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Building Resilience and Emerging Stronger

The Covid-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated the already existing deep-seated inequalities affecting most of our population and we, like many development organisations, were affected by it. Sustainable development is an important facet of our work and focuses on the achievement of lasting solutions for our target groups and their operating ecosystems. The pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of the people we aim to benefit and reminded us how important it is to improve their resilience and help them cope with unprecedented shocks. The uncertain environment and varied measures adopted by the different countries put a lot of pressure on our project implementations. However, we remained agile and our staff constantly adjusted their ways of working in line with the various restrictions.

We have continued to understand and serve our clients. From individual targets to micro-enterprises, we have actively sought solutions that address their obstacles and have provided support to ease their entry into the labour market. For instance, our interactive digital solutions ensured continuity in learning for young trainees and integrated business coaching sessions for micro-enterprises.

In the Central, East, and Southern African region, the youth create opportunities for the continent's growth and remain a key target group for Swisscontact. We believe empowered and skilled youth can realise their full potential and become the changemakers for their communities and countries. We are aware that working to create more opportunities for youth means addressing issues within the wider ecosystem to help them achieve their dreams. The youth need to acquire relevant and market-oriented skills and continuously improve their skill sets to be successful. They need to have supportive institutional structures, the right entrepreneurial attitude and access to finance, technology and technical advice in an enabling environment. Creating a good regulatory environment is also important in ensuring they thrive and can be leaders in the transformation of economies.

Shaping our Future

We are keen on reinforcing the resilience of our target people and the ecosystems surrounding them as a prerequisite to achieving sustainable development. Our focus on creating economic opportunities that improve their financial conditions will continue with additional activities to bolster their resilience to withstand shocks and fight back better.

We will learn and share our lessons widely to collectively improve our efforts of creating a better and livable world for future generations. In the coming years,
the reflection on our past successes and challenges will remain an integral part of our work culture and a centrepiece of quality project delivery. We will also build in supportive Information Technology infrastructure to address the digital divide that exists in the societies we work in. Our work will focus on closing the gaps, embracing technology as an enabler and ensuring we do not compromise and exclude our targeted clients since rapidly evolving technology can exacerbate their deprivation.

Our Work is Needed Now more than Ever

With reduced employment opportunities, slowed down investments from the private sector and the decreasing income flows of micro-enterprises, it is evident that it is no longer business as usual. We will take the front seat in facilitating different processes for the success, sustainability and resilience of our projects. We will continue re-adapting our projects to offer additional or alternative routes for our target groups to land their first jobs. We will improve the employability of young Africans through the promotion of internships, apprenticeships, and industrial attachments and link them better with the world of work. We will also equip our clients with the right skills to venture into entrepreneurship and support them till they are stable. In this endeavour, we will engage private stakeholders and work closely with public institutions.

The testimonies of the people who have benefitted from our projects and the project results presented in this annual report reflect Swisscontact’s agility, resilience, and adaptation in the face of an unprecedented global pandemic. We thank all our donors, implementing partners and stakeholders for walking with us in 2021. None of this work would have been possible without your steady support. Your confidence in our efforts made a difference in the lives of millions of vulnerable people and we count on your continued support in 2022 and the coming years.
Swisscontact is a leading organisation for the implementation of international development projects. Founded in 1959 and registered under Swiss law, we are an independent non-profit organisation. We are politically and denominationally neutral. Swisscontact implements 117 projects across 39 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

As an expert organisation, Swisscontact offers the following services:

- **Project implementation.** We ensure the delivery of high-quality project work on-site for private sector development and focus on inclusiveness, sustainability and impact at scale.

- **Advisory and Consulting Services.** We provide customised, innovative and result-oriented technical guidance and capacity building for effectiveness.

- **Training and Applied Research.** We offer training courses in market systems development and undertake applied research related to development practices.
To attain sustainable impact in our projects, we have invested heavily in our team from top management to support staff. Our team encompasses experts who work collaboratively with local stakeholders to achieve long-term success. We consistently invest in creating positive work environments which promote the constant willingness to course-correct, rethink strategies, processes, and approaches. We believe that development is not only intended to serve our customers but our employees as well.

