Project Overview

LEMONAID+ | ChariTea | Foundation

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The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation

We envision a world in which all people have secure, independent and sustainable livelihoods. To come closer to achieving our vision, we are currently supporting effective initiatives of organisations in seven countries. They implement projects in their respective surroundings that strengthen social, economic and ecological structures over the long term.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation

We are convinced that great ideas are emerging everywhere around the world, but their implementation often fails due to the lack of finances or structural resources. Our aim is to assist organisations establish the conditions required for more people to become entrepreneurs and improve their income over the long term. As an organisation based in the Global North, we view our work as a collaborative effort undertaken in solidarity with people from the Global South. They are frequently excluded from the global economic system, while at the same time, being particularly affected by the negative consequences of global inequalities.

Our vision

Every human being should have access to independent, self-determined and sustainable livelihoods.

Our mission

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation is committed to promoting entrepreneurial and income-generating initiatives in regions that do not have fair access to global markets. We work in partnership with local organisations that initiate transformation processes in their communities and facilitate economic autonomy. Based on our existing vision and mission, we have already supported numerous projects in the Global South over the past few years, thereby making important contributions to sustainable development, education and empowerment in our partner countries. At the same time, we recognise the need to take on responsibility in other areas as well. We have therefore decided to introduce a new funding stream to provide additional targeted support to organisations advocating for refugees and to promote successful integration. Our first funding in this area is going towards civil sea rescue

Project visit at the Rwandan NGO SYTRIECI where they explained how saving groups work. Photo: Jean Bizimana

in the Central Mediterranean, and our aim is to further expand this new funding stream in the future.

Our values

Power critical

Our actions are shaped by a conscious awareness of global power dynamics. Inequalities in opportunities and power structures influence societies and economic relations worldwide. Critically reflecting on our own privileges– and how to use them responsibly – is challenging but essential in order to reduce inequalities over the long term and equitable structures.

Taking Action

From the very beginning, our motivation for the Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation was to encourage others to take action themselves. We see ourselves as a catalyst for making social issues visible, raising awareness, and driving change – together with our project partners in the Global South as well as here in Germany.

Co-creative

Lasting change emerges through collaboration. Together with our partners, we are actively shape development processes and seek to rethink development cooperation. Our collaboration is based on trust and the principle that local organisations know best which solutions are needed at the local level. We provide organisations with the financial means to implement their projects.

Optimistic & committed

Despite the major challenges we face, we approach them with confidence, determination, and enthusiasm. We are certain that positive change is possible and are firmly committed to achieving it.

Impact

Since its establishment in 2011, the Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation has already supported more than 93 projects in 9 countries.

Nevertheless, numbers do not capture the full impact of our project partners and individual changes on people's lives. Behind every figure are different living situations, pathways, developments and experiences.

Participants of workshop organised by SEED with their vision boards. The South African NGO based in Cape Town offers training courses on permaculture.

22,039

Project participants

This figure includes all individuals who have actively participated in the projects. It differs from the number of training participants because, in the early phase of our organisation, we also supported awareness-raising campaigns that reached many people without providing formal training. The difference illustrates how our approach has increasingly shifted over time toward structured capacity building.

17,560

People received training

This figure covers all direct project participants who have completed our training courses within the scope of our partnerships. The formats range from multi-year qualification programs to compact one-day and one-week workshops.

Sisipho Ngcayisa (left) and Siphelo Saki (right) at a computer workshop at the kasiConomy Hub run by the NGO Masifunde in Gqeberha, South Africa.

Participants of a project implemented by Hombre sobre la Tierra sell their goods at a regional market.

9,992

People improved their entrepreneurial skills

This figure covers all direct project participants who have completed our training courses within the scope of our partnerships. The formats range from multi-year qualification programs to compact one-day and one-week workshops.

4,269

People increased their income

This figure reflects the progress we have made in reaching our overarching objective: better living conditions. At the same time, we recognise that this figure leaves room for interpretation. It does not reveal the extent to which incomes have increased or how this change has affected individuals.

Phathiswa Madiki is a seamstress and designer. She receives support for her clothing business from Masifunde's kasiConomy Hub.

A participant of a project run by the Peruvian NGO Apedik has set up her own business with the support of the programme and now sells homemade cakes at the weekly market.

1,440

Small businesses were founded

In many regions in the Global South, formal employment opportunities are limited. Starting a small business is often the most realistic way to support oneself financially. This figure represents specific economic activities that have emerged from training, guidance and structural support.

680

People received access to financial services

Starting a business requires capital. As marginalised people often do not have access to the formal banking system, many of our project partners work to create alternatives and low-threshold access to financial services.

Members of the women's agricultural cooperative set up by the NGO SOCEO in West Bengal, India.

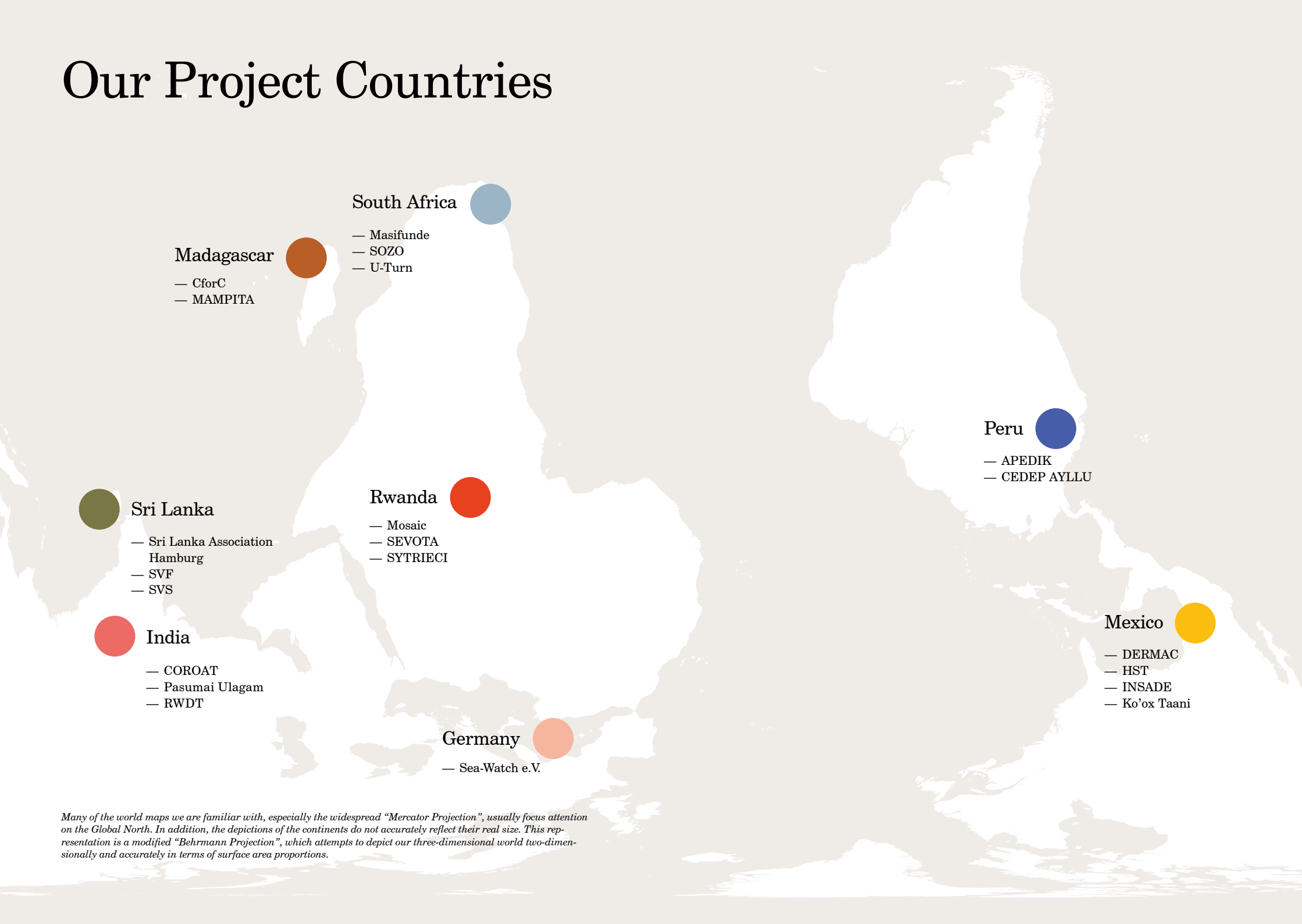
A member of SYTRIECI in Kigali, Rwanda, counting money. The savings groups meet weekly not only to save money, but also to take out or repay loans.

127

Cooperatives were supported

In many project regions, collective production and marketing is an effective strategy for achieving better prices and securing market access. The support of cooperatives not only reinforces economic resilience, but also enhances collective self-organisation and bargaining power.

