

# ONE ACTION

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EMPOWERING CHANGEMAKERS



ANNUAL REPORT

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2018





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# EDITORIAL

*Dear readers,*

*2018 marked the seventh year of OneAction. This inspiring adventure continues to forge new connections and positive action, forecasting a bright future for our upcoming activities!*

*This year was a particularly pivotal moment, with the development of key new projects. Headlined is our new model of reforestation, in partnership with the University of Lausanne and the Indian NGO Sadhana Forest, which converts drylands into “food forests”. The approach is innovative and the potential immense. In Colombia, we have also put together a project designed to eliminate the scourge of plastic waste in the Amazon, while in Quito, our faithful partner INEPE is embarking on the creation of the first university of popular education in the country. It is also in Ecuador that we have chosen wonderful “Nacional” cocoa beans from the province of Los Ríos to create our first chocolate, and a project that goes far beyond fair trade.*

*OneAction is now entering a new phase of its existence, focusing on impactful projects with high potential for replication and scale. Throughout our operations, synergies are created and learnings are shared, galvanizing our team and empowering our development.*

*Next year promises to be exciting in all respects, and we already invite you to taste this new chocolate that sparks in us so much enthusiasm; a symbol of audacious new ideas that always seem to find a way to materialize at OneAction!*



**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.

In collaboration with our partners, we develop 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 the INEPE become more autonomous and spread 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, 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 the INEPE's model of education, OneAction is working towards the development of an e-learning platform to train Ecuadorian teachers from the private and



public sectors. In 2018, the platform, hosted by the Polytechnic School of Quito, saw the participation of 400 students and the creation of two new courses.

In parallel, OneAction supports the INEPE in the creation of the “country’s first university of popular education”, in the form of a state-recognized vocational training institute. With the aim of responding to the country’s lack of training institutions, the INEPE will offer 4 diplomas based on their 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 enhance the INEPE’s exceptional educational offer while constituting a new financial windfall.

Finally, in the garden, the produce from the greenhouses and Andean terraces has increased. In addition, OneAction funded a project aimed at producing organic fertilizer to further boost the production of vegetables and cereals.







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

In 2018, OneAction worked on designing an innovative global reforestation project that is highly cost- and carbon-effective. The goal is to reverse the accelerating, vicious cycle of land degradation in arid regions and to build climate-resilient communities.

To do this, OneAction collaborates with the international NGO Sadhana Forest. Established in Tamil Nadu, India, Sadhana Forest has been successfully working for several years on the reforestation of degraded lands and the conservation of water through the transmission of sustainable agriculture techniques (the photo above shows Sadhana Forest's work on a land still completely arid only 15 years ago).

Our project aims to implement, at scale, a novel reforestation model, based on the proven techniques of Sadhana Forest 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 has existing operational bases.

We will create mobile reforestation units that will traverse the three regions, village by village, to train the most vulnerable communities in our model of reforestation and irrigation, while allowing them to plant indigenous oxalogenic species which are drought-resistant and food-producing (fruit, nuts or leaves), on their own land.

We hope to make these lands fertile and conducive to sustainable agriculture, to enhance food security and to prevent migration. We then wish to extend this project to other regions, identifying additional, effective, oxalogenic species.



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

Following a very successful experience with our partner Hábitat Sur (see the OneAction platform section below), OneAction wished to take on a new collaborative venture. Leticia, the main Colombian Amazonian city located in the heart of one of the world's most biodiverse regions, generates about 70 tonnes of waste a day, which end up either in open landfills, or in the Amazon River, flowing ultimately into the Atlantic Ocean.

Faced with this devastating problem, we want to provide Leticia and its inhabitants with a sustainable solution for the processing of plastic waste. Our project will result in the building of a solar-powered, non-profit plant that turns plastic waste into “plastic wood” construction material. This material has many advantages: it ensures infrastructure that is stronger and more resistant to heat, rot and pests than wood, while remaining equally affordable.

The plant offers 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”. The aim of this process is to raise awareness of the amount of waste produced, particularly plastic waste, and 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, for our partner *Hábitat Sur*, this project offers the means for self-financing, enabling their expansion of social, cultural and environmental projects in support of Amazonian communities.





## 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 students from the most disadvantaged castes. In this seventh year of collaboration, OneAction has ensured 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 each day to all students.

