



HILFSWERK INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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Tel. +43 (0)1 4057 500 - 111



Effective help. Worldwide.

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Editorial

Dear Reader!

The war in Ukraine, the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and other global hotspots of tension, worldwide political instability, and extreme climatic conditions made our work more important than ever in 2023.

Looking at the world almost makes you lose hope for a good life for everyone. If I didn't see the fruits of our work every day, I would probably be discouraged, too.

I would therefore like to focus on the positive aspects in this annual report, which is the measurable effectiveness of our projects. Because in the past year, these projects saved lives, provided opportunities, helped people to help themselves and empowered them to use and develop their potential.

Looking at these people is encouraging. Because as bleak as the global situation may seem, the children, young people and adults in our projects are strong, have their hearts in the right place and are full of initiative. This allows me to look to the future with confidence.

When mothers can once again feed their children themselves, young people in hopeless environments are given prospects and children can finally go back to school after many years, this not only means a change in the lives of individuals, but also a significant step towards a fairer and more hopeful future for entire communities.

None of this would be possible without your commitment. Thanks to your help, we save lives, help children, and accompany entire regions into a more self-determined, more stable future.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart. And we still have big plans! Because we will not give up as long as children go hungry, and our planet is being destroyed. I would be delighted if you continued to stand by our side in the coming years!

In this annual report, I would like to show you what we were able to achieve in 2023. We will give you an insight into the diversity of our aid measures and the resulting development opportunities for children and adults - worldwide.



Stefan Fritz
Managing director

Hilfswerk International



Hilfswerk International is an Austrian-based humanitarian organization operating globally with its headquarters in Vienna. It was established in 1978 with the aim of conducting emergency relief projects and sustainable development projects in Africa, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, and Southeast Europe. With a total of more than 124 employees in 18 countries, projects in the areas of health, education, social welfare, and agriculture are initiated in close collaboration with local teams and civil society organizations.

The organization focuses on the most vulnerable populations, such as women, children, the elderly, and ethnic minorities, who are most at risk of poverty and exclusion.

The non-profit, non-partisan, and non-denominational organization operates independently under the umbrella of the Austrian Hilfswerk family. Projects are financed through national and international project funds for development cooperation and humanitarian aid, as well as through private donations, corporate social responsibility partnerships, and sponsorship.

"Since 1978, Hilfswerk International has been passionately committed to improving the living conditions of people worldwide. Our approach is characterized by a deep understanding of individual needs and a consistent focus on sustainable solutions. The tangible successes of our work fill me with pride and reinforce my confidence in our team, both here in Austria and around the world."



Christian Domany
President Hilfswerk International

Hand in Hand - worldwide

Hilfswerk International contributes to achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals through its relief projects, striving to make a good life possible for all. Our paths to achieving this goal are diverse, but our principles remain the same:



CHILDREN AT THE CENTER

Children are particularly vulnerable and deserve special protection. Therefore, they hold a significant place in all our activities. We invest in the education of children and young people so that they can shape a good life for all in the future. Because promoting children means promoting the future.

EMPOWERMENT

We empower people worldwide so that they will soon no longer be dependent on external aid. We recognize existing potentials and, together with the population, create conditions for them to (re)unfold these potentials. Through our help for self-help, our projects leave traces that last for generations.

EMPOWERING WOMEN

Poverty is still feminine. Therefore, Hilfswerk International is particularly committed to empowering women and promoting gender equality. This includes the equal participation of women and men in political and public life, preventing violence, and ensuring reproductive health.

RESPECT

We respect people, their dignity, culture, history, and traditions. Our projects are implemented jointly and on an equal footing with the local population from development to completion.

ENVIRONMENT

We consider environmental protection as one of our central tasks and actively advocate for the preservation and restoration of natural habitats and resources. In all project activities, we consider the protection of the environment and resources. Our projects leave tangible traces and contribute to strengthening awareness of environmental issues worldwide.



Humanitarian aid: responding to acute crises

We define humanitarian aid as coordinated relief activities following disasters. Its goal is to support people in acute crisis situations and provide them with urgently needed help quickly. These activities include a variety of measures aimed at saving lives and alleviating suffering and hardship in crisis situations.

A central component of humanitarian aid is emergency aid for people affected by natural disasters, armed conflicts, epidemics, or other acute emergency situations. This can include, for example, the provision of food, clean water, medical care, shelter, or other basic needs.



Local cooperation and partnerships

Humanitarian aid is often provided by international organizations such as Hilfswerk International. In most cases, this is done in close cooperation with local governments, communities, NGOs and initiatives. This ensures that responses to humanitarian crises are effective and coordinated.

Humanitarian aid at Hilfswerk International

Humanitarian aid has become a growing area of responsibility for Hilfswerk International in recent years: Operations during the war in Ukraine require a great deal of effort. This aid is often unpredictable, as demonstrated by our earthquake missions in Türkiye and Syria at the beginning of 2023, for example, or in the fall of the same year following the earthquake in Morocco. But even in our long-standing partner countries such as Mozambique or Lebanon, our aid must be regularly adapted to the situation on the ground, and so the need for humanitarian aid can arise in the midst of long-term development cooperation due to unforeseen disasters such as displacement, war or political unrest.



Humanity first and foremost

Humanitarian aid is based on fundamental principles such as humanity, impartiality and independence. These principles serve as guidelines for the implementation of humanitarian activities and ensure that aid is always provided on the basis of real needs, without discrimination or political influence. Swift action is often the difference between life and death; however, especially in these crises, when people are at their most vulnerable, their dignity and respect for their respective cultural circumstances must be guaranteed.

Long-term support and reconstruction

Although humanitarian aid is often short-term and reactive, it also frequently provides long-term support and reconstruction in regions affected by crises. This can include supporting the reconstruction of infrastructure, promoting education or strengthening the resilience of communities to better prepare them for future crises. You can read more about this in the interview with Hilfswerk International emergency relief coordinator Heinz Wegerer on the following pages.

Interview with Heinz Wegerer

What exactly is humanitarian aid?

Humanitarian aid is the immediate and needs-oriented response to acute emergencies caused by natural disasters, armed conflicts or exceptional situations. In contrast to development cooperation, it focuses on immediate needs such as food, water, medical care, shelter and protection. Humanitarian crises can be roughly divided into natural disasters (earthquakes or floods), armed conflicts and complex emergencies (refugee flows or epidemics).

How does Hilfswerk International help in the event of a disaster?

Every crisis is different. The needs of the people affected also vary from crisis to crisis and depend, among other things, on the resources of local actors such as authorities, the civilian population, and local organizations. We usually provide emergency shelter, food, and hygiene products, restore water and sanitation supplies and provide medical care and psychosocial support.

How quickly can humanitarian aid be provided after a disaster?

