



TRASH HERO

ANNUAL REPORT
2022



A clean world, free from plastic pollution.

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THANK YOU!



“Gaining UNEP accreditation was an immensely proud moment for all our volunteers”

OUR big news of 2022 was our accreditation to UNEP, the United Nations Environment Programme. Coming in March, directly after the announcement of a new Global Treaty on plastics, it could not have been more timely. Trash Hero World is now part of UNEP’s “Major Groups and Stakeholders”. This means we have official observer status at the United Nations Environment Assembly and the ability to submit proposals to the negotiation committee for the plastics treaty, which started its discussions in November.

Gaining the accreditation was an immensely proud moment for all of our volunteers: an achievement that was both an endorsement of their years of hard work, and an opportunity for their voices to be heard on the global stage. It shows how far we have come as a movement over the last nine years - and how far we plan to go. As the treaty negotiations continue, to 2024 and beyond, we are working together with our partners, Break Free From Plastic, to ensure we maximise our potential in this area.

Another boost to morale was the return of in-person family meetings, our 3-day volunteer training sessions, in May and October. The absolute joy and energy of the face-to-face gatherings was a personal highlight for me and I know for a great many others. This good spirit, together with a new, more interactive approach and a focus on zero waste education, undoubtedly strengthened the capacity and commitment of our network.

Some of these meetings were noticeably smaller than those before COVID-19 hit. In recent years, our previously exponential growth has slowed. Overall in 2022 the network shrunk, as we continued to feel the fallout from the pandemic, compounded by the slow recovery and cost of living crisis in many countries. In the end, we feel this was a blessing in disguise: improving the calibre of the remaining ~140 chapters has become the priority, with the focus on our long-term goals of zero waste communities. As a result, our impact numbers remain solid.

We are grateful that our funders - old and new - have been unfailingly supportive throughout the challenges brought by the pandemic and the new economic reality. Trash Hero has evolved a great deal during this time, but the direction remains true to our original spirit and commitment. Our [ethical funding policy](#) is one of the strictest in existence, giving all Trash Hero stakeholders the assurance that our work will never be influenced by those in, or supporting, the plastic industry. This ethical stance provides a strong foundation for our relationships with supporters and partners.

Thanks to these close relations and careful management of funds, we closed the year in a secure financial position. For the first time, we have the certainty of six months of reserves for operational costs. As we enter our tenth year of activity, the connection between local action and global impact has never been stronger. Our passion to create a clean world, free from plastic pollution moves into 2023 with renewed motivation and access to a much bigger stage.



Roman Peter
Managing Director and Co-Founder
Trash Hero World

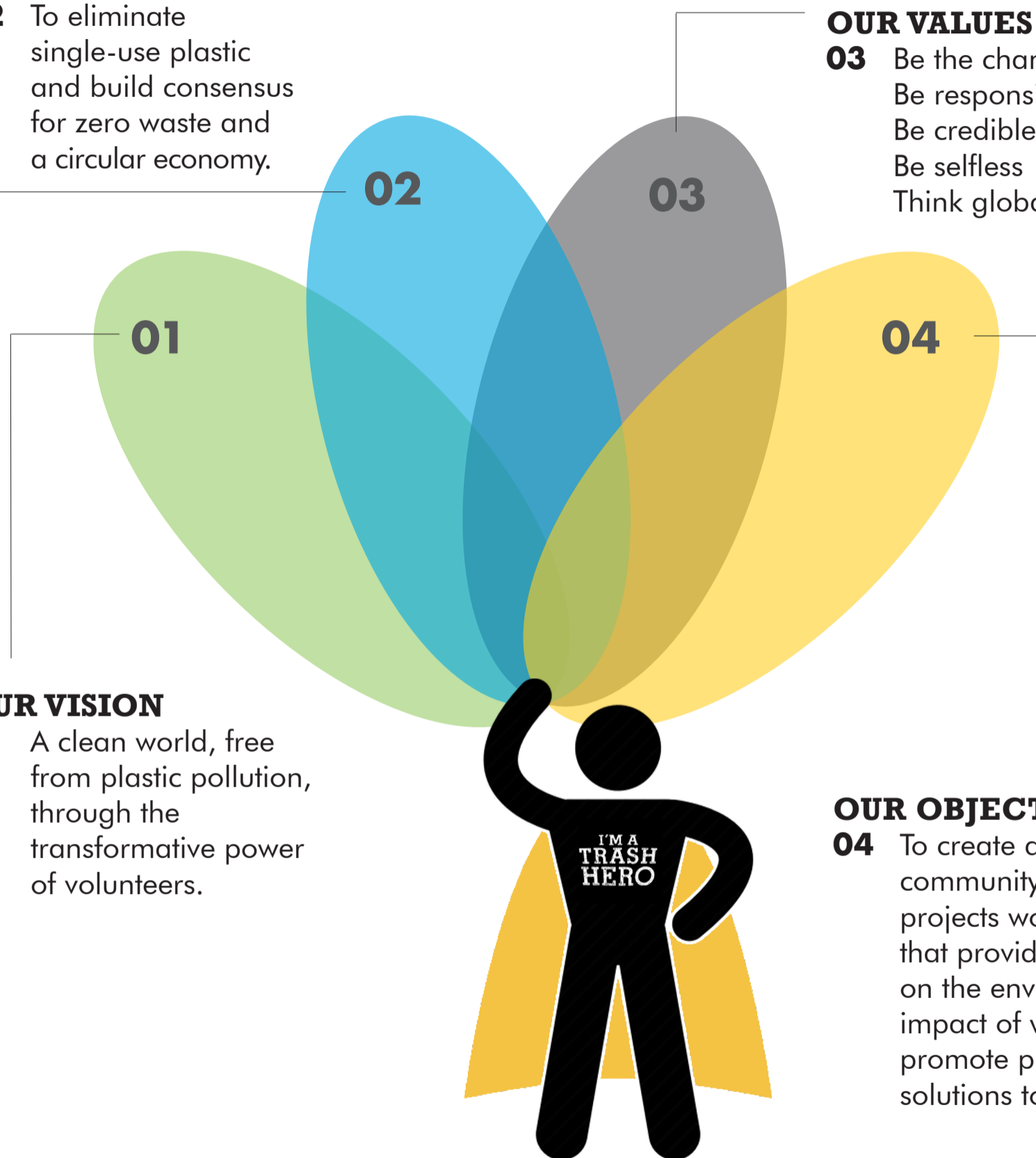
WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