**Total staff**

128

76 male

52 female

69 local

5 international
OUR OVERALL IMPACT

In 2021

14,809 people accessed and completed programmes in vocational training, entrepreneurship, financial literacy and life skills
46% of whom are female.

9,903 people found new jobs or are self-employed
50% of whom are female.

123,856 jobs were created in the benefitting households and SMEs

2,365 smallholders were trained in good agricultural practices
46% of whom are female.

351,794 farmers and small businesses accessed improved products and services
30% of whom are female.

CHF 8,689,552 additional income was generated by our project participants and SMEs
Africa has the youngest population in the world, with 70% of sub-Saharan Africa under the age of 30. These many young people create opportunities for the continent’s growth when they are fully empowered to realise their potential in enabling environments.

The covid pandemic caused many societal shifts that affected the youth. The stark digital divide in education saw some youth continue learning using digital tools while their peers stagnated. When movement restrictions were enforced, some youth were safe in their homes while others became targets for domestic violence and other forms of abuse. It became increasingly difficult for young people to join the workforce or retain jobs.

We understood that if the youth’s talent and energy was side-lined by the lack of opportunities or skills, they would experience greater challenges trying to re-adjust and rebuild their lives. We strategically redefined many of our interventions to impact young people, such as:

- Conducting technical trainings for refugees using an innovative digital learning platform and providing online mentoring to newly established businesses in Northern Kenya.
- Introducing mobile training in remote areas of Mozambique and developing market-relevant specialised courses for youth to become producers and public extension service technicians.
- Promoting digital access to agriculture-related technical advice, including daily and seasonal weather information in Rwanda and facilitating contract farming schemes for women and youth smallholder farmers.
OUR IMPACT ON YOUTH

In 2021

14,017
unemployed youth (6,122 female) accessed technical skills training in different trades.

8,160
youth (4,913 female) completed the technical skills training.

2,200
youth (1,210 female) had access to improved agricultural inputs and good horticultural production practice training.

9,835
youth (4,944 female) transitioned to wage or self-employment.

8,713
youth (4,764 female) received mentorship/coaching support.

CHF 3,100,138
earned by youth from wage or self-employment.

3,322
female youth were engaged in male-dominated trades or activities.

626
male youth were engaged in female-dominated trades or activities.

In 2021, a significant impact on youth was observed, with various initiatives providing support and training to enhance their future opportunities.

- **14,017** unemployed youth (6,122 female) were provided with access to technical skills training.
- **8,160** youth (4,913 female) successfully completed the technical skills training.
- **2,200** youth (1,210 female) had access to improved agricultural inputs and horticultural production training.
- **9,835** youth (4,944 female) transitioned to wage or self-employment.
- **8,713** youth (4,764 female) received mentorship/coaching support.
- **CHF 3,100,138** was earned by youth from wage or self-employment.
- **3,322** female youth were engaged in male-dominated trades.
- **626** male youth were engaged in female-dominated trades.

These initiatives reflect a comprehensive approach to improve the lives of youth and provide them with the tools necessary for their future. The data highlights the significant progress made in 2021, indicating a positive impact on the youth population.

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STRENGTHENING YOUTH SKILLS

Technical skills training

- Mechanics
  Auto mechanics and motorcycle repair
- Beauty
  Hairdressing, barbery, beadwork, fashion and design, tailoring, weaving
- Culinary Arts
  Catering, food processing and baking
- Construction
  Carpentry, welding, masonry, block making, plumbing, painting and electrical wiring
- ICT
  Computer and cellphone repair, Good horticultural practices
- Blacksmithing
- Aquaculture
- Animal Husbandry
- Poultry

Non-technical skills training

- Entrepreneurship
- Financial literacy and group savings
- Literacy and numeracy
- Life skills
- Gender integration sexual and reproductive health
- Work safety
- Business plan preparation
- Cost and cash flow analysis
- Professional orientation

*Labour market assessments were done before introducing new trades to determine relevance and profitability opportunities in the local context.*
OUR OFFERING

Swisscontact delivers customised inclusive solutions via project implementation, provides advisory services, practical hands-on training and engages in applied research. In the Central, East and Southern Africa region, our activities are established around two main areas:

**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, RETRAINING AND LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION**

We strengthen people’s skills, offer them the conditions for a secure livelihood and the opportunity to actively participate in society.