Our role as an international aid organization is always "helping to help". Local help is available immediately. As usually an international organization, we are on site within a maximum of 72 hours, contributing expertise and supporting with resources.

How does Hilfswerk International ensure that the aid reaches the people?

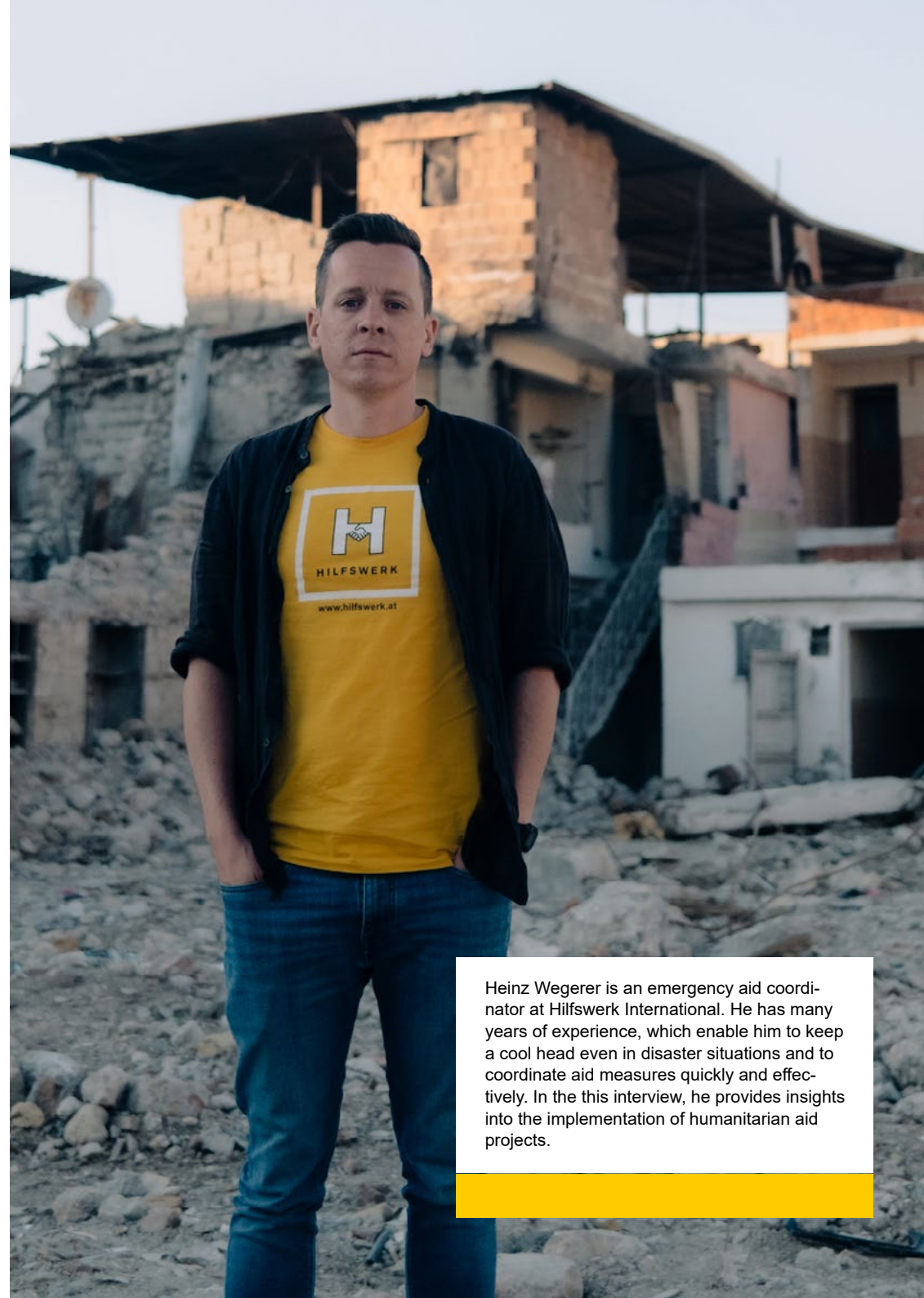
As Hilfswerk International, we are very close to the people affected. It is important for us to be on the ground in person as quickly as possible, so we are able to assess the situation in the best possible way. Essentially, there are three measures that ensure that the right aid reaches the people: needs assessments on the ground, close cooperation with local organizations and continuous monitoring of activities. However, I personally believe that the most important thing is to get an idea of the situation on the ground and to be as close as possible to the people affected, even as the crisis progresses, to ensure that help is provided in a dignified and needs-based manner.

What is the biggest challenge in humanitarian aid?

For us as Hilfswerk International, experience has shown that there are two particularly big stress tests in humanitarian crises. Firstly, we must be able to adapt our aid flexibly and quickly, as the humanitarian aid context usually changes very dynamically. Secondly, it is often very difficult to procure the necessary financial resources to maintain this vital aid once the immediate media attention has subsided.

What is the aim of humanitarian aid?

The aim of humanitarian aid is to alleviate the suffering of the people affected, improve their living conditions, and strengthen their resilience. Success is demonstrated by the fact that people's basic needs are met, their safety is guaranteed, and they are supported on the way to normalizing their lives. Humanitarian aid should also pursue medium and long-term goals and make a positive contribution to restoring social structures and preparing for future crises.



Heinz Wegerer is an emergency aid coordinator at Hilfswerk International. He has many years of experience, which enable him to keep a cool head even in disaster situations and to coordinate aid measures quickly and effectively. In this interview, he provides insights into the implementation of humanitarian aid projects.

Emergency aid in war

In the second year of the war in Ukraine, the suffering of the local population continues to increase. Violence, destruction, and death have continued to be the daily companions of the population over the past year. Since the beginning of the war, Hilfswerk International has been ready with a wide range of aid to counteract the problems in the war zone in a targeted manner and to help the people on the ground.

Child friendly spaces at the front

Children are vulnerable and have special needs that are being neglected in Ukraine due to the war. In our three child friendly spaces in Ivano-Frankivsk, Valky/Kharkiv and Pokrov/Nikopol, they receive child-oriented psychosocial support. Creative activities, social interactions and peer support enable informal learning experiences.

Viktor is 8 years old and has never been to school. After 2 years of pandemic, he has now been living in war for 2 years: schools near the front line are closed. The loneliness and the constant threat of war led to depressive symptoms in him. When his mother Elena heard about the child friendly spaces run by Hilfswerk International, she immediately took action. The regular visits make the boy thrive again.

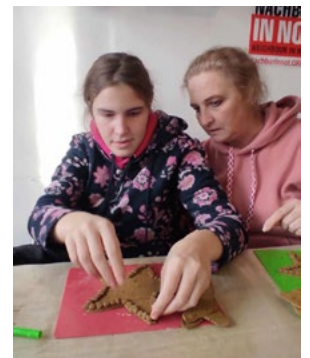
"Viktor blossoms again when playing with others. He can finally be a child again. My thanks go to Hilfswerk International, who helped my son", Elena thanks us.

