

# ONE ACTION

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EMPOWERING CHANGEMAKERS



ANNUAL REPORT

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2019





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# EDITORIAL

*Dear readers,*

*Once again, OneAction has had a prosperous year, both at headquarters and in the field. Project by project, our association continues to grow and expand its impact thanks to the wonderful people who form our action community.*

*One of the highlights of 2019 was the launch of Banyan Alliance and its delicious chocolate! Beyond the new financial income stream it represents for OneAction, this brand offers an innovative, transparent business model that verifies a 'fair price' for all players in the value chain. Other noteworthy events of the year included developments in our ambitious reforestation project and the valuable support obtained, assuring a bright future for our mobile reforestation units in the field. Village by village, these will enable the people most affected by climate change to cultivate their land again. In India, OneAction has also begun the construction of a new school to facilitate access to education, and in Geneva, the famous Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Montero returned to the Victoria Hall for another memorable event.*

*In an increasingly complex global context, all these initiatives are paving the way for OneAction. In view of climate change and the multiple identity crises that our societies are going through, we are redoubling our efforts to show the relevance, efficiency and necessity of the projects we implement, forging more and more partnerships with other key players in the field. This approach illustrates our desire to spread a sense of purpose, mutual aid and optimism in a world that is looking for a new direction. Join us in this promising momentum geared towards action, towards others and the earth!*

**Jan Isler, Founder and Director**





## ONEACTION AT A GLANCE

OneAction works with individuals, communities and organizations looking to contribute towards a more sustainable world. By sharing its expertise and experience, OneAction amplifies the impact of its partners and strengthens their capacity to act. We accompany these actors on the journey to self-sufficiency and sustainable change.

To accomplish its mission, OneAction, in collaboration with its partners, develops projects with strong social and environmental impacts, while providing self-financing mechanisms that guarantee sustainability. OneAction primarily focuses on education, training, sustainable agriculture, reforestation, renewable energy and social entrepreneurship. Our current efforts are concentrated in Switzerland, South America, Asia and Africa, in regions where we benefit from a well-established network of contacts and an excellent knowledge of the socio-cultural, political and environmental context.



# OUR PROJECTS

## Holistic education in Quito, Ecuador

OneAction has been working since 2012 with the Institute of Research, Education and Public Promotion of Ecuador (INEPE). The Institute's school welcomes 700 pupils ranging from infants to young adults, most of whom come from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Internationally recognized, its holistic educational model is based on intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic and creative development. The students are actively involved in the learning process, and traditional subjects are supplemented by a wide variety of activities ranging from sustainable agriculture and reforestation to tai chi, meditation, yoga and music.

With the aim of helping INEPE become more autonomous and showcase its educational model, OneAction supports the Institute in two main areas: the development of its infrastructure and the promotion of its pedagogy. Since 2012, OneAction has funded the construction of an agronomy shack, a composter, greenhouses, water reservoirs and terraces dedicated to the production of Andean crops, as well as a new refectory, a professional kitchen and additional music rooms. To promote INEPE's model, OneAction is working towards the development of an e-learning platform to train Ecuadorian teachers from the private and public



sectors. This platform, hosted by the Polytechnic School of Quito, offers 10 different courses. The platform has welcomed 461 students in 2019 and has trained more than 2'500 people since its inception in 2012.

In parallel, INEPE launched in September the pilot phase of its state-recognized vocational training institute: the country's first university of popular education.

This university is expected to officially open its doors in 2020, with the aim of responding to the country's lack of training institutions. INEPE will offer 4 diplomas based on its 30 years of experience in the field: agroecology, early childhood and primary education, and music.

These courses will give participants direct access to a university master's degree and will further complement INEPE's exceptional pedagogical offer. This initiative will also provide a new and important source of funding to ensure the sustainability of the Institute's many activities.



## A novel reforestation model, India, Kenya & Haiti

In 2019, OneAction worked towards the consolidation of its innovative global reforestation project that delivers highly effective carbon sequestration and soil regeneration outcomes. Our goal is to reverse the accelerating, vicious cycle of land degradation in arid regions and to build climate-resilient communities.

To do so, OneAction is collaborating with the international NGO Sadhana Forest. For the past 15 years, Sadhana Forest, established in Tamil Nadu, India, has been successfully contributing to reforesting degraded land and installing water conservation systems through the transmission of sustainable agriculture techniques. Our project aims to implement, at scale, a novel reforestation model, based on Sadhana Forest's proven techniques

and the latest scientific research carried out by the Faculty of Geosciences and Environment of the University of Lausanne. It includes the study of indigenous, oxalogenic tree species, which contribute exceptionally to soil regeneration and carbon sequestration.