Our Project Countries



South Africa

— Masifunde
— SOZO
— U-Turn

Madagascar

— CforC
— MAMPITA

Peru

— APEDIK
— CEDEP AYLLU

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— Mosaic
— SEVOTA
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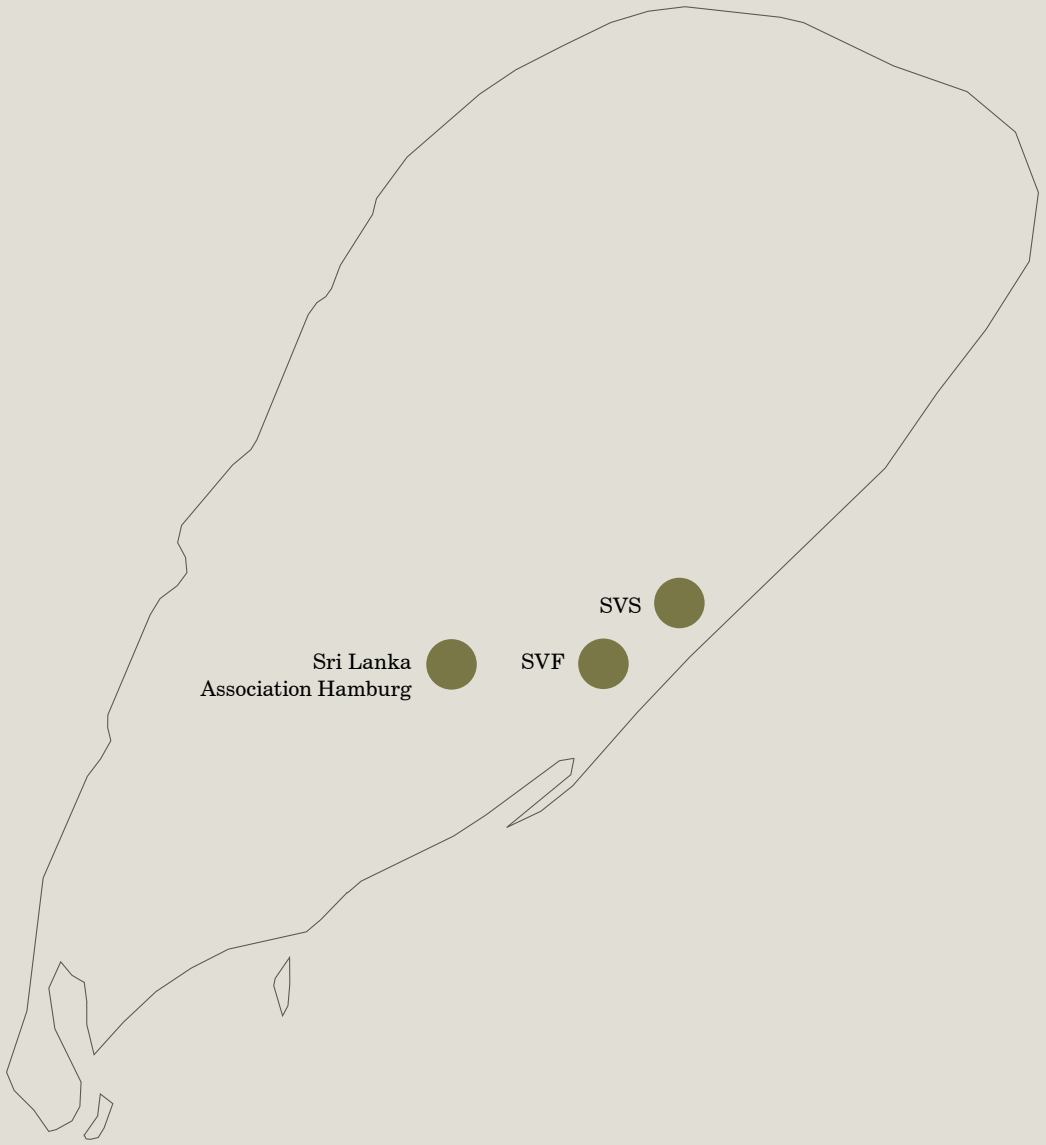
— COROAT
— Pasumai Ulagam
— RWDT

Germany

— Sea-Watch e.V.

Many of the world maps we are familiar with, especially the widespread "Mercator Projection", usually focus attention on the Global North. In addition, the depictions of the continents do not accurately reflect their real size. This representation is a modified "Behrmann Projection", which attempts to depict our three-dimensional world two-dimensionally and accurately in terms of surface area proportions.



Sri Lanka

Number of projects:
3

Country budget:
€221,774

Project regions:
Matale District,
Norton Bridge, Colombo

The island nation of Sri Lanka lies south of India in the Indian Ocean. After decades of colonial rule, Sri Lanka officially gained its independence in 1948. A pronounced ethnic divide between Sri Lankan Tamils and the ethnic majority of Sinhalese is part of the country's colonial legacy. The British occupiers fueled these animosities. The resulting long civil war only ended in May 2009, and its socio-economic and social consequences are still felt in Sri Lanka today. Sri Lanka's economy is largely based on agriculture, being tea, rubber, and coconuts among its most important exports. Currently, the country sees development opportunities, particularly in tourism and the expansion of the service and industrial sectors. However, the inhabitants of the country do not benefit equally from these economic developments. Approximately 24.5% of Sri Lanka's population continues to live in poverty. The ongoing effects of the economic crisis since 2022 have further exacerbated the economic vulnerability of many households.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation is currently supporting the following projects in Sri Lanka: an English school in Colombo, an eye health hospital in the tea hills, and a home gardening project in the Matale district.

Project manager Anslem, together with female project participants, fills a sack with compost soil, which is then used for planting lettuce seedlings. Photo: Sri Lanka Verein Hamburg

Sri Lanka Association Hamburg

Strengthening food security and income opportunities for rural families by supporting women in setting up home gardens.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Matale District	2025–2026	€13,601	Education, Value Chains

The project aims to strengthen food security and income opportunities for poor rural families in Sri Lanka by promoting sustainable organic horticulture. In particular, women are to be empowered to establish and manage their own organic home gardens. Not only to provide for themselves in their daily lives, but also to produce chemical-free vegetables and fruit, improve yields and the efficient use of land, and generate additional income from surplus produce. Through training in organic gardening, composting, pest management, basic financial literacy, and positive thinking, the project not only contributes to healthy nutrition and the reduction of malnutrition, but also strengthens women's self-determination, family resilience, and harmony within village communities.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing economic crisis in Sri Lanka, the number of people living below the poverty line has risen significantly in recent years. Many families, especially in rural areas, are particularly affected by high prices for basic foodstuffs, fuel, electricity, and water. Significantly increased costs for artificial fertilizers and shortages of pesticides, fungicides, and other chemicals also make it difficult for them to achieve sufficient harvests.

The Sri Lanka Verein Hamburg e.V. was founded in 2005 as a non-profit organisation and is committed to reducing poverty in Sri Lanka, promoting education, and strengthening intercultural exchange. The Foundation supports projects for socio-economic improvement on site and maintains close contact with the local project coordination team.

The project manager George Partick is performing a cataract surgery on a patient.Photo: SVF

SVF Hospital

Sustainable eye health, local employment and strengthening the role of women in rural Sri Lanka.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Norton Bridge	2025–2027	€150,000	Education

The Samanala Valley Foundation improves eye care in the tea region of Sri Lanka through free cataract surgeries and regular eye examinations. Over 200 procedures are planned in the first year, with more than 300 surgeries per year planned in the long term. Specialists are trained and permanently employed, and modern medical equipment and materials ensure sustainable treatment. At the same time, the project empowers young women: a protected meeting place offers workshops, exchange and further training in health, mental well-being and practical skills. This promotes social contacts and creates opportunities for personal development.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supports the project financially, in particular personnel costs, medical equipment and administration. In the Central tea region and beyond, access to eye care – especially cataract surgery – is severely limited. Tea pickers are exposed to high levels of UV radiation over long periods of time, which increases their risk of developing cataracts. Unfortunately, most cannot afford surgery, leading to avoidable blindness and further exacerbating poverty. Those who lose their sight can no longer work, losing their most important source of income. Families already struggling financially are then dependent on younger relatives, which severely limits their educational and career opportunities.

Younger family members often take on care responsibilities, making it difficult for them to attend school or work. Restoring sight through cataract surgery gives those affected their independence back and allows them to contribute to everyday life in the household again – which significantly reduces the burden on their relatives.

Previously, the hospital was fully funded by the founder and through private donations. However, after his death, the financial resources have been almost completely exhausted, so that external support is necessary for the first time.

Founded in 1995 by Nigel Kerner, the Foundation focuses on free eye treatments and education in the tea-growing region. The hospital is supported by a tea plantation, which creates stable jobs for the local population. The Foundation improves access to healthcare and promotes sustainable development and poverty reduction in Sri Lanka.

Students enjoying the Sinhala and Tamil New Year celebrations in front of the school.

