloria Suárez, Project leader at the «Organización Femenina Popular» (OFP)

«OFP is a HEKS/EPER partner organization in Colombia. We have worked together for years to protect women and children and to secure a life of dignity for them. Many women faced political and sexual violence during the civil war. Their menfolk were often killed and they were forced to flee.

In a poor neighbourhood of the city of Barrancabermeja, many of these displaced women were able to find a new home. We are supporting them in improving their precarious living conditions and motivating them to build a new and safe existence. They are now improving their food situation thanks to training they have received in organic farming methods. They are also taking out microloans to set up small grocery stores and earn an income in this way.

The Victims and Land Restitution Law became effective in 2012, but the women still possess no land ownership documents. We support them in claiming their rights vis-à-vis the authorities. But standing up for justice in Colombia, however, is an extremely dangerous undertaking. We were already confronted with vicious opposition during the civil war. But HEKS/EPER has stood by us all these years.

The 2016 peace agreement has brought new hope. We are working at the political level to secure its implementation as well as respect for human rights. Only if events are carefully reappraised and all parties to the conflict are on board in the peace process will we be able to overcome the conflict.»

Other personal annual reports: www.heks2018.ch

## ACCESS TO LAND AND RESOURCES

In 2018 HEKS/EPER expanded its activities to promote access to land and natural resources for rural communities to 44 projects in 14 countries and further stepped up its involvement in international networks. The UN adopted a declaration for the protection of the rights of peasant farmers, fishing communities and nomadic peoples. HEKS/EPER had long collaborated in the process that led to the declaration and supported the work of the international committee that prepared it. As one of the first international NGOs, HEKS/EPER brought the declaration to the attention of the Swiss Federal Council (Petition «For people’s right to land»).

HEKS/EPER continued its efforts to provide legal aid for refugee families in Syria and in Iraq, as well as in Uganda and Bangladesh. And, under its church cooperation programmes, HEKS/EPER supported the diaconal work of its church partners in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People and Benefits</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people assisted</td>
<td>1186,000</td>
<td>1186,000</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people receiving humanitarian aid</td>
<td>229,000</td>
<td>229,000</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of small farmers obtaining access to land</td>
<td>61,000</td>
<td>61,000</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of consultation sessions conducted</td>
<td>17,070</td>
<td>17,070</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HEKS/EPER provided humanitarian aid for refugee families in Syria and in Iraq, as well as in Uganda and Bangladesh. And, under its church cooperation programmes, HEKS/EPER supported the diaconal work of its church partners in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

## ORIGIN AND USE OF FUNDS 2018

Total income: CHF 66,2 million.

- **Swiss Solidarity Foundations:** 3%
- **Other foundations:** 4%
- **Target amounts:** 11%
- **Central Churches / Church parishes:** 2%
- **Various church groups:** 3%
- **Private persons:** 17%
- **Municipalities / cantons:** 11%
- **Central Administration:** 6%
- **Humanitarian aid:** 8%
- **Communications / Fundraising:** 3%
- **Work in Switzerland:** 37%
- **Work done internationally:** 38%

Total expenditure for provision of services: CHF 75,0 million.

- **Services:** 25%
- **Information in Switzerland:** 2%
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

HEKS/EPER assisted some 885 000 people in 23 countries in the framework of its development cooperation work in 2018. 61 000 peasant farmers gained better access to land, and 70 000 people saw improvements to their water supplies. 500 000 small producers were assisted in building up sustainable farming operations and the corresponding marketing outlets. And 48 000 people from marginalized minorities obtained access to education and healthcare. Besides, HEKS/EPER helped stabilize the situation of some 500 000 people living in a conflict-ridden environment in 11 countries.

In Niger for example, where livelihoods are ever more threatened by natural disasters, population growth and climate change, some 95 000 cattle farmers and peasants obtained better access to land, thereby improving their food security and economic situation: they created transit corridors to pasturelands and watering places for their herds, replanted eroded land for collective farming and laid out vegetable plots. Meanwhile, some 4200 Dalits and Adivasis witnessed greater economic and social inclusion in Bangladesh. These minorities are still subject to systematic discrimination. They claimed their political and cultural rights from the authorities and obtained access to public services such as social services and education. In addition, approximately 50 initiatives were launched to foster cooperation and peaceful coexistence between the various population groups.

HUMANITARIAN AID

In 2018, HEKS/EPER provided humanitarian aid for around 229 000 people in the wake of natural disasters and in regions affected by conflict across 13 countries. 205 000 people benefited from supplies of food, drinking water, items for everyday use, financial aid or cash-for-work schemes. 43 000 people were provided with seeds and agricultural implements or given help in setting up a small business. 81 000 people were assisted in rebuilding public infrastructure such as streets and schools or water supply systems. And since 2018, 32 000 people have been better prepared for coping with disasters thanks to improved preventive measures.

HEKS/EPER launched new emergency projects in the aftermath of flooding in India and the tsunami in Indonesia. HEKS/EPER remains active in refugee camps in Bangladesh and Uganda as well as in the Middle East. In Syria, HEKS/EPER distributed food and personal hygiene items to over 60 000 people following the largest population displacement since the fighting began. In Lebanon, where 950 000 people have sought protection from the war in Syria, living conditions improved for 11 000 people in the Shatila and Bourj al-Baâqine refugee camps through cash-for-work and housing renovation programmes. And in northern Iraq, to which almost two million people have fled to escape Islamic State (IS), 26 000 people received food aid and heating equipment, 1200 were assisted in repairing irrigation systems and setting up sustainable farming operations, while 1500 displaced people were helped financially to return to their homeland.

REFUGE. JUSTICE. PROSPECTS.

In Switzerland, HEKS/EPER strives for the inclusion of socially deprived people, promotes equal opportunity and fights discrimination. All people should be able to claim their legitimate rights and take part in economic, social, cultural and political life. Besides, HEKS/EPER strives to provide shelter for people facing existential dangers, and offers legal advice to asylum seekers, recognized refugees and other target groups. In 2018, the five Regional Offices of Aargau/Solothurn, Basel Lorraine, Eastern Switzerland and Zurich/Schaffhausen as well as the Siegen Romand in Lausanne conducted a total of 61 programmes.

INTERCHURCH COOPERATION

HEKS/EPER improved the living conditions of 32 000 people in nine countries in the framework of its church cooperation activities.

More information on the work of HEKS/EPER in the 32 project countries: www.heks.ch/projects-worldwide