Our initial aim is to plant 150,000 trees in three regions facing drought-related challenges: Tamil Nadu in India, the Department of Sud-Est in Haiti, and Samburu County







in Kenya, where Sadhana Forest manages existing operational bases. From these centres, we will create mobile reforestation units, i.e. trucks filled with thousands of treelets, that will travel within the three regions, village by village, to train the most vulnerable communities in sustainable reforestation and irrigation techniques, enabling them to plant indigenous oxalogenic species which are drought-resistant and food-producing (fruit, nuts or leaves), on their own land.

This project will contribute to increased land fertility, laying the foundations for sustainable agriculture, whilst improving food security and preventing environmental migration. We wish to replicate this project in other regions, identify additional, effective, oxalogenic species and disseminate our results to the public.

Our main focus in 2019 has been on fundraising. We have secured a number of multi-year partnerships and raised a quarter of the total budget. We have also conducted research on the project's carbon sequestration potential in order to measure as accurately as possible, the impact of our reforestation model in our efforts to limit the effects of climate change.

## **A sustainable solution to plastic waste in the Amazon, Leticia, Colombia**

Following the success of the ‘boat-cycle’ initiative –a boat powered by two cyclists as part of an ecotourism project– led by its partner Hábitat Sur, OneAction wished to pursue a collaboration in the form of a larger project. In light of the 70 tonnes of waste generated daily and dumped in open-air landfills in Leticia, the main city in the Colombian Amazon, OneAction aims to provide a sustainable solution for the treatment of plastic waste.

Our project consists in building a solar-powered, non-profit plant that turns plastic waste into ‘plastic wood’ as a construction material. ‘Plastic wood’ has many advantages: it is stronger than wood, more resistant to heat, rot and pests, while remaining affordable.

The plant represents an effective means of preserving local ecosystems: it controls toxic contamination and curbs deforestation practices caused by the expansion of open plastic dumps and the use of noble wood for construction. In addition, this project alleviates the region’s housing crisis and provides a sustainable and stable source of income to recyclers, one of Leticia’s most vulnerable communities.





The project also includes awareness campaigns targeting families, schools and businesses, encouraging them to collect all the plastic they generate in a bottle, which is later used as an ‘eco-brick’. This process aims to raise awareness on the amount of waste produced, particularly plastic waste, and to empower communities to drive improved recycling practices. The ‘eco-bricks’ will regularly be collected by the plant’s staff, before being processed and sold to local distributors and building companies. Finally, this project provides our partner H  bitat Sur with the means to move towards self-sufficiency, enabling the expansion of its social, cultural and environmental projects in support of Amazonian communities.

In 2019, our team mainly worked on deepening its understanding of the technology needed to transform plastic waste into ‘plastic wood’, on the potential for replicability and scale, and on ways to involve local communities. In addition, we identified partnership opportunities that will be further explored in 2020.





### **Access to education in Bodh Gaya, Bihar, India**

Since 2012, OneAction has been supporting Gyan Niketan, a school dedicated to broadening the educational opportunities and improving the well-being of more than 300 children from the most disadvantaged castes. In this eighth year of collaboration, OneAction has contributed to the school's operation and infrastructure development, while continuing its efforts to fight malnutrition with the *One Meal a Day* programme, which provides a balanced and nutritious meal every day to all students.

In parallel, to enable Gyan Niketan to reduce its dependency on donations, OneAction has worked to create a new fee-based elementary school to provide quality English-language education to local youth at prices much more affordable than those currently available in the rural region of Bodh Gaya. Thanks to the support obtained, the construction of the school,



named Gyan International School, started in February 2019 on a plot of land of nearly 1'600 m<sup>2</sup>.

This new school will expand the future prospects of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds by improving their level of education and English language skills, whilst its operations will cover most of the costs of the free Gyan Niketan school. The school will eventually accommodate 350 children between the ages of 3 and 14, who will attend two years of kindergarten and 8 years of primary school. In addition to the classical curriculum, the school will offer personal development workshops as well as extra-curricular activities such as yoga and meditation.

According to our projections, by its third year of operation, the school is expected to generate enough revenue to cover both its operating costs and those of our *One Meal a Day* programme at Gyan Niketan School. The school is due to open its doors for kindergarten students and the first five grades of primary school at the start of the school year in April 2020.





### **Banyan Alliance, Ecuador & Switzerland**

The year 2019 marked the launch of Banyan Alliance, a chocolate brand with two fundamental goals: firstly, to ensure the sustainability of OneAction's activities by donating a percentage of its turnover to the association, and secondly, to showcase a business model that responds to the many challenges and imbalances observed in the cocoa industry. The latter is regularly pointed out because of its lack of transparency, child labour, the precariousness of farmers and its environmental impact.

To address these issues, Banyan Alliance is promoting a new business model, at once holistic, inclusive, sustainable and circular. This model is based on two fundamental aspects.