In addition to the meals, students are made aware of basic hygiene practices and waste management. In February 2018, we also organised a concert in the school with the band "Tritha & Martin", who donate half of the proceeds from the sale of their CDs to this project.



In parallel, to enable Gyan Niketan to reduce its dependence on donations, we are now working to establish a quality and affordable English-medium school.

This new school will expand the future prospects of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds by improving their level of education and English language skills, while also covering most of the costs of the free Gyan Niketan school.

The year 2018 was devoted to the conceptualization of this new project and the identification of the land, which was acquired at the end of the year.

Construction will begin in 2019, and we expect to be able to open the school in April 2020. According to our projections regarding the number of participants, the school should, by its third year of operation, generate enough revenue to cover both its operating costs and those of our *One Meal a Day* programme at Gyan Niketan School.





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

In order to apply the principle of self-sufficiency to itself, OneAction is currently developing a social entrepreneurship project with two main objectives: to prove a successful business model that goes well beyond the usual principles of fair trade, and to cover a substantial part of OneAction's fixed costs. We have been joined in this adventure by two other actors who are equally keen to bring more sustainable business practices to the cocoa sector: members of the CTA (Commodity Trading Alumni) association and a Swiss chocolatier, Marc-André Cartier.

It is in Ecuador that our collaboration found its roots, where chocolate was used for the first time, and where the indigenous variety “Nacional”, a jewel of cocoa, is cultivated. In search of these precious gems, our team left in May 2018 to meet small producers from the Los Ríos Province. Their beans impressed the entire team and were chosen to



produce the first edition of our organic, ethical and sustainable chocolate called Banyan Alliance. This name honours the emblematic tree, a symbol of interconnection, solidarity and unity.

The objectives of this project are ambitious, holistic and manifold: to practice truly 'fair' trade with an innovative remuneration system that equitably rewards each actor, according to its cost of production; to develop the final product as closely as possible to the origin of harvest in order to secure the majority of the added value locally; to strengthen the capacity of small producers by limiting intermediaries; and to ensure greater proximity and transparency between consumers and producers.

The project respects the environment through the practice of agroforestry and draws inspiration from the principles of the circular economy. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions generated by the production of chocolate will be offset through our reforestation projects, and a percentage of the revenues will be donated directly to OneAction. The brand will be launched in September 2019.





## Reforestation Northern Ecuador

To combat and prevent the calamitous 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 2018, CanopyCo planted more than 4,415 native trees on community lands and created a new nursery. 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 enable the growth of this project, we favour long-term collaborations with companies that have aligned interests. In 2018, we entered into a partnership with Expedismart, a parcel-forwarding company offering its customers the opportunity to plant a tree in Ecuador on each shipment. During the first months of collaboration, nearly 130 trees were planted thanks to the participation of the company's customers.



## Alternative sustainable livelihoods in Mondulkiri, Cambodia

OneAction and its local partner Cambodian Rural Development Team (CRDT) successfully completed the third and final year of their project in the Seima protected forest in Mondulkiri. The three-year initiatives were aimed at increasing the food security and self-reliance of local communities, mostly from the Bunong minority, while reducing deforestation in the region.

At the end of the project, we collaborated with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva (IHEID) to carry out a project impact assessment. Three students went to the field to conduct interviews with the beneficiaries and prepare a project evaluation report based on pre-established indicators and a baseline study conducted in 2014. Their analysis identified the strengths and weaknesses of the eight community-based organizations established in the three villages concerned, of the trainings on resource management and sustainable farming methods, of the operation of OneAction's revolving funds for the purpose of developing income-generating activities, and finally, of various environmental preservation activities. This study provided an opportunity to make recommendations to beneficiaries and to CRDT, as well as to other NGOs working in the same sector to improve the long-term impact of the project, and to promote the success of other initiatives responding to similar needs.





## OneAction platform

As part of our personal initiatives platform, OneAction accompanied a former student of IHEID in the development of the project Solèy La Fè Manje. The initiative aims to diversify the local economy and strengthen food security in Anse-à-Pitres, Haiti, through the installation of a solar-powered grain mill that processes the fruits of the Mayan walnut tree, recognized for their nutritional value. The core construction of the mill was completed with the support of OneAction. In the coming months, the solar panels will be installed and the mill's activities, based on a participatory community process, will begin.

