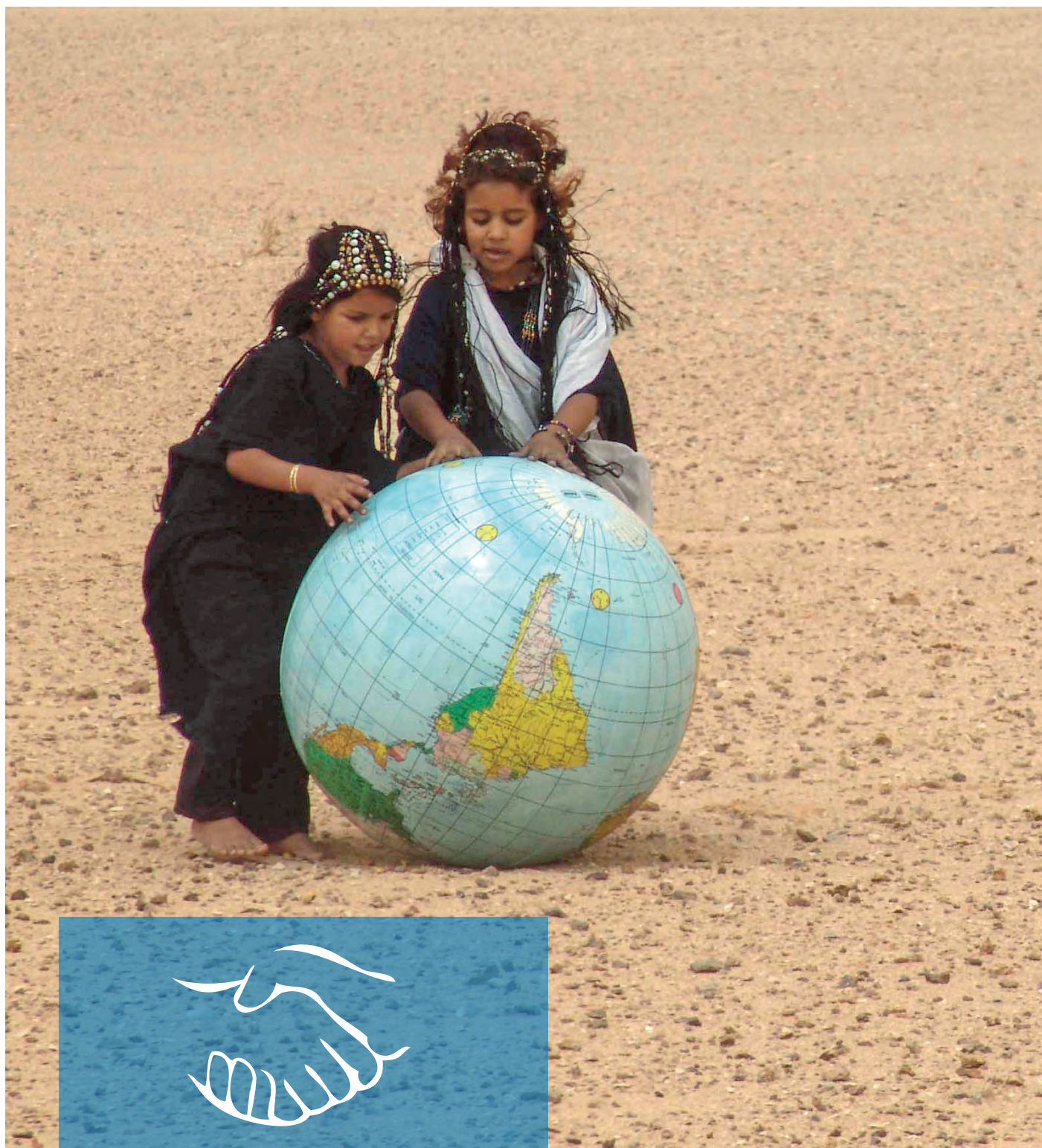


2024

swissrelief
to restore, bridge, encourage & empower



ANNUAL REPORT

Editorial

Hope in the Midst of Suffering

Country Reports

Central Asia | Westbank & Gaza
Pakistan | Mauritania | Other Countries

EDITORIAL



Education for women about hygiene and health.

Dear Donor

The year 2024 brought new challenges for many people in conflict-affected regions of the world, but also hope through the tireless assistance of organizations like SwissRelief. In the Levant—marked by the devastating effects of the Gaza war, fighting in Lebanon, and ongoing upheaval in Syria—many people are displaced or in extreme need. SwissRelief continued to provide valuable support by supplying thousands of internally displaced persons with essential food packages and enabling students from impoverished families to access education. Such initiatives provide hope for a better future amidst the uncertain present.