SVS School for English

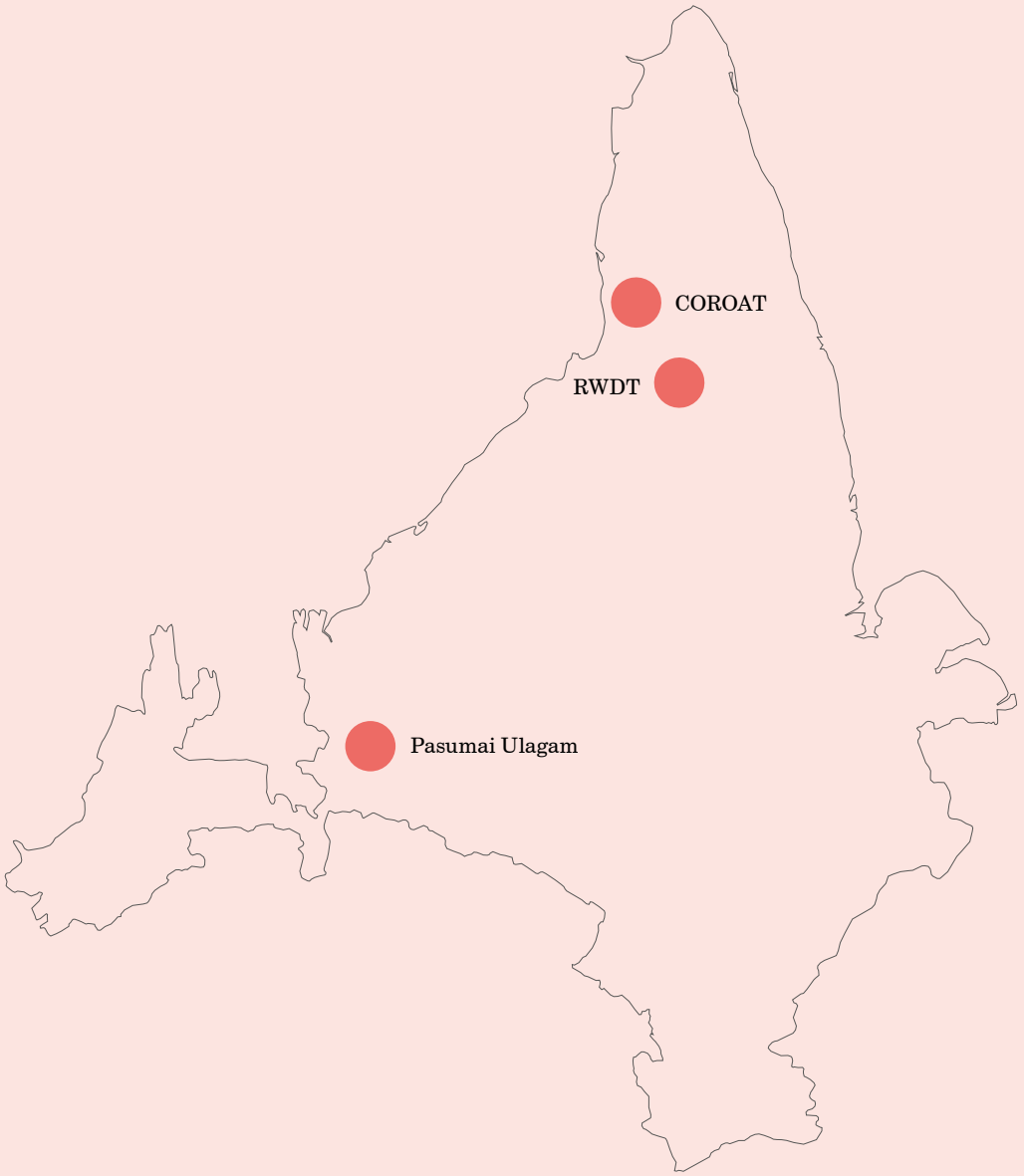
Creating opportunities through English lessons.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Colombo	2024–2027	€58,173	Education

The SVS School for English in Colombo offers young adults affordable and practical English courses to improve their chances in the job market. After pandemic-related setbacks, the school is building a permanent teaching and management team and reducing course fees from €0.60 to €0.40 per hour – an important relief for low-income learners. The 100-hour courses focus on everyday and work-related communication while promoting intercultural exchange. In the long term, the school wants to expand its digital offerings, develop its own learning materials and cooperate with companies. The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supports this development by financing personnel, infrastructure and organisational processes – and thus contributes to securing educational opportunities for disadvantaged young people in the long term.

In Sri Lanka, English is a crucial factor for employability, especially in urban and service-oriented sectors. Although the language is taught in schools, practical methods are often lacking. Before the pandemic, the school was self-supporting with over 450 students. However, economic slumps have brought many families into financial hardship, so the demand for affordable, high-quality language tuition is greater than ever.

The SVS School for English, founded in 2006 by Sebastian Lawrance, aims to create educational opportunities for all. Through affordable, high-quality English courses, it opens up new professional prospects for learners, strengthens their self-confidence and promotes social participation.



India

Number of projects:
3

Country budget:
€340,457

Project regions:
Tamil Nadu, Bihar

According to the latest estimates for 2026, India's population is approximately 1.477 billion, making it the world's most populous country. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), India has enjoyed steady growth rates and continuous social development in recent years. India is now among the fastest-growing economies in the world. Despite this dynamic growth, not all segments of the population benefit equally, and poverty and social inequality remain significant challenges. According to the latest available data, in 2022, around 170 million people in India still lived on less than US$2.15 per day, demonstrating that a substantial portion of the population is affected by extremely low incomes, even though the poverty rate has decreased significantly compared to historical averages. The persisting structures of the traditional caste system—which was officially abolished—also continue to contribute to social inequality in the country. The Dalits, whose name means "oppressed" or "broken," are often marginalised and economically exploited (Minority Rights Group International, 2026). Women, too, face discrimination under prevailing cultural, social, and religious structures. The projects currently supported by the Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation primarily empower women and Dalits in the southernmost state of Tamil Nadu and the northeastern state of Bihar.

Hashima Nayak, Project Manager (front), and other participants in the “She in He” project.

COROAT

Promoting dignity and sustainable livelihoods for transgender people in Tamil Nadu.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Tamil Nadu	2025–2028	€119,143	Education, Entrepreneurship

In the second project phase (2025–2028), COROAT (Community Renovation and Organisation Advancement Trust) will work with 1,000 transgender individuals in ten districts across Tamil Nadu. Building on the initial funding phase (2022–2025), which reached 477 transgender individuals, the second phase expands both geographically and programmatically. It provides more individualised support and promotes systematic integration into government structures to ensure lasting impact beyond the project period.

Key interventions include individual psychological counselling, vocational training for environmentally friendly small businesses, start-up capital for these enterprises, and support in accessing identity documents, social benefits, and housing. Public campaigns and awareness events are also conducted to reduce structural discrimination. In addition, several hundred stakeholders from local administration, educational institutions, and the financial sector are engaged to foster long-term institutional change.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation finances a large share of the project, including staff salaries, start-up capital, training costs, and the development of an app providing continuous, individualised psychological support for transgender people.

Despite legal progress, transgender people continue to face systematic exclusion, social stigmatisation, violence, restricted access to public services, and economic marginalisation. Many also experience rejection by families and society, causing significant psychological distress and undermining economic stability. Sustainable change requires long-term, individualised support, psychosocial assistance, and structural awareness-raising among authorities and the wider public; one-off training measures or financial support alone are insufficient.

COROAT is a women’s organisation founded in 2009. Its founder, who comes from a traditional artisan family, witnessed child marriage, child labour, indebtedness, and low literacy rates among girls in her immediate surroundings. These experiences shaped her commitment to advancing the rights of women and disadvantaged girls. The organisation promotes the rights of women and marginalised groups through rights-based interventions.

Photo: Adam Dickens.

Pasumai Ulagam

Empowering women in the informal recycling sector.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Erode, Tamil Nadu	2026–2028	€80,986	Value chains, Entrepreneurship

Pasumai Ulagam's project supports women working in the informal recycling sector. Many of these women collect and sort waste daily under hazardous conditions and without social security. They are affected by poverty, social exclusion, exploitation, and insecure incomes. At the same time, they make a vital contribution to recycling and reducing environmental pollution.

Over a three-year period, 200 women will be organised and together they will establish a cooperative. The goal is to sustainably improve their economic situation and enable them to gain greater social recognition and participation. Through the cooperative, the women will gain access to fairer market prices, joint marketing, and better working conditions. Doing so, they local recycling centers are being established, and partnerships are being forged with businesses, recycling companies, and municipalities. This aims to reduce their dependence on middlemen.

Furthermore, all participants receive protective clothing and access to regular health check-ups and nutritional counseling. The women's families also benefit from hygiene and health campaigns. More than 150 children from the families receive school supplies, tutoring, and support to prevent them from dropping out of school. Through awareness campaigns and shared decision-making structures, societal preju dices against female waste pickers are reduced, and women are integrated into local decision-making processes.

The Foundation finances training, protective materials, recycling equipment, health measures and specialist personnel for the implementation of the project.

Women in the informal recycling sector in India are among the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups. Many work without a fixed income, social secuity, or health protection. Women are particularly affected by discrimination, inadequate healthcare, and lack of access to education. At the same time, they make a vital contribution to waste sorting and recycling in rapidly growing cities.

Pasumai Ulagam was founded in 2000 by social activists in Tamil Nadu. The organisation works with marginalised women, youth, and children in urban areas and rural regions. Its work focuses on women's empowerment, education, vocational training, environmental protection, and community development. Pasumai has supported Ulagam for many years. Ulagam particularly helps disadvantaged women to build sustainable income opportunities and strengthen their social participation.

The participants of the Indian RWDT project Thameyanthiri (right) and Maheswari (left) prepare the finished ropes for transport and sale by carefully winding them up.

RWDT

Self-employment with coconut fiber products.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Salem, Tamil Nadu	2026–2029	€140,328	Education, Entrepreneurship, Supply Chains

RWDT's (Rural Women Development Trust) project builds on the results of the first project phase (2022–2025) and expands support for women from the Arunthathiyar Dalit community in Salem district, Tamil Nadu. During the first phase, 180 women received training in coconut fibre production and support in developing their own economic prospects. A women's cooperative was established to strengthen joint production, marketing, and savings. Around 250 children from participating families gained access to evening learning centres with tutoring and nutritional supplements.