**BUSINESS PROMOTION**

We support the creation of productive jobs, higher incomes and promote resource-conserving prosperity.

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Skills for Life (S4L)

Promotes the socio-economic integration of refugees and host communities in Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement through enhanced self/wage employment, job creation and income generation. S4L supports the communities to move from humanitarian support to lasting development pathways. It targets male and female unemployed youth primarily between 18 and 25 years and offers training in market-driven trades and entrepreneurship before mentoring participants as they transition into wage and self-employment. It incorporates an integrated learning group approach including career counselling, training, experiential learning and financial support.

Click [here](#) for more details.
Co-creates and delivers an apprenticeship offer with public and private partners in the construction sector in Kenya—specifically in the plumbing and electrical installation trades. It targets youth between 18 and 24 years who have completed secondary school and aims to improve their technical skills, hands-on experience and access to decent jobs in safe workplaces. It applies an integrated learning approach that combines on-the-job training anchored in companies with school-based theory. Private companies take the lead in selecting, employing apprentices and enhancing the current curriculum. It demonstrates and establishes a business case for dual apprenticeships and drives systemic change to improve the employability of Kenyan youth.

Click here for more details.
**Skills to Build (S2B)**

Develops and improves the skills and competencies of young men and women in the construction sector to enhance their employment and self-employment opportunities. With increased incomes, youth contribute to economic and social equity in Mozambique. The project facilitates private-public led, modular technical skills training and certification for vulnerable youth and low-skilled workers. Some of the innovations introduced include Recognition of Prior Learning and linkages to financial service providers who offer capital to youth venturing into self-employment. S2B also provides mobile training in different trades such as electrical installation, welding, masonry, plumbing and painting.

Click [here](#) for more details.

**Skills For Employment Tanzania (SET)**

Responds to the challenge of unemployment and underemployment among Tanzanian youth and young mothers. It improves the relevance of skills development by facilitating relevant labour market information and enhancing quality skills development through training of trainers in pedagogy and teaching methodologies while increasing access to innovative and demand-driven vocational skills.

Click [here](#) for more details.
Re-engineering Uganda’s Sanitary and Phytosanitary Inspection for Horticultural Exports (RUSH)

Supports Uganda in improving its Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) inspection processes for horticultural exports. RUSH aims to realize systemic change in time, cost and wastage reduction during the export of horticultural products, especially fruits and vegetables. RUSH has adopted a risk management system developed by the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation to assess the risk level of imports and exports arriving at the border. The project employs a Public Private Partnership approach with multi stakeholder engagements to ensure the sustainability of interventions. The primary customers are exporters, packhouse owners, quality controllers, the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and the Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC). The secondary customers include apex private sector associations and smallholder farmers.

Click here for more details.

Learn, Earn and Save (U-LEARN)

Targeted economically, socially and academically disadvantaged youth between 18 and 24 years and capacitated them with market-driven skills to increase their employment chances and entrepreneurship possibilities. The project applied a unique learning group model and was implemented in 11 districts in Uganda and 14 districts in Tanzania. It focused on the three fast-growing sectors of agri-business, construction and hospitality.

Click here for more details.
Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO)

Supports Business Support Organisations (BSOs) in South Africa to strengthen the export capabilities of companies intending to access markets in Switzerland, the EU, and regional markets. SIPPO supports the BSOs by promoting trade fair participation and facilitating capacity development in market research, buying and selling missions and study tours. It also supports BSOs in organisational development, digitalisation, strategic planning and positioning, project cycle management, knowledge sharing and continuous learning. SIPPO is active in six sectors – fish and seafood, processed food, natural ingredients, technical wood, high-quality textiles and sustainable tourism.

Click [here](#) for more details.

Dynamic Markets for Farmers - Sustainable Cocoa and Honey

Supports smallholder farmers in the cocoa and honey value chains by facilitating their access to extension services and markets and by enabling them to improve their knowledge and skills. It applies an inclusive market systems development approach through public and private sector partnerships to provide improved products and services to the project's direct clients. In 2021, the project introduced a microleasing scheme in partnership with Delta Bees Ltd and Ntwtwe Area Beekeeper's Association (NABCOS). This initiative saw 158 smallholder beekeepers (19 women) access 3,378 improved Kenya Top Bar (KTB) hives and other modern beekeeping equipment.