On the one hand, Banyan Alliance only works with a high quality, environmentally friendly product: it exclusively selects *Nacional* cocoa beans, with low yield but exceptional taste properties; the chocolate and all its ingredients are certified organic; the cocoa comes from agroforestry crops; the chocolate bars are made entirely in the country of cocoa production so a large part of the added value is maintained there; and the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions generated by the production and transport of the chocolate are offset through OneAction's reforestation projects.

On the other hand, Banyan Alliance aims, in the most objective way possible, to reach a 'fair price', not only for the farmers, but for all actors along the value chain. Thanks to the label of our partner Equal Profit, Banyan Alliance makes sure that the margins of each actor taking part in the project are proportional to their respective production costs. In addition, the calculation of remuneration is based on national indicators such as the minimum living wage, and not on market prices. In this way, we hope to rebalance the value chain by objectively weighting the efforts of each player, thus enhancing the value of agriculture and making it a more attractive and sustainable livelihood option.

Following the launch of the brand in September, Banyan Alliance's first half-tonne production was quickly sold in the form of bars and neapolitans, delighting Geneva's audience and heralding an exciting adventure.

Since then, Banyan Alliance has been working with its chocolate maker on seven new varieties with Andean flavours, which will be released in the course of the year 2020.



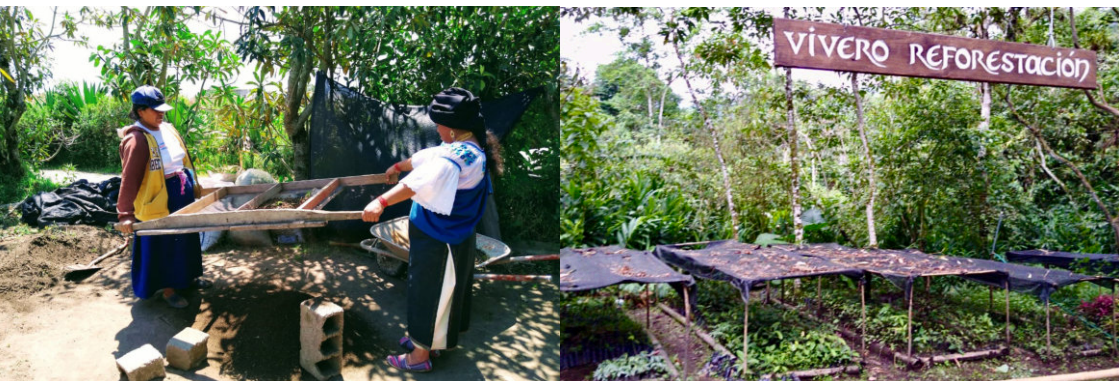




## Reforestation Northern Ecuador

To combat and prevent the catastrophic effects of deforestation and unsustainable agriculture in northern Ecuador, such as desertification and soil decay, OneAction has been reforesting and restoring abandoned farmland since 2012 with CanopyCo, an Ecuadorian organization. In 2019, CanopyCo planted more than 5,430 native trees on community lands, mainly in Morochos, and in a reserve in the vicinity of Mindo, where a new tree nursery was funded.

During the year, OneAction continued to offer individuals and businesses the opportunity to plant trees, helping to protect biodiversity, restore groundwater and create jobs for local communities. To participate in the growth of this project, we favour long-term collaborations with companies that have aligned interests. In 2019, we were able to expand our portfolio of companies, allowing the project to scale up significantly for the first time.





## OneAction platform

As part of our platform for personal initiatives, OneAction has been accompanying since 2017 a former student of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in the development of the project *Solèy La Fè Manje*. The initiative, based in Anse-à-Pitres, Haiti, aims to diversify the local economy and strengthen food security through the installation of a solar-powered grain mill that processes the Maya nut.



Thanks to OneAction's support, the money needed to launch the initiative was raised, allowing the construction of the shelter and the installation of the mill. Since the inauguration of the project in early 2019, members have been able to produce their own flour from the fruits of the Maya nut tree. In parallel, our local partner continued to raise knowledge on the use of the mill and the Maya nut's nutritional and economic benefits, and to increase participation in the project. In order to measure the success of the initiative, an impact study will be conducted in July 2020.



avons fait un potager et on a planté des fleurs, fruits et légumes  
 tout les matins on va au potager et on va travailler.



## GreenAction, Switzerland

GreenAction offers schools a project to create educational gardens with various workshops related to the environment and sustainable development, on themes such as recycling, the life cycle of fruits and vegetables, or the construction of nesting boxes and insect hotels. OneAction adapts to the needs of the schools, which decide what aspects of the project they wish to integrate during the year, and provides them with a trained advisor.

Following the success of the workshop during the 2018/2019 school year, we renewed our partnership with the Moser school for a second year. Our project manager was thus able to further develop the vegetable garden with the students and to lead various environmental workshops.