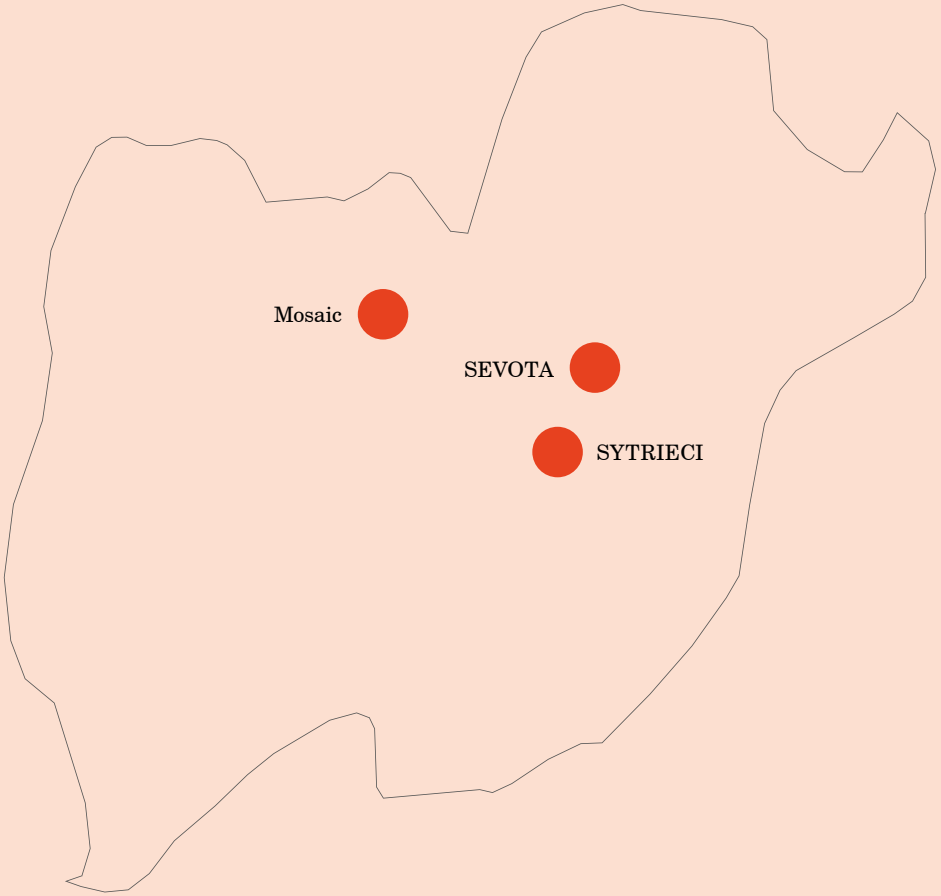
In the second project phase, an additional 240 women will receive vocational training in the processing of coconut fibre products as well as support in establishing local production units and income-generating activities. The existing cooperative will be strengthened to enable collective production, build financial reserves, and improve long-term market access.

A further focus is on adolescents and young women from participating families. Around 360 young women will receive training in tailoring and garment production. In addition, a small production unit for environmentally friendly jute products will be established to create sustainable local employment.

Educational support will also be expanded. Around 300 children from project families will attend evening learning centres to strengthen academic performance and prevent school dropouts. Nutritional supplementation will continue as part of the programme.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation finances training, machinery, production materials, and specialist personnel for implementing the second project phase. The Arunthathiyar Dalit community is among the most marginalised groups in India. Due to caste-based discrimination, its members were restricted for generations to degrading forms of labour, including waste collection and other low-status work. Many women continue to face exploitation, discrimination, and extreme poverty. Literacy rates remain low, educational opportunities are limited, and structural violence persists.

RWDT was founded by former victims of forced labour and violence, the organisation is particularly committed to marginalised Dalit women in Tamil Nadu who were exploited in quarries, brick kilns, and agriculture. In cooperation with district authorities, RWDT protects women from renewed exploitation and supports pathways to sustainable self-employment.



Rwanda

Number of projects:
3

Country budget:
€348,029

Project regions:
Bugesera, Kamonyi, Muhanga, Rwamagana, Rubavu.

Rwanda – often called the "land of a thousand hills" – has undergone remarkable development in recent decades. Despite the deep wounds of the 1994 genocide and the on going marginalisation of indigenous groups such as the Batwa , the country is consistently pursuing an agenda of social change.

The political participation of women plays a key role: Rwanda is the first country with a female majority in parliament, with 64% of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies held by women (www.parliament.gov.rw, June 2026). At the same time, more than half of electricity generation now comes from renewable sources (Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority, Q2/2024). However, challenges such as income inequality and social exclusion persist – in 2023, the Gini index was at 39.4 (World Bank Data). The Gini index measures the distribution of income in a society: The higher the value, the greater the inequality.

Since 2017, we have been cooperating with civil society actors in Rwanda. We support initiatives in the areas of education, advocacy, local value creation, and access to financial services.

Claudine Abagirayera is a participant in the Mosaic project. In the photo, she displays cultivated oyster mushrooms, which are consumed and sold by the project participants. Photo: Jean Bizimana

Mosaic Rwanda

Promoting Vertical Mushroom Cultivation and Processing in Rwanda.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Bugesera, Eastern Province	2025–2028	€137,374	Value chains, Education

Due to the success of the pilot project, the Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation has extended the funding of Mosaic for another three years. In this second phase, oyster mushroom cultivation will be professionalised and expanded.

Because of high market demand, 480 additional people will be trained in the vertical cultivation of oyster mushrooms to be able to grow them independently. In addition, 87 young adults will receive sales training and small cooling karts, enabling them to sell the mushrooms fresher for longer and more easily. The second phase of the project aims to modernise Mosaic Rwanda's cultivation centre and add a laboratory for cultivating mushroom spawn, thus enabling the entire value chain to be handled locally. Furthermore, the production and packaging of mushroom powder will be added.

Local farmers indirectly benefit from the project, as Mosaic Rwanda purchases agricultural waste from them, which they then use for the mushroom substrate. Furthermore, a portion of the mushroom harvest is given to vulnerable people to reduce malnutrition.

Bugesera is one of the most disadvantaged regions in Rwanda. Many families suffer from high unemployment, food insecurity, and malnutrition. Widows, orphans, and unemployed youth are particularly affected. Additional challenges are droughts, poor soil, limited access to education, and a lack of start-up capital. Gender-based violence and a lack of start-up capital make it particularly difficult for women and young people to pursue their own economic activities or build a business.

Mosaic's project addresses these challenges in a practical way: It combines food production, income generation, and social integration.

Mosaic Rwanda is a non-profit organisation based in the Bugesera District of Rwanda's Eastern Province. The organisation focuses on education, poverty reduction, environmental protection, and the prevention of gender-based violence.

At its own workshop and training centre in Nyamata, Mosaic Rwanda combines traditional knowledge with modern technology —for example, in agriculture, renewable energy, and small-scale production. Previous projects have included literacy programmes, reforestation, and energy-efficient lava kilns. As a member of civil society networks, Mosaic Rwanda contributes to sustainable community development beyond Bugesera.

SEVOTA supports the youth in rural areas to learn a profession and enables them to start a career. Young women chose often nail design as their vocational training. Photo: Jean Bizimana.

SEVOTA

Strengthening youth – opportunities through economic participation.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Kamonyi District	2023–2026	€90,300	Access to Finance, Education

SEVOTA's three-year project strengthens the economic independence of young people by specifically promoting entrepreneurial and technical skills. The focus is on modern agriculture, crafts, and basic business management. The project aims to offer young people prospects for a stable income, to professionalize their products, and to improve their access to markets.

The project combines vocational training, peace education, and conflict management with the provision of seed capital and the promotion of access to financial institutions. Over three years, 27 youth clubs have partnered with SEVOTA, benefiting a total of 1,026 young people. They acquire practical skills in hairdressing, construction, baking, welding, tailoring, and embroidery, as well as knowledge in business management, marketing, and cooperative building . After the first year, the number of participants is increased annually to achieve a growing impact.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation covers the costs of personnel and further training to ensure long-term impact.

Despite economic progress, youth unemployment remains a major challenge in Rwanda – particularly for survivors of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi. In a nationwide survey conducted by SEVOTA, encompassing 48% of youth clubs across 30 districts, 16.7% of young people reported being unemployed. The majority were engaged in low-paying jobs, such as livestock farming, agriculture, or informal crafts.

The average income was less than US$50 per month, too little for financial independence or entrepreneurial development. To counteract this situation, SEVOTA focuses on building high-performing youth cooperatives in sectors with long-term growth potential – such as tailoring, hairdressing, construction, agriculture, and small businesses.

SEVOTA (Solidarity) pour l'Epanouissement des Veuves et des Orphelins SEVOTA (Visant le Travail et l'Autopromotion – Working and Self-Employment) was founded in 1994 by social worker and genocide survivor Godelieve Mukasarasi. Originating from supporting genocide survivors, its work today focuses on disadvantaged youth, women who have experienced violence, and orphaned families. SEVOTA supports 125 groups with 1,778 families in eleven districts of Rwanda. Its key areas of focus are trauma recovery, peacebuilding, and economic participation. Through 62 youth clubs with nearly 1,900 participants, the organisation strengthens engagement, resilience, and self-reliance – for sustainable prospects in regions marked by violence.

Each member of a saving group receives a small booklet in which the amounts saved, borrowed, or repaid are carefully recorded. Photo: Jean Bizimana

SYTRIECI

Better living conditions for street vendors.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Muhanga, Rubavu, Rwamagana	2025–2028	€120,355	Acces to Finance, Education, Advocacy

During the first funding phase (2022–2025), SYTRIECI (Syndicat des Travailleurs Domestiques et Indépendants de l'Économie Informelle) supported women in Kigali's informal sector. As the organisation's network extends beyond the capital, the second project phase will support 1,350 street vendors in three districts across northern, southern, and western Rwanda.