Click [here](#) for more details.
Targeted poor households and agro enterprises in Rwanda and aimed to improve their long-term efficiency and inclusiveness. IMSAR increased the incomes of the poor households by supporting market actors to adopt new practices, products, services, rules, behaviours and norms that improved the way markets work for the poor. IMSAR had interventions in three areas i.e., agricultural inputs, agricultural lending/finance and improved aggregation. Innovations facilitated with partners included the promotion and use of the black soldier fly as an alternative protein source for animal feeds, the development of unique financial products for farmers and agribusinesses, promotion of post-harvest aggregation, out grower and contract farming models and improved access to high-quality fertilizers.

Click here for more details.

Improving Market Systems for Agriculture in Rwanda (IMSAR)

Helps smallholder farmers in Malawi engaged in poultry and aquaculture value chains gain market knowledge and access to improve their interactions and commercialise their activities. CASA fosters the competitiveness of downstream agri-SMEs such as farmer organisations and larger agribusinesses by supporting their investment planning and readiness and linking them to financing. Some of the innovations introduced in the aquaculture sector include the development of a hub bank, the deployment of a Community Agribusiness Driven model previously used in legume farming and adopted by fish farmers, the production and supply of sex-reversed fingerlings with superior growth performance and a tax waiver on floating fish feed imports. In the poultry sector, CASA has implemented an out-grower model, strengthened smallholder poultry aggregation and facilitated finance for SMEs.

Click here for more details.

Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusiness (CASA)
Catalyzed agricultural investments in markets and climate-smart practices, strengthened existing supply and distribution chains and accelerated new business models, products and services, to overcome the systemic constraints and market failures that hold back agricultural investments and growth. NUTEC-MD spearheaded the development and scale-up of the Quality Declared Seeds (QDS) model which led to improved seed quality and changes in smallholder behaviours and practices. It also successfully applied the Commercial Agent Model (CAM) which professionalized the function played by intermediaries to generate better and more predictable returns for smallholder farmers and commercial entities.

Click here for more details.

Status: Closed
When growing up, I keenly observed my grandfather and uncle at work. They were both carpenters and it was fascinating to see the end products they had made. Unfortunately, I had to drop out of secondary school as her grandparents, who were my guardians, were growing old and could not continue working full-time to pay my school fees. I landed a job as a babysitter and earned CHF 3 per month. This barely supported our needs. In 2018, PROMOST in collaboration with the local authorities recruited me for a one-year training in carpentry. It was a dream come true since I was following a path I had always wished to venture into. After a year, I opted to stay on at my trainers’ workshop, helping him fulfill orders and saving as much as I could. I was able to grow my clientele base and finally got the courage to venture out on my own. I’m now married to a mason and this has worked out perfectly. When he’s contracted for a job, he refers me to offer carpentry services and, in the end, we generate more income. I still serve my other clients and have now invested in livestock rearing to earn additional income to give my son the good life he deserves.

23-year-old Jacqueline Yambahariye
Aspiring Rwandan youth supported by the PROMOST Project
The government has begun reforming the vocational education sector in Mozambique in partnership with Swisscontact. The initiative seeks to provide certification to citizens who have acquired professional skills in certain qualifications but have not yet had the opportunity to have these skills officially recognised due to the lack of proper regulatory systems. This gap has reduced the employment capacity of these workers and has underestimated the county’s labour force in construction. The pilot of the Recognition of Prior Learning has been successful due to the support of Swisscontact through its Skills to Build project. They provided technical support, financed the training of trainers’ sessions and equipped the centres with the necessary materials and tools for the training and practical tests. The project also helped identify persons to participate in the pilot and onboarded key training centres.

Dr. Ida Alvarinho
National Director of Professional Qualifications at the National Authority for Professional Education (ANEP)
Skills to Build Project Partner

UPSKILLING AND RESKILLING

I have for a long time been passionate about husbandry. I tried my hand at it and unfortunately, most of my chickens got sick and died. I was curious to find out the cause and to learn more about proper rearing. Coincidentally, I heard of a training opportunity offered by Swisscontact. I immediately applied and was accepted. When I completed the course, I regained my confidence to try the venture again since I not only gained the technical skills but also skills in good customer care, record keeping and financial literacy. The project linked me to the local market in Kakuma and a supplier of good quality feeds in Lodwar. Presently, I have 270 chickens and my monthly average income from the sale of meat and eggs ranges from CHF 400 to CHF 500.