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Further measures since the beginning of the war:

Our focus in Ukraine is on helping children during the war. But we have also been able to help people in Ukraine on various other levels:

- Since the beginning of the war, **40,000 refugee women and children** have been housed in western parts of Ukraine and provided with food, hot meals, and winter kits.
- **50,100 vulnerable, sick, or injured children** were supported with urgently needed medication, medical equipment, food, and clothing.
- Along the front line, **70,000 civilians** received emergency aid packages containing food, hygiene products, and winter equipment.
- More than 70 power generators provided by Hilfswerk International throughout the country now ensure a reliable supply of electricity and water for more than **400,000 people**.
- When the Kachowka dam burst in the summer of 2023 and the population suddenly ran out of drinking water, we were able to provide **more than 20 million liters of drinking water**, reaching over **100,000 people**.
- In **three Hilfswerk International "Help Points"**, which serve as meeting places, Ukrainians receive various types of advice, emergency aid packages and psychological support.
- **40,000 Ukrainians** receive fast, unbureaucratic and effective help in the Help Points and the child friendly spaces.



Quick response after disasters

In 2023, several devastating earthquakes led to severe humanitarian crises. In February, more than 55,000 people lost their lives in Türkiye and Syria due to one such natural disaster. Seven months later, at least 3,000 people died after the earthquake in Morocco in September. Hundreds of thousands are still suffering from the damage caused by the natural disasters.

Hilfswerk International provides humanitarian aid in the regions of Hatay (Türkiye), Idlib (Syria) and Al-Haouz (Morocco). Our measures enabled us to support **more than 60,000 people** in the disaster areas last year.

Emergency aid for Türkiye and Syria

- **Emergency aid packages**

We provide urgently needed equipment such as blankets, sleeping bags and hygiene articles and distribute a total of 4,100 emergency aid packages.

- **Accommodation**

By providing tents, 50 families in Arsuz (Hatay region) are given shelter.

- **Sanitary facilities**

A lack of clean water leads to a high health risk. Diseases can spread quickly without proper hygiene. We provide toilets and showers in the tent camps.

- **Water treatment**

We provide treatment plants. They ensure that the available water is suitable for consumption.

- **Education**

A container provided by us serves as a kindergarten and afternoon care center. This ensures that children and young people receive early support even in crisis areas.

- **Psychosocial help**

We offer children and young people low-threshold psychosocial help in the form of workshops.

- **Food supply**

We support a small farmers' cooperative that combats rising food prices by directly marketing their products and strengthens the local economy after the earthquake.



Humanitarian aid in Morocco

Around 100,000 children are affected by the consequences of the earthquake in fall 2023. In rural areas, where the infrastructure was already weak before the earthquake, the consequences of the disasters are once again worsening the already difficult living conditions. A lack of emergency shelter, food and drinking water threatens the survival of many communities after the earthquake.

Despite the enormous challenges - from inaccessible villages to logistical bottlenecks - we did not hesitate to help those in need in the crisis region within a few days.



Four-year-old Arad is severely traumatized by the earthquake. He has lost his ability to express himself. He was constantly crying. When he started attending our kindergarten, he was able to build up social resources and overcome his trauma.

- We have reached **more than 1,000 people** with essential goods.
- We distributed **food, water, hygiene articles and blankets** for the cold nights.

"After a few weeks in kindergarten, I finally saw Arad smile again. It takes a load off my mind. Thank you to the support from Austria. The help has brought a noticeable positive change to our lives," says his mother Elif gratefully.



Development cooperation: a global effort for sustainable improvements

Development cooperation is a global effort to improve the lives of people in partner countries and strengthen their living conditions in the long term. It encompasses a wide range of measures aimed at combating poverty, promoting social justice, improving education and health, developing local infrastructure, and protecting the environment.

Goals of development cooperation

A successful development cooperation project is usually characterized by the fact that it can be supported by local resources in the long term after completion. One example of this is the mother and child hospital in Haiti, which was set up by Hilfswerk International and is now run by local staff and partial local funding. Another example is the successful model for reducing the mother-child mortality rate in Mozambique, which Hilfswerk International developed together with the local population. It has now been adopted as a model and integrated into the Mozambican Ministry of Health's national action plan.

Partnership and cooperation

Development cooperation is mostly carried out by non-governmental organizations such as Hilfswerk International. Cooperation takes place at various levels, from local projects to large-scale international initiatives.

The core principles of development cooperation include respect for human rights, the promotion of gender equality, the sustainability of development measures and partnership between donors and recipient countries. For us, the participation of local communities from start to finish is also a top priority.

Difference to humanitarian aid

In contrast to humanitarian aid, which aims to immediately alleviate suffering and hardship in crisis situations, development cooperation focuses on long-term structural changes that enable sustainable improvements in living conditions. While humanitarian aid is often short-term and reactive, development cooperation is long-term, solving structural problems and promoting long-term development. This requires a comprehensive approach that considers the economic, social, and ecological dimensions of development.

Significance in a globalized world

In an increasingly globalized world, development cooperation is a crucial building block for tackling global challenges such as poverty, hunger, inequality, climate change and conflict. Through coordinated and sustainable development cooperation, together we can create a world in which all people can lead a life in dignity and peace.



Helping broadly

Hilfswerk International has been helping people in Mozambique for more than 20 years, making it one of our core countries. Our focus is on:

- Mother-child health
- Food security
- Environmental protection



Mother-child health

Childbirth in Mozambique often means death for the mother or the baby - or both. The main problem in most cases is the lack of medical care for mothers and newborns. Our long experience in strengthening mother-child health in Mozambique is passed on in a medical training course. The main contents are

- Early care for newborns
- Integrated management of pregnancy and birth
- Treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS
- Family planning
- Nutrition for pregnant/breastfeeding women, babies and children

In total we reach **106,515 people, 4 nursing schools and 2 universities.**

Flight, food security and health

Violent conflicts characterize the Cabo Delgado region in northern Mozambique. Many people are fleeing to seek safety. The displaced people, especially pregnant women, babies and small children, suffer from food insecurity. The lack of clean water and sanitary facilities leads to major hygiene and health problems. Hilfswerk International supports the people

- with food parcels to reduce food insecurity.
- through the construction of sanitary facilities and drinking water wells.
- with training in agriculture to safeguard food diversity.
- in dealing with their trauma through psychosocial support.

In 2023, we assisted a total of **272,995 people.**

Good for people & the environment

Climate change is causing increasingly severe weather extremes in Mozambique: cyclones, floods and droughts are leading to crop failures and the destruction of agricultural infrastructure. The risk is particularly high in river and coastal regions. Along the Pungwe and Búzi rivers, we are working with the local population and promoting resilience to environmental disasters.