We will continue this collaboration until the end of the school year, and will then evaluate the opportunity to hand over the torch to one of the many associations specialized in environmental education in Geneva.

# EVENTS

## Second edition of the OAKS concert

Once again, OneAction partnered with the NGO Karuna-Shechen, founded by the Buddhist monk Matthieu Ricard, to organize the second edition of the charity concert 'OAKS'.

After the success of the first edition in 2017, the famous Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Montero generously decided to repeat the experience by coming to play free of charge in favour of the two associations. The artist also chose our concert to present, as a world premiere, her brand new Ensemble composed of four young South American musicians.

For her return to Geneva, Gabriela made the Victoria Hall audience waltz between baroque and Caribbean swing. Named 'ReInventions', the concert paid tribute to Bach. Gabriela first performed the Suite No. 5 in G major, then some adaptations of the great composer such as Busoni's Chaconne before unveiling some of her own compositions. Offering a subtle combination of Bach's transcendental melodies and the liveliness of Venezuelan rhythms, Gabriela took us on a journey through time and space during a memorable and successful evening.



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(Our accounts are graciously audited by the company Grant Thornton Spiess SA.)

OPERATING STATEMENT (CHF)	2019	2018
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Earmarked revenues	372,301.97	400,524.50
<i>Projects in Africa</i>	89,242.30	0.00
<i>Projects in Asia</i>	169,665.52	224,890.90
<i>Projects in South America</i>	32,277.70	154,310.40
<i>Projects in other geographical areas</i>	81,116.45	21,323.20
Non-earmarked revenues	235,986.36	174,598.95
<i>Membership fees</i>	180.00	240.00
<i>Donations</i>	170,337.60	149,245.95
<i>Self-financing projects</i>	65,468.76	25,113.00
TOTAL	<b>608,288.33</b>	<b>575,123.45</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Expenses related to projects	(436,633.36)	(415,335.65)
<i>Projects in Africa</i>	(1,053.85)	(0.00)
<i>Projects in South America</i>	(163,415.35)	(227,266.20)
<i>Projects in other geographical areas</i>	(80,015.00)	(62,133.76)
<i>Self-financing projects</i>	(74,080.16)	(26,219.69)
<i>Wages related to field work</i>	(118,069.00)	(99,716.00)
Expenses related to the headquarters	(155,829.65)	(153,446.65)
<i>Wages</i>	(137,287.60)	(133,068.75)
<i>Operating costs</i>	(18,380.35)	(20,215.25)
<i>Financial costs</i>	(161.70)	(162.65)
TOTAL	<b>(592,463.01)</b>	<b>(568'782.30)</b>
PROFIT	<b>15'825,32</b>	<b>6'341,15</b>



## BALANCE SHEET (CHF)

2019

2018

### ASSETS

Current assets	128,143.74	109,826.92
<i>Current account</i>	68,524.79	108,160.77
<i>Prepaid expenses</i>	3,956.45	1,408.15
<i>Other receivables</i>	55,662.50	258.00
TOTAL	<b>128,143.74</b>	<b>109,826.92</b>

### LIABILITIES

Short-term liabilities	2,551.50	60.00
<i>Other creditors</i>	2,339.15	0.00
<i>Deferred income</i>	60.00	60.00
<i>Accrued liabilities</i>	152.35	0.00
Equity	125,592.24	109,766.92
<i>Retained earnings</i>	109,766.92	103,425.77
<i>Profit</i>	15,825.32	6,341.15
TOTAL	<b>128,143.74</b>	<b>109,826.92</b>

## OUR PARTNERS

Among the actors who supported OneAction in 2019, we would like to thank the foundations Aletheia, Covalence, Drittes Millenium, Mastepe and MKS; the associations CTA and SER; and the companies Banque du Léman, Carrosserie Salvatore Pelleriti, Centre Ayurvédique Purusha, DigiDNA, l'Effet Papillon, Ernst & Young, Expedismart, Grant Thornton Spiess, and les Sœurs Boa. We would also like to thank our volunteers and our loyal partners in the field: CanopyCo and INEPE in Ecuador; Hábitat Sur in Colombia; Sadhana Forest in Haïti, India and Kenya; and Gyan Niketan Charitable Trust en India. Finally, we extend our gratitude to our members and partner schools: Collège Champittet and École Moser.

# ONE ACTION



## ONEACTION ASSOCIATION

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BIC/SWIFT: BCGECHGGXXX

## BECOME A MEMBER

If you wish to become a member of OneAction,  
please address a letter to the Association's  
headquarters or send us an email in which you  
express your desire to join us. Make sure to  
include your postal address.

## PARTICIPATE

You can help OneAction in Switzerland or  
abroad as a volunteer or by submitting your own  
project. More information is available on our  
website: [www.oneaction.ch](http://www.oneaction.ch)