Over three years, 45 Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs), each comprising 30 members, will be established. Participants will receive training in entrepreneurship and labour rights, covering business planning, marketing, financial management, customer relations, value chains, labour law, negotiation skills, and national regulations. Six federations will emerge from these groups and receive seed funding to expand entrepreneurial opportunities. Solidarity-based lending mechanisms will facilitate access to loans.

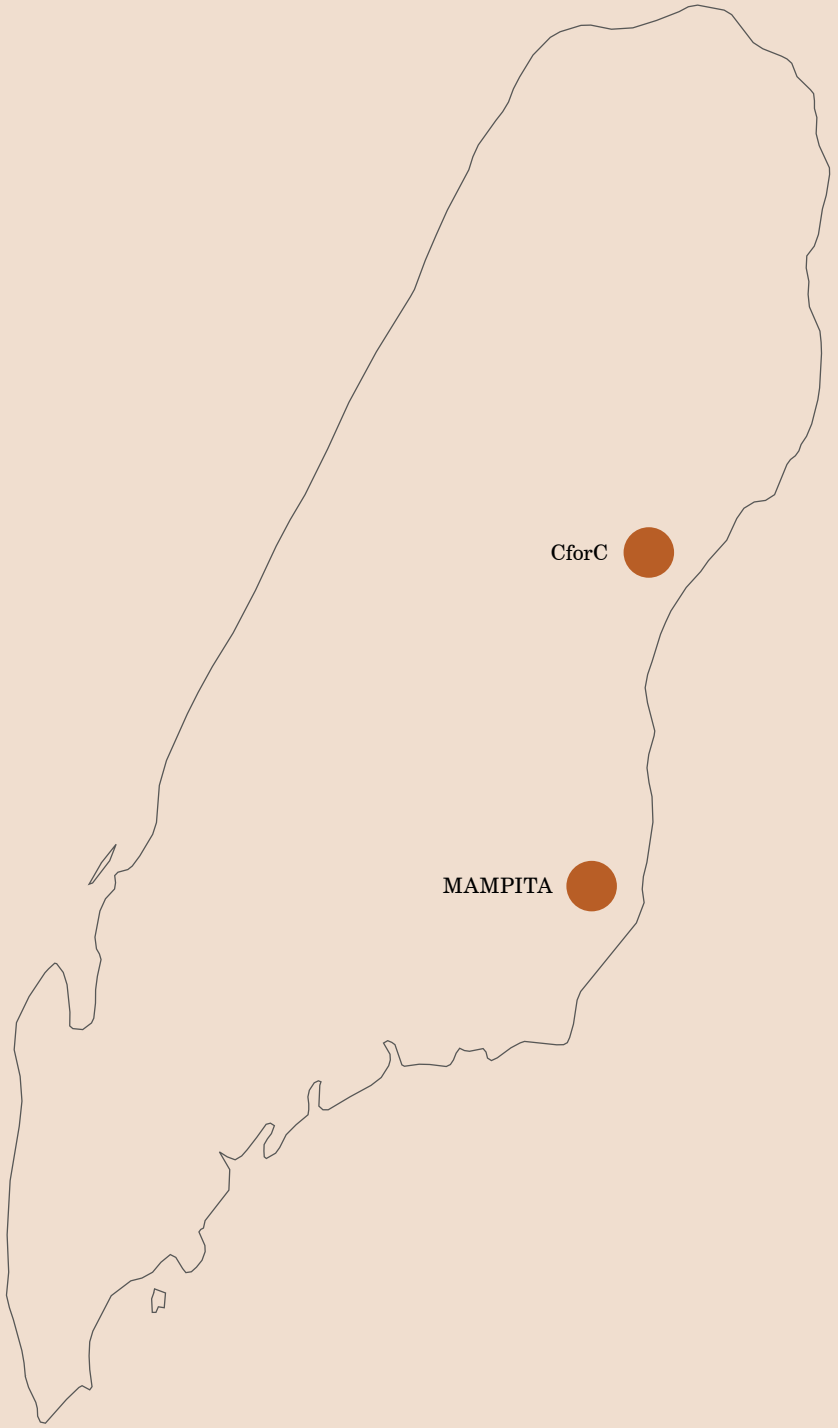
Beyond economic empowerment, the project addresses social and political dimensions. Women, especially mothers, will be supported in developing entrepreneurial activities, while local authorities will be engaged to improve working conditions for informal workers.

Since the 1994 genocide, Rwanda has made significant progress in infrastructure, security, and economic development. Nevertheless, many still depend on informal work. In urban areas, this is linked to unemployment resulting from rural-to-urban migration; in rural regions, limited access to arable land forces many households to seek alternative income sources through small-scale trade.

Street vending outside designated markets is prohibited in Rwanda, leaving many vendors criminalised despite having few alternatives. As a result, they work under precarious conditions without social protection or access to financial services. Targeted support is therefore essential to secure sustainable incomes and enable legal economic participation.

SYTRIECI is a Kigali-based trade union founded in 2014 by Jeannette Nyiramasengesho. The organisation represents 6,872 workers, 85% of whom are women, including street vendors, tailors, domestic workers, and waste pickers.

Its key approaches include savings groups and cooperatives that facilitate collective savings and access to microloans, as well as training in trade practices and organisational development. Through these efforts, SYTRIECI strengthens workers' rights, promotes entrepreneurial growth, and has contributed to job creation, labour-law improvements, and increased access to loans.



Madagascar

Number of projects:
2

Country budget:
€149,688

Project regions:
Menabe, Boeny, Sofia, Betsiboka

Madagascar lies off the east coast of Africa and, with over 587,000 km², is the world's second-largest island nation. The country is one of the world's most important regions for biodiversity – numerous animal and plant species, including lemurs, are found nowhere else. At the same time, the island's unique ecosystems are among the most threatened worldwide.

Despite its natural wealth, Madagascar faces significant social, economic, and environmental challenges.

In 2022, 75% of the population in Madagascar lived below the national poverty line (World Bank), while approximately 42% of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition (UNICEF, 2021). Particularly in rural areas, many people depend on subsistence farming and are therefore heavily reliant on stable climatic conditions. Limited access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities further exacerbates existing social inequalities.

The consequences of climate change are increasingly exacerbating the situation. Recurring droughts, floods, and cyclones threaten the food security of many families, destroy agricultural yields, and impair the economic stability of entire regions. At the same time, deforestation, soil erosion, and the loss of natural habitats are leading to an increasing threat to the country's biodiversity.

Against this backdrop, local organisations and initiatives are committed to strengthening rural communities and ensuring the long-term protection of natural resources. The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supports local projects that specifically support women, small-scale farmers, and families in rural areas to sustainably strengthen their economic and social opportunities.

Remandine A. Leona participates in agricultural training implemented by CforC's agronomist. She learned how to use the drop by drop irrigation to make her cultivation more resilient to climate change and droughts. Photo: Rafaliarijaona Ravo Nantenaina.

CforC

Strengthening female farmers in rural Menabe.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Menabe	2023–2026	€63,165	Value Chains, Access to Finance, Education

Since 2021, the NGO CforC has been operating a demonstration farm in the Menabe region of western Madagascar, where women learn new agricultural methods through hands-on experience. The program is aimed at female farmers who want to increase their yields and thus ensure their families' food security through improved seeds, tree nurseries, orchards, and organic composting.

Around half of the participants are already implementing what they've learned on their own fields. The farm provides ongoing technical support to adapt methods to local conditions. Currently, over 300 women in another village are participating. In addition, the participants are establishing village savings groups, that give them access to microloans and enable investments in farms, households, or small businesses. The program content is developed in close collaboration with the women themselves: focus groups in the villages ensure that training and services meet the actual needs on the ground. The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supports the project by funding personnel costs, materials, and administration, thus enabling the farm's continued operation.

Menabe region is one of the poorest in Madagascar – over 90% of the population lives below the poverty line. Agriculture ensures survival, but remains largely subsistence farming with low yields. Women perform the majority of the fieldwork, but are severely disadvantaged in terms of market access, knowledge, finances, and participation in decision-making. Many also suffer from social pressure and economic dependence. Therefore, CforC is specifically committed to supporting the women of the region, aiming to improve their economic participation and independence.

CforC (Capacity Building for Communities) was founded in 2004 by 30 Madagascan artisans to give women access to international markets and fair trade conditions through joint economic activity. It soon became clear that poverty, domestic violence and gender inequality were profound obstacles to the development of women. Today, CforC is a nationwide NGO that fights for women's rights, economic independence and social participation through workshops, gender awareness, agricultural projects and advocacy work.

Juliette Raharinantenaina sells charcoal. She applied for a microcredit at the Mampita agency in Maevatanana to diversify her sales and thereby increase her income. Photo: Rakotondrasoa Jean Charles

Mampita

Microfinance and health solutions for communities in Madagascar.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Boeny, Sofia, Betsiboka	2024–2027	€86,523	Access to Finance, Education

In the Boeny, Sofia, and Betsiboka regions, many families rely on small-scale farming or informal activities. Limited access to capital makes it difficult to invest in income-generating opportunities. Mampita addresses these challenges through a three-pronged approach: microloans provide financial flexibility, training programs build skills in accounting, management, and marketing, and health insurance improves access to medical care.

The organisation offers financial products tailored to local realities. Local branches identify suitable borrowers, support the application process, and provide personalised advice. This close guidance helps ensure loans are used effectively and contribute to sustainable livelihoods. Participation in the health insurance system also improves families' healthcare security. The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation funds key project components, including personnel, equipment, and operating costs, enabling expansion into new regions.

In Madagascar, around 80% of the population lives below the poverty line. Subsistence farming, child poverty—almost half of all children suffer from chronic malnutrition—and the impacts of climate change, including droughts, cyclones, and floods, shape daily life. In this context, microfinance, education, and social protection are essential tools for reducing poverty.