In Central America, the situation on the former “Sugar Island” is now dramatic: Sugar is no longer sufficient even for domestic needs, and basic resources like electricity and medications are scarce. After an earthquake that destroyed several houses, SwissRelief was able to support families in rebuilding, thereby providing a small glimmer of hope in a nation marked by crises.

In Central Asia, despite small progress, the situation remains catastrophic. More than 20,000 families received important support through food, winter clothing, and blankets in 2024. Healthcare remains precarious. Over 120,000 patients could be treated in the supported clinics, including many women like

Ramzia-Gul, who finally regained her health through medical assistance and hygiene education. Such stories are proof of the impact of humanitarian aid for those who cannot afford medical care.

Despite all the suffering these regions continue to experience, organizations like SwissRelief remain bearers of hope. They provide both immediate aid and long-term perspectives for a better future.

Your SwissRelief •



Nathanael Regez, President SwissRelief



14

Where

Active in 14 countries in the Middle East, North Africa, Central America and Asia.



20

Who

Over 20 projects implemented by local partners.



200,000

Whom

Over 200,000 people helped every year.



Focus

How

on disaster relief, reconstruction, literacy, education, networking, aid distributions, advocacy, refugee relief, food, water, MED/start-ups, medical care, etc.

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CENTRAL ASIA Overcoming Barriers Through Medical Aid



Examination of a woman in the gynecology department.

Despite small progress such as a decline in acute food insecurity, the situation in the country remains catastrophic. Financial constraints force many organizations to cut their food aid. High unemployment and low wages make food unaffordable for many, even when available. In 2024, SwissRelief supported 21,420 families with food packages, blankets, and winter jackets. Many recipients were widows, people with disabilities, or internally displaced persons.

According to the WHO, 14 million people need medical help and 8 million are at acute risk. Millions of children are malnourished and clinics are overwhelmed, unable to treat their increasing numbers. The need for healthcare rises daily, as many cannot afford even a simple doctor's visit. In the two clinics that SwissRelief has supported for many years, over 120,000 patients were treated last year, primarily women and children. Thanks to this care, many illnesses were detected early and treated free of charge. Ramzia-Gul, a 40-year-old mother of four, suffered from chronic abdominal pain

for years because she was culturally stigmatized and had no access to female healthcare providers. A clinic supported by SwissRelief offered her a safe place for treatment. After being diagnosed with a severe pelvic

infection, she received antibiotics and education about hygiene and prevention. Her recovery inspired other women in the area to overcome barriers and seek help. ●



Siblings during an emergency aid distribution.

WEST BANK & GAZA **Building Reconciliation in the Conflict**

The ongoing conflict in the Middle East has traumatized countless people, displaced them from their homes, and torn families apart. SwissRelief was able to provide urgently needed help on various sides in 2024. The West Bank has been completely isolated from the outside world by Israel since October 2023, and unemployment has risen immensely. Many families are struggling for mere survival. Additionally, countless workers from the Gaza Strip have been stranded in the West Bank for over a year, have no work, and cannot afford food or accommodation. With the help of local partners on the ground, several hundred poor families in the West Bank could be regularly supplied with emergency aid packages.

In the Gaza Strip, where people suffer most from

the war, our local staff also tirelessly provided aid. They distributed food, warm blankets, and other relief supplies, offered support in processing war trauma, and organized play and sports programs for orphaned children. Additionally, at various stations, needy people could get filtered drinking water, charge their electronic devices, and receive trauma counseling.

For years, SwissRelief has supported an educational facility in the West Bank with a kindergarten, a primary school, and a leisure center. There, children learn the value of reconciliation instead of joining the cycle of hatred between the hostile ethnic groups. This place became even more significant due to the war. The facility strengthens children's self-esteem, creativity, and ability to resolve conflicts. ●



Refugee children receive a meal.

«There, children learn the value of reconciliation instead of joining the cycle of hatred between the hostile ethnic groups.»

PAKISTAN Emergency Aid After Floods



Affected people wait for emergency supplies after the flood.