- We empower farmers by training them in resistant cultivation methods.
- We are reforesting the river basins and the surrounding mangrove forests.

In 2023, these measures improved the nutritional situation of **386,794 people**, protected the sensitive mangrove forest ecosystem and generated income.



In close cooperation with the local authorities and the population in our project regions, we are improving the quality of life of more than **650,000 people** in Mozambique.

Education against poverty

In the rural regions of Kenya, the majority of people live in poverty. In our project region of Kamobo (Kapsabet) in western Kenya, most families must get by on less than KES 5,000 a month (that's around EUR 40).

Education can help to combat poverty in the long term. However, it is not affordable for all families. Public schools are theoretically free, but in practice there are high costs

for compulsory school uniforms, books, and materials. In addition, classes are often overcrowded, which reduces the quality of education. Private schools are not an option for low-income families.

Children from poorer backgrounds therefore usually remain stuck in poverty. Hilfswerk International is committed to educational equality in Kamobo.



"School is fun. I'm grateful for that. I would like to become a teacher one day so that I can pass on my knowledge," Debra tells us happily.

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Hilfswerk International in Kenya

- Education for children from disadvantaged families
- School attendance for 50 children
- Regular meals
- Poverty reduction

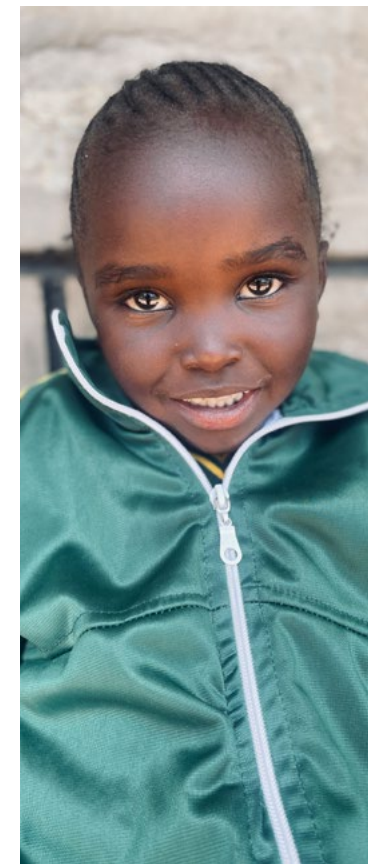
School for all

The "Arbing School Kamobo" is a non-profit school for children, which also offers space for children from socially disadvantaged families.

- Hilfswerk International enables 50 children between the ages of 6 and 12 from poor families to attend school, including school materials, books, and uniforms.
- The children also receive a hot meal at school every day, which feeds the children and at the same time reduces the financial burden on the families.

When dreams come true

Ten-year-old Debra had long dreamed of going to school. However, as the daughter of a single day laborer, they didn't have the money. After we told her that we could make it possible for her to attend the school, she beamed with joy. Today, four months later, Debra is thriving at school, enjoying the company of her friends, and is particularly interested in mathematics.



Creating perspectives

Unemployment is a major problem in southern Tunisia. The labor market does not meet the needs of young people. This weakens the regional potential and minimizes young people's hope for a good future. Many of them work informally, which hardly leads to long-term social security.

Women particularly suffer from these shortcomings. To overcome these obstacles, education and economic participation for women needs to be promoted. In that way gender-specific barriers to entrepreneurship can be removed.

Hilfswerk International has been supporting the people of Tunisia since 2012. Our goal for 2023 was to reduce hopelessness in Tunisia. We achieve this through:

- the strengthening of entrepreneurial thinking
- the targeted promotion of women



"Without the support of Hilfswerk International, I would have never been able to do this. I am very grateful for the assistance."

Entrepreneurship as opportunity

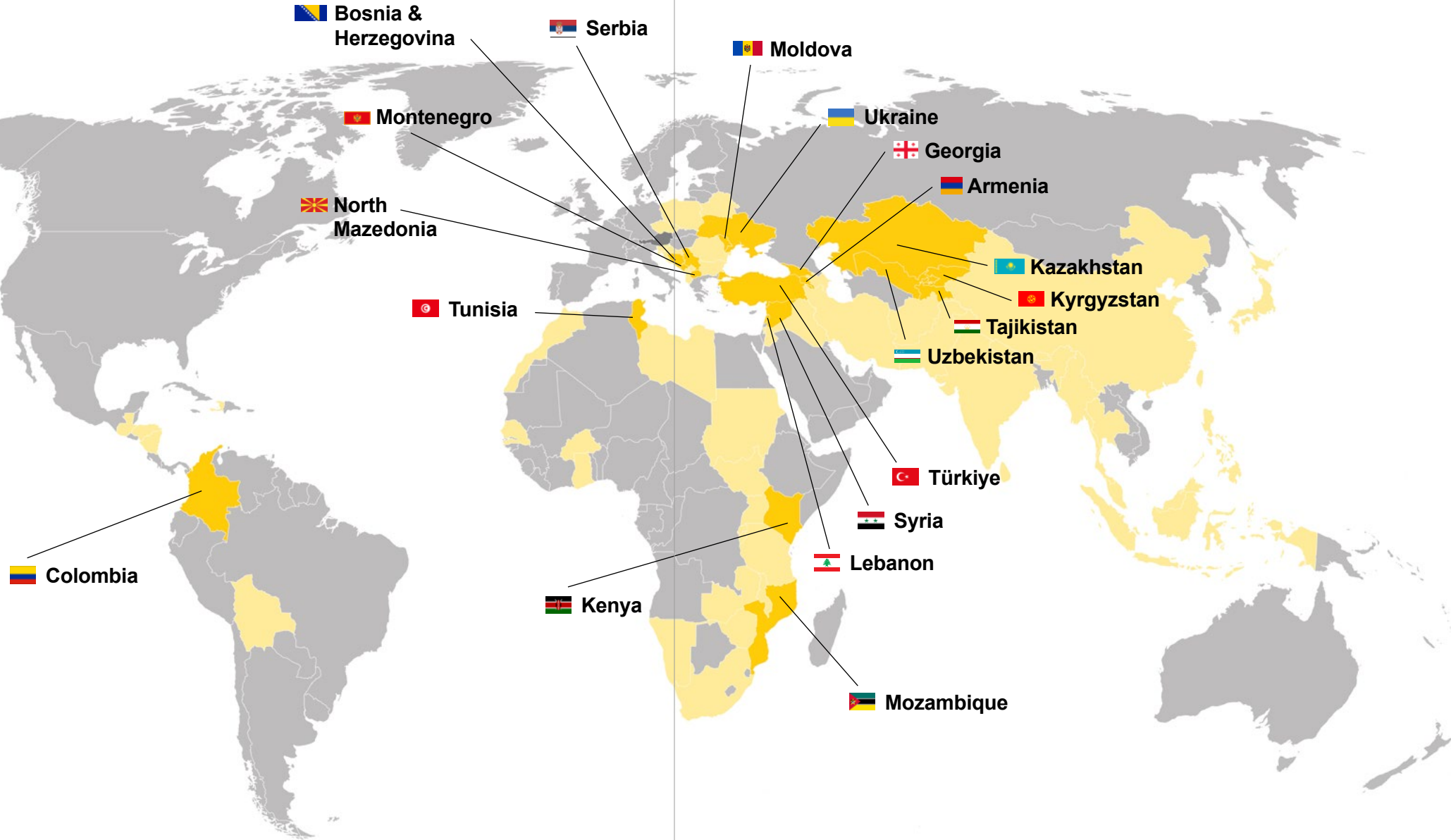
We support female entrepreneurs in Tunisia on their path to self-employment through targeted workshops. We have supported a total of **54 young women** in this project.