Many rural families have limited access to banks, insurance, and healthcare. According to the international health network P4H, only 8% of the population had health insurance in 2019. As a result, illnesses, crop failures, and other unexpected expenses can quickly push households into financial hardship. At the same time, limited savings and restricted access to formal credit make long-term investments difficult. The project therefore combines financial services, education, and health insurance to reduce economic risks and strengthen long-term stability.

Mampita was founded in 2008 on the initiative of the French NGO Inter Aide. Its name roughly translates as "creating connections." The organisation aims to sustainably improve the economic and health conditions of poor families in Madagascar. Today, Mampita operates in several regions and develops programmes tailored to local needs. Through microloans, health insurance, and training, it promotes personal responsibility, social protection, and long-term economic stability.

South Africa

Number of projects:
3

Country budget:
€432,099

Project regions:
Capetown, Amathole District, Hamburg, Western and Eastern Cape, Mitchell's Plain.

South Africa is a country of extraordinary cultural diversity and historical complexity, shaped by profound social upheavals and a dynamic present. South African society is still marked by the legacy of apartheid. According to the Gini-Index, a statistical measure of inequality, South Africa is the country with the highest level of income inequality in the world.

The consequences are growing discontent and social tensions within the population.

A large proportion of the population often has little access to education of an adequate standard, and with youth unemployment exceeding 60%, the country faces serious structural problems: many young people are inadequately trained for various professional roles, and access to the formal labour market is difficult. Energy shortages present the country with further challenges. Nevertheless, South Africa is one of Africa's largest economies and the only African member of the G20.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supports projects in the Western and Eastern Cape in South Africa that are specifically designed to provide young people, young adults and women with prospects for the future and enable them to generate an income

A Masifunde project participant has built his own professional future and opened his own small shop.
Photo: Tobela Pemba

Masifunde

Empowering young women at the kasiConomy Hub.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Walmer Township, Gqeberha	2025–2027	€150,000	Access to Finance, Value Chains, Education

Within the first project phase between 2018-2020, the Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supported Masifunde's coffee shop project myMito. After they established a new programme, they successfully applied again for funding.

The kasiConomy Hub was founded in 2024 by Masifunde to support young people – especially women – in the Walmer Township (Gqeberha) in setting up their own businesses. The focus lies on crafts, fashion, jewelry and event management. The centre serves as both a start-up centre and training facility, creating prospects for financial independence and strengthening local economic growth.

Each year, 80 school leavers receive practical vocational training that teaches both technical and social skills. In addition, 10 female entrepreneurs per year are accepted into a 12- to 24-month program that promotes their entrepreneurial skills with mentoring, training and networking.

Products can be sold directly in the affiliated shop – 100% of the proceeds go to the producers. The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supports the project by financing personnel, materials, operating costs and training courses.

Townships like Walmer are economically highly marginalised. Women in particular are affected by poverty due to gender inequality and youth unemployment (over 60%) and mostly work in the informal sector. The kasiConomy Hub addresses this and offers practical alternatives for independence and participation. In the long term, the model is to be implemented in other townships.

Masifunde started in 2009 with a simple vision: to make lasting change possible in underserved communities. Over the years, a small initiative has evolved into the Change Maker Hub – a vibrant network that offers preschool and after-school learning, vocational pathways, and, since 2024, the kasiConomy Hub. Through these programmes, Masifunde strives to link education with empowerment and build economic resilience for generations to come.

Esther Ramanantsialonina (left) and Sidikat Olajuwon (right) working on the design of the “Dream Wall”, an inspiring and interactive space where they can visually represent their short-term goals as entrepreneurs. Photo: SOZO

SOZO

Training and Employment for Youth in Vrygrond (Cape Town).

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Vrygrond, Western Cape	2025–2028	€150,000	Education, Entrepreneurship

The “Fuel the Future” training center combines skills development, employment, and entrepreneurship. At its heart is the Fuel the Future Coffee House, a café that serves as both a learning environment and as a workplace. Here, young people gain practical experience in gastronomy, customer service, operations, and event organisation. The program is complemented by job shadowing, mentoring, and training courses that lead to permanent positions, such as baristas, bakers , or program coordinators. Furthermore, a business marketplace provides young entrepreneurs with access to sales, equipment rental, and networking opportunities. Events and subscription services ensure the program’s financial stability.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supports the project with funding for operating costs, personnel, and apprenticeships, thus contributing to the creation of sustainable employment.

Over 60% of young people in South Africa are unemployed. A lack of school qualifications, unequal educational opportunities, and social exclusion often lead to poverty and a lack of prospects. Government programs have limited effectiveness – local and practical solutions are needed. This is precisely where the Sozo Foundation Trust’s “Fuel the Future” comes in: through a model that closely links training with real job opportunities and thus creating sustainable opportunities.

SOZO was founded in 2011 in Vrygrond (Cape Town). What began as a tutoring initiative has evolved into a holistic education and employment program. Today, the NGO operates a self-sustaining community ecosystem in which young people are not only trained but also actively involved as mentors and trainers. With this approach, SOZO creates long-term impact, mutual responsibility, and greater economic stability for entire communities.

Different seedlings are being grown in the greenhouse for sale. Photo: U-Turn

U-Turn

Living Roots: Rehabilitation opportunities for homeless people through gardening.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Cape Town	2023–2026	€132,099	Access to Finance, Value Chains, Education

Living Roots is a social enterprise by U-Turn that combines social inclusion and environmental protection. Homeless and formerly homeless people are provided with jobs and practical skills – from gardening and landscaping to organic compost production.

At its core is the "Life-Change Journey," a four-phase rehabilitation program that guides participants from initial activities to permanent employment. Beyond its therapeutic impact, the project makes a direct contribution to restoring urban nature. With the support of Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation, Living Roots empowers up to 486 people annually to lead self-determined lives – while simultaneously contributing to the preservation of Cape Town's biodiversity.

Cape Town's expansion has displaced many habitats, endangered local plant and animal species and weakened the city's climate resilience. At the same time, the number of homeless people is growing – a consequence of poverty, unemployment, and a lack of social safety nets.

Living Roots responds with an integrated approach that combines social rehabilitation and environmental protection, thus achieving a dual impact.

U-Turn was founded in 1997 to help homeless people transition from dependence on social services to independent living. At the heart of its work is the conviction that every person has potential and deserves the chance to develop it. The organisation's core program is the structured "Life-Change Journey," which guides participants through four phases – from initial emergency support and alcohol withdrawal to skills development, long-term employment, and stable housing. This model has proven to be an effective way to permanently lift people out of homelessness and strengthen their independence.

Germany

Number of projects:
1

Country budget:
€50,000

Project regions:
Central Mediterranean

Germany is one of the most populous countries in Europe and a founding member of the European Union (EU). As the EU's largest economy, Germany not only engages in active trade with other EU countries but is also a key trading partner for countries worldwide. Global trade ties and German history, particularly its colonial past, not only influence the current situation of countries in the Global South but also establish a historical responsibility that should be acknowledged.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation has primarily supported projects in the Global South. However, increasing global inequalities are forcing people to seek new opportunities outside their countries of origin. Around 117.3 million people worldwide were forced to flee their homes in 2025. Of these, approximately 67.8 million were internally displaced persons, forced to flee within their own countries. The vast majority of those fleeing and migrating who find refuge outside their homeland are located in countries of the Global South. Only a small proportion of people flee or migrate to industrialized nations like Germany. The reasons why people leave their homes are diverse and often closely intertwined. War, violence, persecution, and poverty are some of the factors that are closely linked to global inequalities and contribute to displacement.

At a time when more people than ever are forced to flee, while political and social discourse in Germany and worldwide is becoming increasingly inhumane, we consider it all the more important to support organisations in Germany that advocate for refugees and successful integration. We currently support one German organisation dedicated to rescuing people in distress at sea in the central Mediterranean. In the future, we would like to support additional organisations working in this field.

For over ten years, Sea-Watch has been rescuing people fleeing distress at sea in the Mediterranean. What began as a small volunteer initiative is today a civilian fleet of ships and aircraft. Their mission stands for a clear goal: No human being must die in search of safety. Photo: Clara Marnette.

Sea-Watch e.V.

Civil sea rescue in the Central Mediterranean.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Central Mediterranean	2025–2026	€50,000	Sea Rescue

Sea -Watch e. V. has a vision of a world in which borders, racism, injustice and inequality are overcome and all people can live and move about in a self-determined, free and safe manner.

The organisation has therefore been working for more than ten years to rescue people fleeing persecution in the central Mediterranean. In addition to its sea rescue vessels, it operates several aerial reconnaissance aircraft to report emergencies to rescue coordination centers and ships in the vicinity, as well as to document human rights violations.

Lemonaid & ChariTea eV contributes to financing the provision of medical supplies, warm clothing, and blankets to the rescued people on board. Furthermore, the funds help to continue vital aerial reconnaissance missions – to save more lives and document human rights violations.

Due to a lack of safe routes and the increasingly repressive border control policies of the European Union, thousands of people die every year attempting to cross the Mediterranean. More than 34,000 people have already lost their lives on this journey (IOM, 02/2026) – and the actual number is likely to be significantly higher. While state authorities remain inactive, civil society organisations are taking on the vital task of preventing people from drowning and raising awareness about the injustices in the central Mediterranean.