34-year-old Charles Lokudu
Skills for Life Project Participant

LABOUR MARKET INSERTION
Schools in Uganda closed for 2 years to curb the spread of COVID-19. I struggled to find something to keep me preoccupied. With barely any skills, I ventured into beekeeping with 5 local hives. After months of patience and making several adjustments, I realised my hives were not getting colonised which meant I could not harvest honey. I needed to gain proper skills to be successful. I was sure of a stable market since I heard a radio announcement mention that Delta Bees Ltd. was willing to buy honey from local farmers. The next week, representatives from Swisscontact and Delta Bees visited my village and encouraged us to form a group to streamline the capacity building sessions they would hold. Delta Bees was keen on the types of hives we used. They bought wood and we bought iron sheets to make traditional hives. I invested in 20 hives and practised what I had learnt. By June 2021, my production had increased and I sold honey worth CHF 179. I made more money with each harvest and reinvested it back in my business. I accessed a microleasing loan through an initiative by the 2 companies and purchased 20 KTB hives worth CHF 517. I am confident that my future harvests will increase now that I’m applying the knowledge I gained. I am back in school now but happy that I’m getting my financial freedom on the side.

18-year-old Michael Bwambale  
Client of the Dynamic Market for Farmers – Sustainable Cocoa and Honey Project
People are willing to act on their own initiative even under difficult conditions if an enabling environment with a level playing field is provided. We work to address the systemic weaknesses that prevent individuals and enterprises from accessing and benefitting from skills and services that deliver productive employment, income generation and job creation. Our approach relies heavily on participatory engagement and building solid partnerships with system players to achieve sustainable outcomes. We take on the role of catalyst or facilitator, working with both private and public sector actors to pilot and scale solutions that benefit all stakeholders, especially local populations. This approach encourages ownership of change processes among local actors as well as private and public investment.
We understand sustainable and inclusive economic development as a long-term process that requires technological, institutional, and social innovation. To deliver our sustainability approach we also focus on:

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

We aim for systemic change that achieves access to relevant financial education and products for our target groups.
We aim for sustained system changes that deliver equal access, agency and rights for excluded groups. We ensure our projects are gender-sensitive and work on strengthening equal access to resources and opportunities for women and men.

GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

We aim for positive environmental impact that transforms sectors and benefits our clients.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

GOOD GOVERNANCE

We aim for structural transformations that ensure transparent, responsive action and accountability from system actors.
I would buy baked goods and hawk them around Kakuma Refugee Camp. This earned me savings of about CHF 50 a month. I always had a desire to grow my income so I could better support my family so in 2021 when I heard about the Skills for Life training offer in catering, I quickly signed up. The 3-month course was intense but very enjoyable. I learnt how to make several dishes and snacks like cake, mandazi, chapati and even pizza. This was a game-changer in my business since I reduced my overhead costs. Instead of buying the already cooked dishes and snacks, I now make them on my own and sell them at favourable prices. I have been able to double my monthly savings to CHF 100. I aspire to grow my business and become a leading supplier within the camp.

30-year-old Jeannette Inaduloi
Skills for Life Project Participant
We promote inclusive economic, social and ecological development to make an effective contribution toward sustainable and widespread prosperity in developing and emerging economies.

With this objective in mind, we offer economically and socially disadvantaged people a chance to improve their lives on their own initiative.
OUR PARTNERS

OUR DONORS
1. Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
2. The Hilti Foundation
3. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
4. Canton of Basel – Landschaft
5. Municipality of Riehen
6. Medicor Foundation
7. UW Linsi Foundation
8. Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation
9. Mastercard Foundation

OUR CONSORTIUM PARTNERS
1. The Palladium Group
2. NIRAS Development Consulting
3. The Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI)
4. LTS International
5. GFA Consulting Group

Our projects received in-kind and cash contributions from 65 stakeholders in the private sector and other supporting development organisations valued at about CHF 33,330,131.

Community Relations
2021 Annual Turnover
CHF 13.5 million

Our 2021 Annual Turnover
OUR NETWORK

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