Soumaya is one of our participants. At 28 years old, she runs a school support center to assist children with their learning. However, the monthly expenses are increasing and becoming more difficult to manage.

She participated in our project and attended the workshops. There, she improved her communication and marketing skills, which helped her acquire funding for the center. The training paid off because today she can successfully operate the center, supporting children in Tunisia every day.

Project regions:

- Sousse
- Nabeul
- Kairouan
- Bizerte
- Beja
- Kef und
- Medenin.



The project countries marked in yellow correspond to a snapshot in the year 2023. The world map also shows all countries in which we have been active so far in light yellow.

Help in Europe

Hilfswerk International has been helping the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina on their way to a better future since 1996.

In 2023, our work in the Western Balkans focused on healthy ageing and mobile care. In total, we were able to reach just **over 350 people** with our measures in 2023.

Healthy ageing

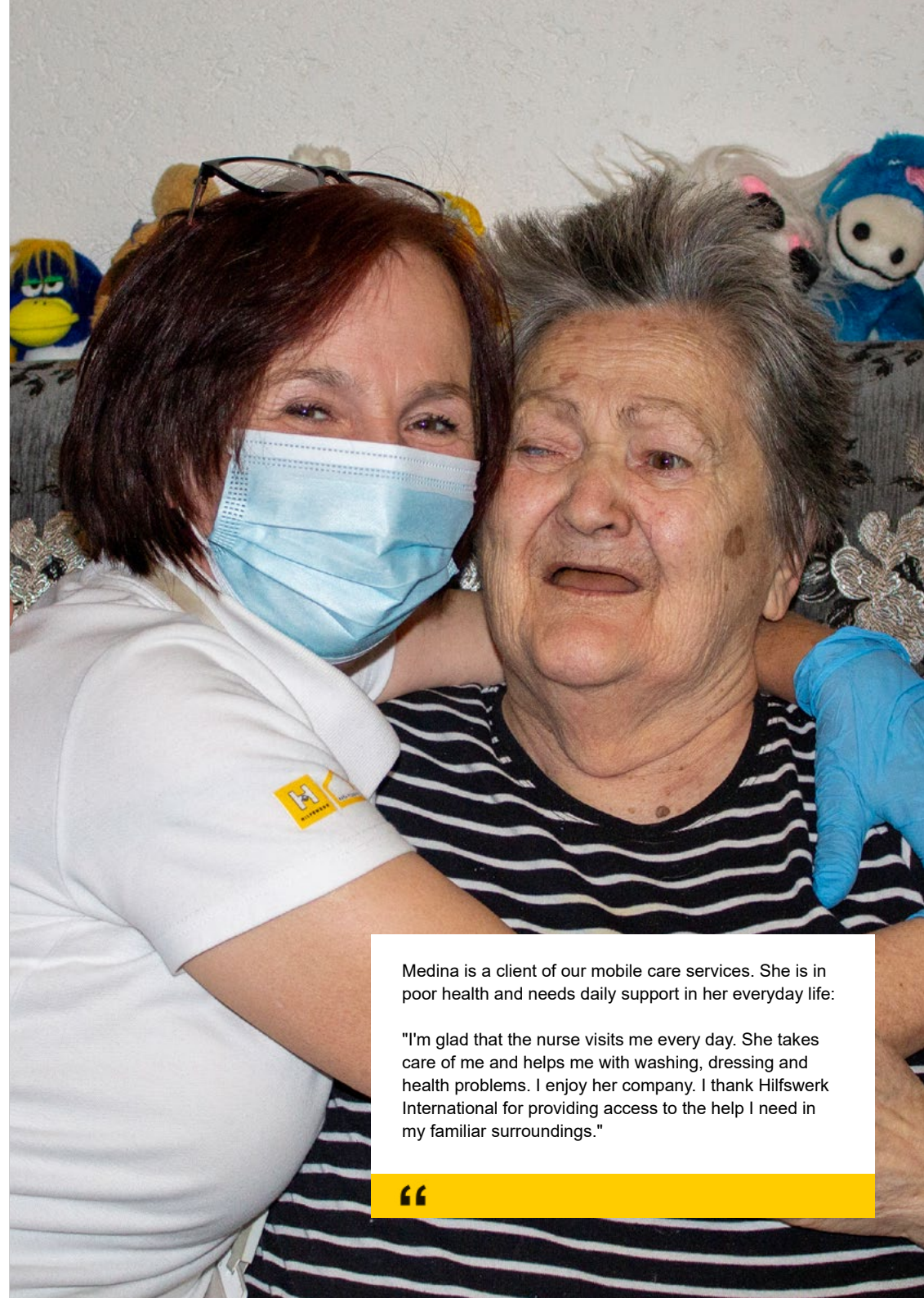
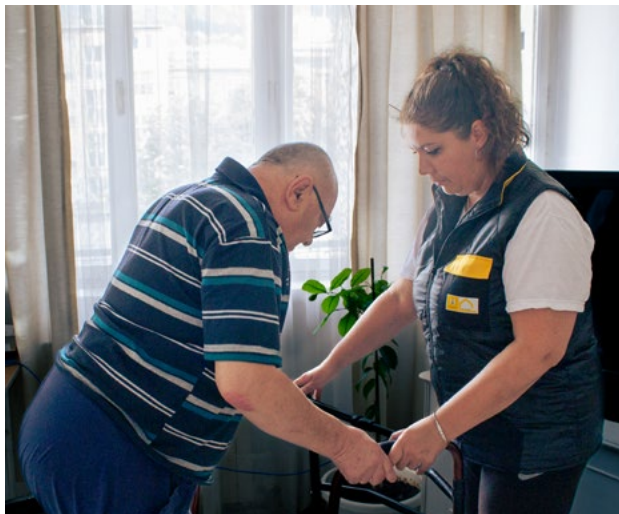
The population in the countries of the Western Balkans is getting older and older. There are hardly any affordable care options. Our mobile care facility (House of Support) provides important support for older people who are no longer able to cope with everyday life on their own. The aim is to give elderly people the opportunity to remain in their familiar homes.