Sea-Watch e.V. was founded in 2014 to save refugees from drowning. The organisation emerged from a group of volunteers who could no longer stand idly by while people died in the Mediterranean, a politically calculated practice. In the more than ten years since its founding, the initiative's ships have participated in the rescue of approximately 50,000 people. In addition to rescue operations at sea , Sea-Watch e.V. operates several aerial reconnaissance aircraft.

Mexico

Number of projects:
4

Country budget:
€567,249

Project regions:
Chiapas, Yucatán, State of Mexico

Mexico is located in southern North America and, with over 130 million inhabitants, is one of the most populous countries in Latin America. Despite economic development and declining poverty rates, Mexico faces a number of social challenges that affect large segments of the population. Although poverty has decreased slightly in recent years – from 41.9 % in 2018 to 36.3 Despite a decline in the number of people living in poverty (PW) in 2022 (CONEVAL, 2023), social inequality remains a central problem. Indigenous communities, who make up about one-fifth of the population (INEGI, 2020), are particularly affected and often have limited access to education, healthcare, and political participation.

Among the most pressing challenges are: Economic inequality: Income disparities between urban and rural areas, as well as between different population groups, remain significant. Organised crime, gender-based violence, and structural impunity impact the daily lives of many people—especially women, young people, and marginalised groups. Rural areas often lack adequate healthcare, infrastructure, and educational opportunities. These structural problems disproportionately affect already disadvantaged populations and exacerbate existing social inequalities. Since 2015, the Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation has been collaborating with partner organisations in Mexico. We support initiatives that promote skills development, economic empowerment, and sustainable growth along local value chains. Currently, we support four projects that specifically target women, youth, indigenous communities, and disadvantaged groups.

Don Adalberto, from the community of El Campito in Chiapas, has been able to increase his cocoa harvest and income by participating in the DERMAC program. Photo: Claudia Wondratschke

DERMAC

Sustainable cocoa farming in the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Chiapas	2025–2028	€149,503	Education, Value Chains

In Chiapas, DERMAC aims to sustainably improve the livelihoods of 200 small-scale farmers in the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve by strengthening sustainable cocoa cultivation and establishing a regional cooperative. The project combines ecological responsibility with economic independence through training in sustainable farming methods, organisational development, quality management, cooperative structures, cocoa processing and marketing, post-harvest infrastructure, and the promotion of women's participation throughout the value chain.

During the first project phase (2022–2025), improved cultivation methods reduced fungal diseases in cocoa plants by 60%. The current phase focuses on technical assistance, efficient harvest management, access to higher-value markets, and the development of processing and logistics facilities. These measures improve product quality while creating economic opportunities, particularly for women and young people in remote rural areas.

In the Soconusco region, cocoa and coffee are among the most important crops economically, socially, and ecologically. However, climate change, soil erosion, plant diseases, and limited market access increasingly threaten the livelihoods of cocoa-growing families.

As a result, many farmers have turned to less sustainable income sources such as extensive livestock farming, sugarcane, or oil palm cultivation, with negative consequences for biodiversity and soil health. At the same time, many young people are leaving agriculture because they see few prospects in cocoa farming. The project addresses these challenges by demonstrating how sustainable cocoa production can be strengthened and locally integrated.

DERMAC is a non-profit organisation based in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico, with many years of experience in biodiverse regions such as Oaxaca and Chiapas. The organisation develops participatory environmental projects that bring together communities, academia, government, and civil society to create sustainable solutions.

Its work focuses on protecting terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, strengthening rural livelihoods for marginalised populations, and planning and implementing nature-based development models. Through its interdisciplinary team, DERMAC supports communities in developing ecologically and economically viable projects that protect ecosystems while improving local living conditions.

A project participant from the community of Mahas in Yucatán, Mexico, harvests pumpkins in his field using a machete. Photo: Philipp Stengelin

HST

Pumpkin seeds and Chawa chili: Local added value for Mayan communities in Yucatán.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Yucatán	2023–2026	€149,058	Value Chains, Education

Hombre Sobre la Tierra AC (HST) supports Maya families in eastern Yucatán and advocates for fair wages and sustainable livelihoods. The goal of this project is to expand participation in fair-priced marketing. Thirteen Maya families are already active in the Slow Food Network, and 15 more are expected to join. A total of 53 families will focus on the production of chawa chilies and indigenous pumpkin seeds. To support these efforts, a new storage and processing center is being built, enabling the families to produce these commercial products independently.

Funding from the Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation will be used to purchase a pumpkin seed shelling machine and a chawa chile roaster, significantly reducing the labor and time required for manual tasks. The funds will also cover personnel costs and provide training on the proper use of the equipment.

In many parts of Yucatán, Maya communities lack access to stable markets. Products like chilies or pumpkin seeds often have to be sold at low prices due to a lack of infrastructure, processing technology, or trading partners.

The situation improved noticeably after joining the Slow Food International Network in 2016: local processing opportunities increased the income of some families by up to 200%.
However, the COVID-19 pandemic hit these successes hard – sales opportunities collapsed, and many families were forced to sell far below value again. Through collaboration with the association, the necessary structures are being created to resume the production and distribution of pumpkin seeds and chili peppers.

Hombre Sobre la Tierra AC (HST) has been working with Mayan communities in Yucatán for over 30 years. The team of Mayan-speaking professionals focuses on food sovereignty, sustainable agriculture, and cultural identity. Their goal is to empower marginalised families to build a self-determined future.

Trained chef Amaranda Becerra Puerto teaches participants how to cook various habanero chilli sauces (salsas) in a workshop initiated by INSADE in Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico. Photo: Philipp Stengelin

INSADE

Entrepreneurial self-employment for women on probation.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Yucatán, State of Mexico	2023–2026	€123,185	Education, Value Chains

"Hecho en Libertad" supports women who have been incarcerated or are on probation in building self-determined lives. The goal is to overcome stigma, poverty, and recidivism through entrepreneurial self-employment and the strengthening of personal initiative.

Around 100 women participate annually in practical training programs. They learn how to produce handmade products such as cosmetics, baked goods, hot sauces, and jewelry from recycled glass. The program also provides business skills to help them implement their own business ideas, generate income, and build financial stability. Following a successful initial phase (2020-22), the project is now being expanded: Indigenous women in Yucatán and the State of Mexico will also benefit from the programs in the future. The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supports the project by funding training, material costs, and fees for specialists and coordination.

Women in Mexico face massive obstacles after being released from prison: stigmatization, discrimination, and a lack of job opportunities make it difficult for them to start over. Many are left without prospects – which often leads to recidivism. " Hecho en Libertad" addresses this very issue with a holistic approach that strengthens self-confidence, builds economic skills, and fosters community.

The organisation Interculturalidad, Salud y Derechos A.C. (INSADE) supports people affected by violence or incarceration. Through participatory methods, creative educational formats, and close collaboration with local partners, INSADE creates pathways to social reintegration. The organisation stands for inclusion, dignity, and the conviction that everyone deserves a second chance – regardless of origin or life story.

Participants in the Ko'ox Taani project in Espita, Yucatán, hold a meeting of their savings group.
Photo: Philipp Stengelin.

KO'OX TAANI

Poverty reduction for women and their families in Yucatán, Mexico.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Yucatán	2023–2026	€148,515	Access to Finance, Education

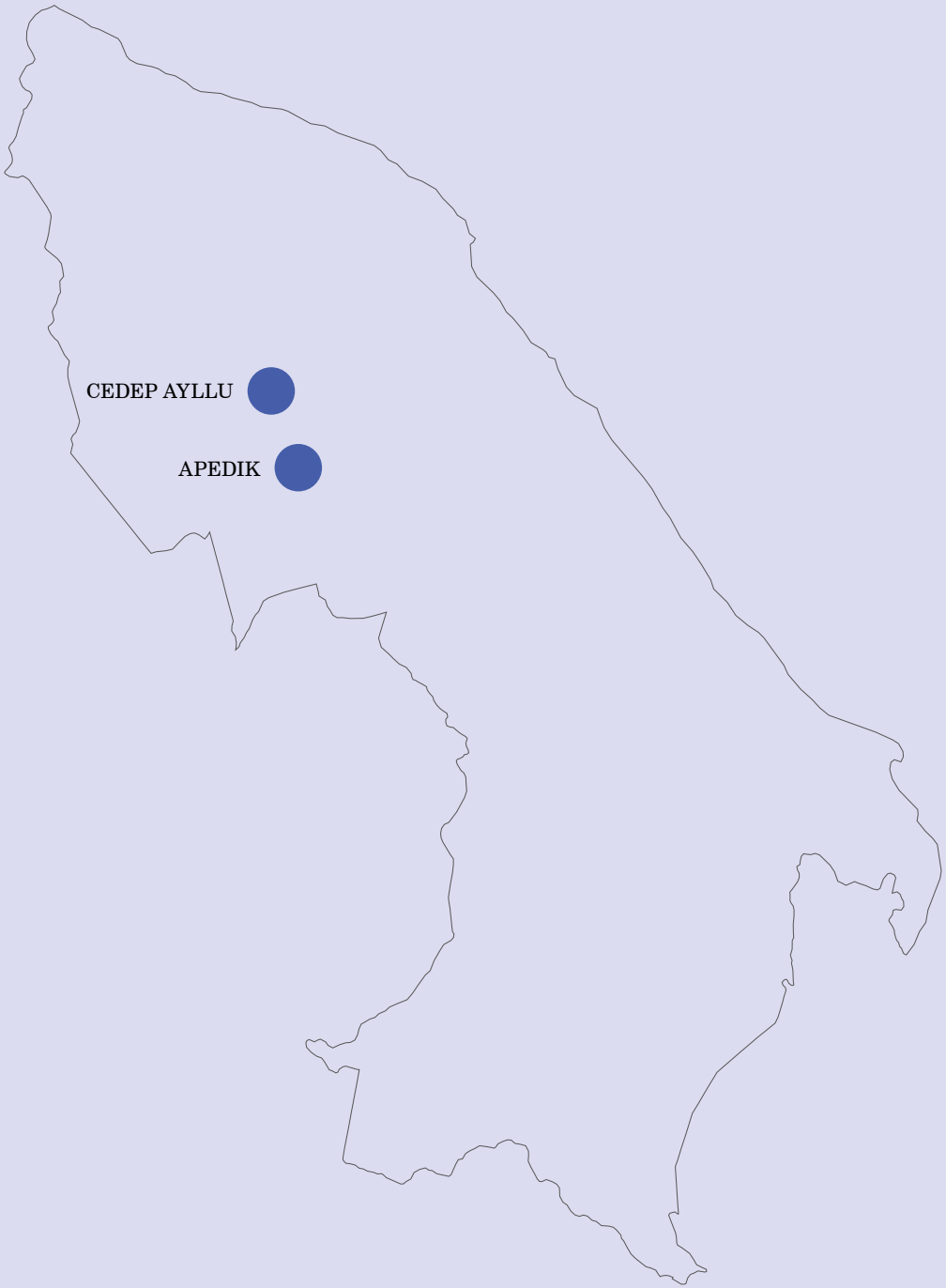
The project aims to sustainably improve the lives of 100 indigenous Maya women and their families in eastern Yucatán. The economic situation of many households has been severely impacted by the pandemic, climate change, and structural poverty. The initiative focuses on building climate-resilient structures and creating long-term income sources by connecting to local and regional value chains and establishing savings groups. The organisation Ko'ox Taani pursues a holistic approach tailored to the families' needs. This includes: training and the establishment of savings groups, promoting agroecological and biodiverse food production, food security measures, socio-educational programs, and various income-generating projects for families.