Pakistan is regularly affected by floods and other natural disasters. SwissRelief's partner responded quickly to heavy rains and floods in Sindh Province in 2024, organizing extensive relief measures. In three days, the local team packed 600 hygiene kits, 400 tents, 600 food

boxes, and 800 20-kg flour sacks. The team arrived in Sindh on October 21. After setting up a local warehouse, distribution began on October 24 and was completed after two days. In total, 600 families (approximately 3,625 people) were supported. The team observed significant damage:

destroyed houses, livestock deaths due to mosquito and snake bites, and health problems due to standing water where mosquitoes and thus malaria spread rapidly. Pregnant women particularly suffered, experiencing miscarriages and stillbirths. People looked hopeless and discouraged. They had little to nothing to eat, despite the upcoming Diwali festivities. The food aid was an enormous help for them. Additionally, the team offered emotional support. Women from the team specifically went to Sindhi women and listened to them share their experiences and challenges.

Gulab and his brother are just two of the beneficiaries. Due to the long, heavy rains, their house collapsed. Then their goats died due to the mosquito plague and other diseases resulting from the standing floodwater. There was no work for the two men, and they thanked the team heartily for the emergency aid package. ●



A man is grateful for the food items.

MAURITANIA **Help for Divorced Women**

For a conservative Muslim country, it is remarkable how quickly married couples can divorce in Mauritania. This happens even though the entire tribe is often involved in choosing marriage partners and a marriage is a complex and costly undertaking. Even women frequently file for the divorce. Unlike in other poor countries, they can often keep a large part of the household goods afterward. Many Mauritians are not just divorced once, but multiple times, and are even proud of it. There are mothers of whom each child has a different father from a different marriage.

However, the high divorce rate is increasingly becoming a problem for society and endangering social cohesion. It becomes particularly critical when a woman marries early and has children and is then divorced by

her husband—sometimes under pressure from family or relatives. Without a school diploma or vocational training, the single mother cannot support herself and her children.

This is where SwissRelief's partner steps in and helps vulnerable mothers generate their own income. First, the emergency situation is analyzed. Then, based on the woman's prior skills, a project is developed and funding is clarified. In one case, the affected woman had already worked in a clothing store. With the financial start-up help, she was able to rent a small shop and purchase goods. She sells these and uses the proceeds to pay the rent and buy new goods.

What she earns beyond that is used to support herself and her two children. ●



Thanks to start-up funding, a single mother was able to become economically independent.

«It becomes particularly critical when a woman marries early and has children and is then divorced by her husband—sometimes under pressure from family or relatives.»

LEVANT Present Despite War and Hunger



Internally displaced people receive food.

War, hunger, and displacement again marked the year 2024 for many people in the Levant. The Gaza war, fighting in Lebanon, and upheaval in Syria brought great suffering to the region's people. Many look toward an uncertain future with fear. In contrast, many look back gratefully who were helped by SwissRelief. SwissRelief

continued the distribution of food packages for several thousand threatened internally displaced persons. Similarly, students from impoverished families received educational support. With these and other projects, SwissRelief aims to provide survival assistance for today and hope for tomorrow in the afflicted Levant. ●

CENTRAL AMERICA Aid After Natural Disasters

Before our last visit, we asked our partners: "What can we bring you from Switzerland?" Their answer shocked us: "Please bring us sugar!" The island was called the "Sugar Island" during Soviet times. Meanwhile, the situation is so bad that sugar production no longer even meets the country's own needs. Electricity regularly fails, long car lines form in front of gas stations, and pharmacy shelves are empty. Add to this dengue and Oropouche epidemics as well as destruction from hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes.

Through our friends, we were able to help five families rebuild and make their homes habitable again after an earthquake. ●



The earthquake caused dilapidated homes to collapse.

SAHARAWIS Flooding in the Refugee Camp



A little rain is a blessing. But this heavy rain left much destruction in its wake.

During the last field visit, the mayor of a refugee camp told us: "In the name of the population and the authorities, I send brotherly greetings to SwissRelief and all its members. Thank you for your great effort in alleviating the suffering of the Saharawis." In the second part, he asked us to expand our support especially for young adults, as they are more at risk than before. As mayor, he is particularly challenged because his refugee camp was flooded in autumn after heavy rainfall. SwissRelief provided emergency aid afterward.

The situation is very sad, and we wish our Saharawi friends a dignified and humane solution to their situation soon. ●

TAJIKISTAN Fighting Against Violence and Human Trafficking



Women are trained as seamstresses.

Last year, SwissRelief again fought against human trafficking and supported affected and endangered women and girls. In Varzob, a new women's shelter with a vocational training center was opened. In Dushanbe, 344 women and girls

received vocational training in areas such as sewing, jewelry making, and food production. Additionally, 108 women received psychosocial counseling, 388 women received legal counseling, and six new self-help groups were established.

SwissRelief also conducted awareness campaigns and seminars in various locations. SwissRelief's work once again helped many women break free from homelessness, abuse, and legal difficulties and build themselves a new life. ●