Mobile care training

Another focus is on the training of nursing staff to meet the increasing demand for qualified specialists in the field of mobile care. We are also committed to raising awareness of the importance of high-quality mobile care. Through the targeted exchange of knowledge about best practices in Austria, we are finding sustainable solutions for care in the Western Balkans.

Successes in 2023

- **20 people** were trained for mobile care
- **95 elderly people** made use of our care services
- **237 relatives** were relieved in this way.
- **15 public institutions** entered a joint dialog for an exchange of knowledge about mobile care and healthy ageing.
- **95 older people** received a handbook compiled by us with useful information about healthy ageing.



Medina is a client of our mobile care services. She is in poor health and needs daily support in her everyday life:

"I'm glad that the nurse visits me every day. She takes care of me and helps me with washing, dressing and health problems. I enjoy her company. I thank Hilfswerk International for providing access to the help I need in my familiar surroundings."



Help for the socially disadvantaged

There are several reasons for the social imbalance in the South Caucasus. The population is getting older and older. At the same time, young people suffer from a lack of prospects. Emigration, poverty and a lack of social support services are problems that affect people in Georgia and Armenia. We are supporting both countries with various measures on the way to a strong social system.

Georgia: Health in old age

Older people in Georgia face several challenges. In rural areas in particular, access to healthcare and social services is severely limited. Pensions are mostly insufficient to cover living expenses and provide adequate care. Young relatives often migrate in the hope of a better life. As a result, older people suffer from social isolation and lack adequate care, particularly in rural areas.

In our "Houses of Support" (see also Western Balkans, p. 24/25), we train qualified care professionals and offer mobile care services for people in need of care. Our Houses of Support are also a popular meeting place for the older generation with a wide range of leisure activities. This counteracts loneliness in old age.

Eleonora is 81 years old and lives in Dmanisi. Her volunteer helper, Luka, visits her four times a week. Shared leisure activities and practising on her tablet enrich Eleonora's everyday life.

She also uses the tablet to keep in touch digitally with her family, who live in the capital Tbilisi.

Measures and successes in the past year:

- Our mobile care services have reached 73 elderly people
- 108 older people took part in daytime activities at our centers
- 31 nursing staff and 40 volunteers have been trained in our Houses of Support
- 48 employees from the health and social services sector took part in awareness-raising courses on the needs of older people
- 30 young volunteers provide visiting services for single elderly people
- 85 people in need receive everyday support from active pensioners



"Luka has become an important part of my life. Thanks to him, I stay in contact with young people. He helps me with things that I can no longer do on my own at my age. Thanks to Hilfswerk International for bringing older people like me together with young people like Luka."



Armenia: Social cohesion

The social system in Armenia has room for improvement. One in four people live below the poverty line. State support services are inadequate. Together with the local communities in the regions of Shirak, Tavush, Armarvir and Syunik, Hilfswerk International is developing local strategies to support the socially disadvantaged.

We are also particularly keen to strengthen civil society organizations and associations. Together with them, we are developing new social services to expand the range of services and establish a stable social network.



In 2023, we thus reached...

- 3,300 people and their family members receiving support from newly established social services
- 83 employees of associations
- 450 active citizens
- 85 employees of the local administration (e.g. education, social or youth department)
- 40 representatives from state authorities and ministries

Effective Assistance

For more than 20 years, Hilfswerk International has been supporting vulnerable groups in Moldova. Our two therapy centers in Hîncești and Pripiceni offer a wide range of services for children with disabilities and their families. In 2023, we also faced the challenge of supporting the countless refugees from Ukraine in Moldova.



"I am so grateful for the help. We can talk to psychologists about our experiences. Amelie has opportunities to play and interact with peers. In Ukraine, she was isolated. Even though our situation is still painful, I hear my daughter laughing again. That gives me hope for a better future", says Maria.



Emergency assistance after Flight

More than 100,000 people have left Ukraine to neighboring Moldova due to the war. The country is overwhelmed by the large influx of refugees and struggles to ensure adequate care for the many people. Hilfswerk International is actively engaged in meeting the needs of refugees. This is achieved through:

- Support for 15 refugee accommodations
- Provision of urgently needed equipment such as mattresses and blankets
- Distribution of food and hygiene items
- Psychosocial support

In 2023, we reached a total of 4,500 refugees through these efforts.

Maria and her daughter Amelie have availed themselves of this assistance. They fled from Odessa, Ukraine to Moldova. Their house was bombed, so they urgently needed refuge, which they found in one of our refugee accommodations.

Opportunities for children with disabilities

It is difficult for children with disabilities and their families to receive adequate support in Moldova. In our therapy centers, Blue Bird (Hîncești) and Soul Drops (Pripiceni), they find loving care. In addition to a needs-oriented leisure program, we offer children therapies, warm meals, and educational opportunities to promote their social integration.



Special thanks go to our ambassador for children in need: Jeanine Schiller. For years, she has been tirelessly advocating on behalf of Hilfswerk International for children with disabilities in Moldova. Her relentless commitment enabled in 2023:

- Social and rehabilitation assistance for 55 severely disabled children and their families to promote social integration and personal autonomy
- Raising public awareness of the problems faced by children with severe disabilities

Hilfswerk International in Moldova

- Help for refugees
- 15 refugee accommodations
- Children with disabilities

Future for Central Asia

The risk of poverty and unemployment are quite common in Central Asia. The countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan face the challenge of promoting regional development accordingly. Hilfswerk International supports the region in this endeavor with an innovative, sustainable, and comprehensive program. In this way, we are accompanying the people of Central Asia into a more stable future.



- The knowledge of **390 experts** on topics such as food security and agriculture was compiled in several workshops. A **transnational conference** also facilitated cross-regional exchange.
- Six curricula, including teaching materials, were modernized. **280 students** benefited from the future-oriented knowledge transfer. As a result, the agricultural sector is undergoing long-term change.
- New study laboratories were set up. Four sets of literature were procured for four universities in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.
- We provided intensive support to **18 young entrepreneurs** during the start-up phase of their company.
- We have motivated **more than 2,000 young people** to get involved in socially effective and economically valuable projects in rural areas.
- We have drawn up a roadmap for the implementation of the government's youth strategy by 2030.
- A blogger forum we organized led to the establishment of the National Association of Bloggers of Tajikistan.
- **417 young people** have received training on gender equality.