The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation contributes to the financing of workshops, material costs, and administrative structures – including the salaries of Ko'ox Taani's local staff.

Yucatán, a state in southeastern Mexico, is characterized by significant social and economic inequalities. The gap between men's and women's employment opportunities is substantial. Women, in particular, often have limited access to paid work, which significantly impacts the poverty rate. In 2022, 38.8% of Yucatán's population lives below the poverty line. Nationally, this figure was around 45% in 2021 of the population affected by multidimensional poverty – 75 % of them were of indigenous origin. Although the economy has shown signs of recovery since the COVID-19 pandemic, social inclusion remains a challenge for many marginalised groups.

Ko'ox Taani was founded in Yucatán in 2015 to offer new opportunities to families living in extreme poverty. Its focus is on empowering indigenous women, with the goal of promoting their financial independence and social participation.

Ko'ox Taani operates according to the Graduation Approach: an integrative model that guides families step by step in overcoming extreme poverty and building a more stable income. The organisation is firmly rooted in the region and operates as a civil society initiative for sustainable development on the Yucatán Peninsula.



Peru

Number of projects:	*Country budget:*	*Project regions:*
2	€255,109	Cusco, Antilla

Approximately 60% of Peru's land area is covered by Amazon rainforest, making it one of the most biodiverse countries in the world. Peru possesses vast natural resources and is the world's second-largest copper producer after Chile (Statista, 2022). According to the Minority Rights Group (2023), around 25.7% of the population identifies as indigenous. Many live in rural areas, speak Quechua or Aymara, and practice small-scale agriculture—often under precarious conditions and with limited access to clean water, education, and healthcare.

In addition, there is informal and sometimes illegal mining, which leads to massive environmental destruction in many regions: Contaminated water and declining soil quality endanger both ecosystems and the livelihoods of many families.

In Peru, the effects of poverty, exclusion, and structural inequality disproportionately affect women and indigenous communities, regardless of whether they live in remote or urban areas. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these inequalities: informal employment relationships collapsed, and gender-based violence increased. Many women, especially mothers, have limited access to education, healthcare, and safe employment. At the same time, small-scale farmers often lack infrastructure, market access, and political representation. The projects of our partner organisations address these challenges: they provide practical training, create new income opportunities, and promote local self-organisation—with the goal of bringing about lasting structural change.

Since 2022, Lemonaid & ChariTea e.V. has been cooperating with civil society organisations in Peru. The projects focus on education, organic farming, and the empowerment of marginalised population groups, especially indigenous communities and women.

Elena Cóndori Quespe, a member of a saving group supported by Apedik of the municipality of Chahuaytire, in Pisac, Cusco, weaves textiles that are later sold at local and regional markets. Photo: Eleazar Cuadros.

APEDIK

Mujer Emprende: Empowering Women Through Skills and Entrepreneurship.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Cusco	2025–2028	€115,109	Value Chains, Education

In the second phase of "Mujer Emprende," the organisation APEDIK supports 200 women living in precarious conditions. The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation supported APEDIK previously in a first phase of the project between 2022-2025.

The aim of the second phase is to strengthen their economic independence and create long-term opportunities for them and their families. The women acquire practical skills in business management, financial planning, and vocational trades such as tailoring, baking, and handicrafts. In addition to professional skills, the project also focuses on self-esteem, health, and emotional resilience. Core components of the project include workshops and training sessions for new business ideas and existing small enterprises. Start-up capital is partially provided, and access to microcredit is facilitated to support the women in establishing small businesses.

Another important aspect is the creation of self-help groups and participation in various networks to improve market opportunities and increase visibility. In addition, APEDIK organises sales fairs and promotes local partnerships.

Lemonaid & ChariTea eV provides support through the financing of specialist staff, program implementation and material costs.

Peru has been in a political and economic crisis since 2022. Particularly in Cusco, the pandemic, recession and decline in tourism have hit women and their small businesses hard. Many bear sole responsibility for their families – often without social security and burdened by domestic violence. Phase 2 of the project addresses precisely this point: Women are empowered to develop their potential, achieve financial independence, and become visible as active shapers in family and society.

Since 1993, the organisation APEDIK has been committed to the social and economic empowerment of women in Cusco. Originally starting with microloans, APEDIK now pursues a holistic approach encompassing education, entrepreneurial support, and community development.

Thanks to guidance from Cedep Ayllu staff, Hildaura Estrada Prudencio has been able to significantly increase their crop yields over the past three years. Photo: Eleazar Cuadros

CEDEP AYLLU

Sustainable economic Inclusion for farmer communities in the High Andeans.

Project region:	*Project duration:*	*Project budget:*	*Focus areas:*
Antilla, Curahuasi District	2026–2029	€140,000	Value Chains, Education

Between 2022-2025 the Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation financed a first project phase of Cedep Ayllu.

The second project phase builds on the successes of the first and strengthens the economic and ecological development of rural communities through sustainable agriculture and improved marketing opportunities. The focus is on expanding agroecological production, improving irrigation infrastructure, diversifying crops, and strengthening local community structures.

A total of 898 people will benefit from technical advice, training, and community-based approaches that promote climate-resilient farming methods and improve income and food security. Key measures include the installation of modern irrigation systems, soil remediation, and reforestation. The second phase expands on the existing approach by establishing mushroom production modules and cultivating new income-generating crops such as garlic, oregano, and granadilla.

Furthermore, the project supports families with post-harvest processes, brand development, and market access placing a stronger focus on long-term economic stability, marketing, and climate-friendly agriculture.

In southern Peru, many indigenous communities in the agricultural sector are among the country's most structurally disadvantaged regions. Unequal power relations, land concentration, and political exclusion hinder equitable participation. A lack of infrastructure, corruption, and short-sighted economic policies mean that rural interests are systematically ignored. Women, in particular, bear a heavy burden: they perform key tasks in production and household management but have few rights to land or water. Despite their contribution to food security, they face severe economic disadvantages and are frequently victims of violence. Empowering them is a crucial lever for sustainable development.

Since 1983, the organisation CEDEP Ayllu has been working to support indigenous communities in the Cusco region of southern Peru. Its work focuses on promoting agroecological farming methods, empowering rural communities, and protecting Andean ecosystems. The organisation also advocates for collective rights and strengthens social, political, and economic processes that create sustainable long-term prospects for communities.

Annotations and Abbreviations

Annotations

Poverty — Since poverty affects many different areas of life and cannot be measured only in terms of a person's monthly income, other indicators must also be included in order to define poverty accurately. The concept of multidimensional poverty therefore includes other areas such as education, health and people's standard of living.

In order to be able to measure multidimensional poverty, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) introduced the multidimensional poverty index in 2010. (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2023).

Saving groups — Such groups support people who don't have access to financial services to save money and learn key financial skills. They are a form of micro-finance involving small groups of 15 to 25 members that have well-defined procedures, allowing members to make basic rules about saving and borrowing and operating in transparent and democratic ways. This leads to a secure system that encourages responsible use of the savings, borrowing and social insurance services offered by the group. Saving groups are the first step to financial inclusion as they provide a mechanism to save money while building financial knowledge and skills.

Twa — The Twa (plural: Batwa) are an Indigenous ethnic group dispersed across several countries in the African Great Lakes region, including Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Rwanda, they are estimated to constitute ca 1% of the population. Historically, the Twa lived in and relied on forests for their livelihood as hunter-gatherers. Over time, expanding agriculture and pastoralism, accompanied by deforestation, as well as the establishment of protected areas and national parks, led to the loss of much of their livelihood. As a result, many Twa communities continue to experience social and economic marginalisation (Minority Rights Group).

Abbreviations

NGO — Non-Governmental Organisation

Global North / Global South — see: www.britannica.com/topic/Global-North-and-Global-Sout

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