In addition, OneAction supports the project of a Swiss woman in connection with the Colombian NGO Hábitat Sur, which has completed the construction of a “bicy-boat”, an embarkation driven by two cyclists.

In addition to creating employment, this social enterprise aims to introduce local youth to the beauty of the Amazonian ecosystem in order to strengthen their connection to the environment. In this way, OneAction hopes to encourage the youth to become their environment's advocates, while helping to keep them away from drug trafficking, which is prevalent in the region.

### **GreenAction, Switzerland**

During the 2017-2018 school year, OneAction implemented the GreenAction programme in two schools in Geneva. In total, our Project Manager has created 8 vegetable gardens, with the participation of 120 students and 8 teachers. Within the École Moderne and Institut Florimont, she has also given various environmental workshops. Students and teachers have been able to learn together, observe nature, help each other and act in key areas of the environment and sustainable development. Particularly, they have planted strawberries, constructed insect and earthworms hotels and founded a Green Team at school.

From the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, the École Moser joined the initiative. Students who chose to participate in GreenAction activities benefited from weekly workshops ranging from building bird feeders to developing waste awareness boards. In spring, students will focus on developing the garden in the school yard.



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(Our accounts are graciously audited by the company

Grant Thornton Spiess SA.)

<b>OPERATING STATEMENT (CHF)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Earmarked revenues	400'524.50	298'825.05
<i>Projects in Asia</i>	154'310.40	12'937.45
<i>Projects in South America</i>	224'890.90	231'005.75
<i>Projects in other geographical areas</i>	21'323.20	54'881.85
Non-earmarked revenues	174'598.95	263'010.81
<i>Membership fees</i>	240.00	900.00
<i>Donations</i>	149'245.95	209'552.69
<i>Self-financing projects</i>	25'113.00	52'558.12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>575'123.45</b>	<b>561'835.86</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Expenses related to projects	(415'335.65)	(339'412.84)
<i>Projects in Asia</i>	(62'133.76)	(29'977.99)
<i>Projects in South America</i>	(227'266.20)	(235'983.02)
<i>Projects in other geographical areas</i>	(26'219.69)	(48'451.83)
<i>Self-financing projects</i>	(0.00)	(0.00)
<i>Wages related to field work</i>	(99'716.00)	(25'000.00)
Expenses related to the headquarters	(153'446.65)	(173'733.21)
<i>Wages</i>	(133'068.75)	(162'767.51)
<i>Operating costs</i>	(20'215.25)	(10'964.50)
<i>Financial costs</i>	(162.65)	(1.20)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(568'782.30)</b>	<b>(513'146.05)</b>
<b>PROFIT</b>	<b>6'341.15</b>	<b>48'689.81</b>



**BALANCE SHEET (CHF)** **2018** **2017**

**ASSETS**

Current assets	109'826.92	107'074.77
<i>Current account</i>	108'160.77	102'891.67
<i>Prepaid expenses</i>	1'408.15	789.00
<i>Other receivables</i>	258.00	3'394.10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>109'826.92</b>	<b>107'074.77</b>

**LIABILITIES**

Short-term liabilities	60.00	3'649.00
<i>Other creditors</i>	0.00	469.00
<i>Deferred income</i>	60.00	3'180.00
Equity	109'766.92	103'425.77
<i>Retained earnings</i>	103'425.77	54'735.96
<i>Profit</i>	6'341.15	48'689.81
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>109'826.92</b>	<b>107'074.77</b>

**OUR PARTNERS**

Among the actors who supported OneAction in 2018, we would like to thank the foundations Covalence, Green Leaves Education, Mastepe, NAK-Humanitas and Institut Robin des Bois; the association SER; the Migros Aid Fund, the companies Baker Tilly Spiess, Banque du Léman, Ecosapin, Expedismart and Quaero Capital; and the commune of Onex. We would also like to thank our volunteers and our loyal partners in the field: INEPE and CanopyCo in Ecuador; Hábitat Sur in Colombia; Sadhana Forest in Haiti, India and Kenya; Gyan Niketan Charitable Trust in India; and CRDT in Cambodia. Finally, we extend our gratitude to our members and our partner schools: Collège de Champittet, École Eden, École Moderne, École Moser and Institut Florimont.

# ONE ACTION



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## 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)