Promotion of youth

In addition to the agricultural sector, strengthening young entrepreneurs rounds off positive economic development in the long term. These were our measures last year:

Agricultural development

Economic growth counteracts poverty. Fruit, vegetable production and livestock farming are important traditional economic sectors in Central Asia. Our aim is to utilize the region's existing potential and develop it further together with the local population. Our focus is therefore on promoting the agricultural sector:

Prospects for young people

29-year-old Amir is a young entrepreneur in our project. We supported him with technical equipment and entrepreneurial training in his career as a photographer - and with success. Today, he already employs three other people and has been able to expand his photography equipment with his own income.

Hilfswerk International in Central Asia

- Promotion of youth
- Economic development
- Entrepreneurship
- Agricultural sector

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"Thanks to Hilfswerk International, I managed to take the step into self-employment. It has helped me to secure my livelihood."



Together for the Future



Our central concern in Colombia has been peacekeeping for years. Historically, the interests between farmers, former FARC combatants, and the indigenous population have been widely divergent. Peace can only be maintained if access to resources such as food, land, education, and water is as balanced as possible among the population groups.

In our project region of Guaviare, we mediate between the different interests and advocate for successful exchange. In 2023, in collaboration with all population groups, we implemented measures with the following goals:

- Environmental protection
- Food security
- Education

Diverse Knowledge

Last year, a 30-day knowledge exchange through workshops and discussion sessions enabled the training of 449 people. Many of them are teachers and social leaders from indigenous and farming communities. The training covers topics such as curriculum redesign, territory and environment, culture, peace, innovation, and food sovereignty.

The aim of this measure is to collectively gather knowledge. With this knowledge, we continue to work with the local population for positive communal and technological innovations.

Workshops for Children and Youth

In addition to the training for teachers and leaders, we conducted a total of 22 workshops for rural and indigenous children and youth last year. The focus of the workshops is on handling information and communication technologies.

Another focus is on imparting knowledge in the areas of innovation, technology, and renewable energies. A central concern is not only to impart theoretical knowledge but also practical skills in areas such as environmental protection and technology to the youth in these workshops.

Fostering Young Knowledge

Fourteen-year-old Gabriela is a remarkable young woman with outstanding skills in mathematics, natural sciences, and technology at her school in the El Retorno community (Guaviare). She participates in our workshops for young people in the field of science and technology, where she gains access to valuable technological resources, especially in the field of robotics.



Gabriela represents the Guaviare region as a youth ambassador in institutions such as NASA. Her participation in our training programs has contributed not only to her personal development but also to the promotion of excellence in these areas in Guaviare. Gabriela is a role model for other young women to actively engage in shaping the future.

Ways out of the crisis

Lebanon is facing humanitarian challenges. Extremely high inflation rates, the war in the Middle East and alarming unemployment are putting people under enormous pressure.

The crisis in Lebanon is coming to a head: inflation and supply shortages are making even basic items unaffordable.

Prices for everyday items such as food have increased 25-fold in Lebanon since 2020. A kilo of bread, which cost the equivalent of two euros three years ago, now de facto costs 50 euros. At the same time, a teacher who earned the equivalent of EUR 2,000 a month three years ago now only earns EUR 80.

This hyperinflation has wiped out the middle class, with 80% of the population now living in poverty. There is hardly any hope left. People with low incomes, such as the Syrian and Palestinian refugees, are affected by feeling the current crisis particularly keenly.



Help for refugees

The children in the Al-Marj refugee camp in the Bekaa Valley grow up in difficult conditions.

Most Syrian families in the Bekaa Valley live in tents after fleeing the war. For the refugees, this means no permanent roof over their heads for 13 years, no income of their own and devastating medical care. This is particularly fatal for children and pregnant women. Hilfswerk International supports a clinic that offers free medical and psychological care for women and children in Bekaa.

In 2023, we were able to reach **1,695 children and 2,022 women** with medical care, hygiene kits and literacy courses.

Hilfswerk International has been committed to helping people in Lebanon since 2006.

In 2023, our focus was on the following areas:

- Support for refugees
- Mother-child health
- Empowering women
- Promotion of education
- Poverty reduction

Literacy for women

30-year-old Rama fled from Syria to Lebanon. She never learned to read and write because she left school early. She had to look after her nieces and nephews from a young age. However, she was able to develop these skills in one of our literacy courses. Now she helps the children with their homework.

“

"Every new letter I learned to write gave me self-confidence. I am very grateful to Hilfswerk International."



Social entrepreneurship: an alternative for sustainable solutions

Social entrepreneurship is a concept that applies the idea of entrepreneurship to social problems. For us at Hilfswerk International, social entrepreneurship has increasingly emerged as a "third pillar" alongside humanitarian aid and development cooperation in recent years.

Innovative solutions for social challenges

At its core, it is about developing and implementing innovative and sustainable solutions for social challenges. These solutions aim to have a positive social impact. They should be economically self-sustaining and grow organically.

Social enterprises are looking for long-term sustainable solutions that can bring about real change. By integrating entrepreneurial principles, social enterprises can be particularly efficient and scalable. The main goal is to successfully integrate social and/or environmental goals into business operations.

Social entrepreneurship & development cooperation

The difference between development cooperation and social entrepreneurship lies in the approach to problem solving. Development cooperation often focuses on the provision of financial resources, know-how transfer and technical assistance to improve living conditions in partner countries. Social entrepreneurship, on the other hand, relies on entrepreneurial approaches to develop sustainable solutions to social problems, independent of government or international aid.

Examples from practice

In 2021, Hilfswerk International founded a social enterprise, "die gute Seife" (the good Soap) (see pp. 38 & 39). The company's model is based on the fact that particularly vulnerable Syrian and Lebanese women in Lebanon produce handmade, cold-pressed olive oil soap. In return, they receive a reliable and fair income, which enables them to provide for themselves and their families. We sell the soap they produce here in Austria and Europe with the aim of ensuring that the business model is not

only self-sustaining but can also be expanded so that more families can be supported to ensure their survival.

Other examples include the **House of Support** in Georgia and the Hilfswerk **Kuća podrške** in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Demographically speaking, the average age of the population in these countries is particularly high. In addition, many young people are emigrating. Elderly people are often left alone and without support. There are hardly any state structures for the care and support of older people. As a result, ageing with dignity is not possible for many seniors. The House of Support and the Hilfswerk Kuća podrške are sustainable care systems for elderly and people in need of care that are adapted to the respective local conditions. With the help of the knowledge and experience of Hilfswerk in Austria, medical staff are trained so that those in need of care can be supported both medically and psychosocially.



SABUN - the good soap



This is Midia. She fled the war in Syria 12 years ago with her husband and three children. Back then, they found refuge in Lebanon. But even here, life is not always easy. There is hardly any work for Syrian refugees and the economic situation in Lebanon is tighter than ever before. Midia and her family's housing situation is precarious: her three sons are now 17, 15 and 12 years old. The family of five lives in a room that is only around 15 m² in size. They sleep, study, eat, play and work in these 15 m². The worst thing about it is that the room has no window and therefore lets in no daylight.

Help at eye level

More than 1.5 million Syrians have fled the civil war to neighboring Lebanon. Refugees struggle to make ends meet here every day and often live in extreme poverty. SABUN the good soap, a project of Hilfswerk International, helps women in this situation: through traditional craft and selling soap, Syrian (and Lebanese) soap makers receive a fair income to support themselves and their families.



Order the good soap now at:
dieguteseife.at
+43 1/4057500-112



"Everyday life in Lebanon is difficult. The soap gives me hope and distraction from the challenges here. The best thing about it is that I can provide for myself and my children with my income. I can buy food, firewood and schoolbooks and am not dependent on donations. That's why I try to make every single soap perfect."

- Midia, soap maker

“



Good for Midia:

Midia is one of four soap makers in Lebanon who form the heart of the SABUN the good soap project. Soap production provides them with an income, a life of dignity and self-determination and hope for a better future.



Good for the environment:

All the ingredients for the good soap are sourced regionally to keep transportation distances as short as possible. The cold production process requires hardly any energy.



Good for you:

The good soap is made by hand using traditional methods and consists only of natural ingredients, without any additives. It also gently cares for sensitive skin.



Order SABUN - the good soap now:

www.dieguteseife.at
office@dieguteseife.at
+43 1/4057500-112

Your donation makes a difference.

DONATION ACCOUNT

Hilfswerk International
AT71 6000 0000 9000 1002
GIBAATWWXXX

We are here for you:



Gerda Huber-Zafarpour
Donor Service

+43 1 / 40 57 500 - 111
gerda.huber@hilfswerk-international.at



Bianca Weissel
Head of Communications

+43 1 / 40 57 500 - 112
bianca.weissel@hilfswerk-international.at

Where families suddenly become homeless, where children cannot attend school, where fleeing is the only way to survive, or where constant hunger shapes people's lives, Hilfswerk International stands ready to help.

Your donation ...

... **saves lives** through rapid emergency aid in extreme situations.

... **protects the environment** through reforestation programs of mangrove forests and the Amazon rainforest.

... **fight hunger** by distributing nutritious meals to starving children.

... **strengthens the economy** through training for small businesses and job creation.

... **brings hope** through educational programs for children and adolescents.

... **is tax deductible.** You can deduct your annual donations up to 10% of your previous year's income as special expenses at the tax office.

... **is effective** because people are at the heart of what we do. Therefore, we always strive to keep our administrative costs as low as possible.

... **grows:** Our projects are designed to have a lasting impact. Through close collaboration with the local population, our development projects not only help today but also in the future.

... **shapes the future:** Children have a special significance in our projects – because they are the potential of tomorrow.

... **is transparent:** As an Austrian organization, our expenditures are regularly audited by independent auditors and (international) funders.



Effective help

We ensure that our received funds are used effectively and commit to strict financial accounting oversight by independent auditors.

In 2023, 5.8% was allocated for fundraising and 5.4% for administration.

Financial report 2023

→ SOURCES OF FUNDS

I. Donations

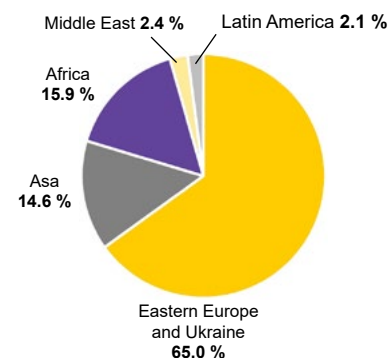
a. Non-dedicated donations	1,241,572.36
b. Dedicated donations	3,901,337.46
II. Membership fees	700.00
III. Operating income	0.00
IV. Subsidies and grants from the public sector	1,738,613.86
V. Other income including financial income	14,647.48
VI. Reversal of liability items for donations or subsidies not yet been used for their dedicated purpose (project offsetting)	2,574,458.14
VII. Release of reserves for donations or subsidies not yet been used in accordance with the statutes	0.00
TOTAL	9,471,329.30

→ USE OF FUNDS

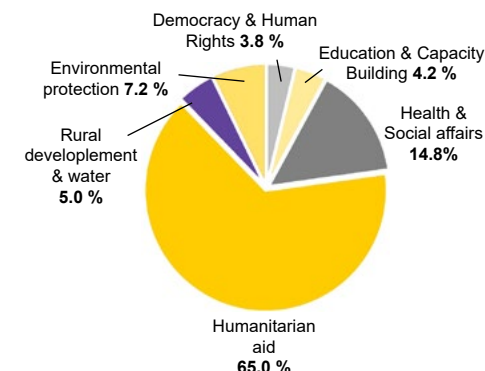
I. Services for statutory purposes	8,027,480.24
II. Fundraising	522,561.32
III. Administrative expenses	489,508.84
IV. Other expenses including financial expenses	25,562.82
Subtotal	9,065,113.22
V. Allocation of liability items for donations or subsidies not yet been used for their dedicated purpose (project offsetting)	0.00
VI. Addition to reserves for donations or subsidies not yet been used in accordance with the statutes	336,500.00
VII. Annual result	69,716.08
TOTAL	9,471,329.30



Regional breakdown



Sectoral breakdown



We thank our strategic partners:

- ADA - Austrian Development Agency
- Außenwirtschaft Österreich
- Austrian Chamber of Commerce
- BAMF - Federal Office for Migration and Refugees
- Chamber of Agriculture
- EC – European Commission
- Else Kröner-Fresenius-Foundation
- Erste Holding
- Federal Ministry for Art, Culture, Public Service and Sport
- Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs
- Finance in Motion
- GIZ - German Society for International Cooperation GmbH
- IV - Industrial Association
- Kahane Foundation
- LBG Austria
- LED - Liechtenstein Development Service
- Linsi Foundation
- Medicor Foundation
- MIVA Austria
- Neighbor in need
- OENB - Austrian National Bank
- State of Lower Austria
- State of Styria
- State of Upper Austria



„Viktor blossoms again when playing with others. He can finally be a child again. My thanks go to Hilfswerk International, who helped my son.“

- Elena from Ukraine



„Life in Lebanon is difficult. The soap gives me hope and distraction from the challenges here. The best part is that I can provide for myself and my children with the income. I can buy food, firewood, and school books and am not dependent on charity. That's why I try to make each soap perfect.“

- Midia, soap maker from Lebanon



„The food parcels saved us. Without the food, I don't know if my baby and I would have survived.“

- Isabel from Mozambique

CONTACT

Hilfswerk International

Gruenbergstrasse 15/2/5, 1120 Vienna

Tel. +43 1 40 57 500-111

office@hilfswerk-international.at

www.hilfswerk.at/international/en

facebook.com/hilfswerkinternational

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