OUR MISSION

02 To eliminate single-use plastic and build consensus for zero waste and a circular economy.

OUR VALUES

03 Be the change
Be responsible
Be credible
Be selfless
Think global, act local



OUR VISION

01 A clean world, free from plastic pollution, through the transformative power of volunteers.

OUR OBJECTIVES

04 To create and support community volunteer projects worldwide that provide education on the environmental impact of waste and promote practical solutions to reduce it.



HOW WE WORK

WE deliver programmes directly in a number of countries, with the majority of work being carried out in Southeast Asia.

Currently we run four core programmes: Action & Awareness, Bottles & Bags, Kids & Education and Trash Hero Communities. More details of these can be found on p.14.

All programmes meet the following criteria:

1. have the potential to create long-term behavioural and systemic change with minimal financial resources
2. are open to and actively encourage participation from all sectors of the community
3. focus on practical action and solutions, rather than campaigning and blaming
4. remain strictly non-political and non-partisan
5. are 'on the ground' and can be run entirely by volunteers

Our programmes are community-based and run by groups of volunteers, called "chapters", that use our name together with their location, e.g. "Trash Hero Da Nang".

A specific criterion that must be met before we set up a new chapter is that we have in place a team of *local* people with the commitment to carry out our programmes in accordance with our values and purposes. A chapter without direct support from residents would not go ahead.

Trash Hero World provides the means for chapters to start running our community engagement programmes, in the form of training, guidance and basic marketing materials (t-shirts, posters etc.). We also provide on-going monitoring and evaluation to ensure that quality standards are met, and coordinate the global network of chapters to leverage resources and increase impact.

We specifically do not finance the running costs of any local chapters as we do not want them to be perceived as a "foreign" entity, nor to encourage leaders to become dependent on external sources of funding. Rather, chapters are coached to seek support from within their community, with strict rules on the type of donation allowed (gifts in kind only, no cash). This builds long-term resilience and increases community trust and engagement.

Trash Hero World is financed through donations, grants of different kinds, and primary purpose earned income. Our [ethical funding policy](#) informs our approach to all such arrangements.

PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

Trash Hero World works for the benefit of the public in general through the:



1) Advancement of environmental improvement and protection

- regularly clearing litter from public spaces (beaches, parks, waterways and streets) through collective voluntary effort
- promoting the separation and correct disposal of household waste
- promoting the reduction of waste in general through behavioural and systemic change
- enabling the reduction of single-use plastic within whole communities through low-cost sustainable alternatives

2) Advancement of community development

- championing voluntary work, in particular collective effort, as a solution to the issues of litter and uncurbed household waste
- providing practical opportunities for people to be trained as community volunteers and participate in voluntary community activities
- promoting good citizenship through meaningful collective action
- creating social cohesion around a common cause and resilience through community-wide networks and initiatives

We are aligned with and committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG) 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 14.



HOW WE WORK: PEOPLE

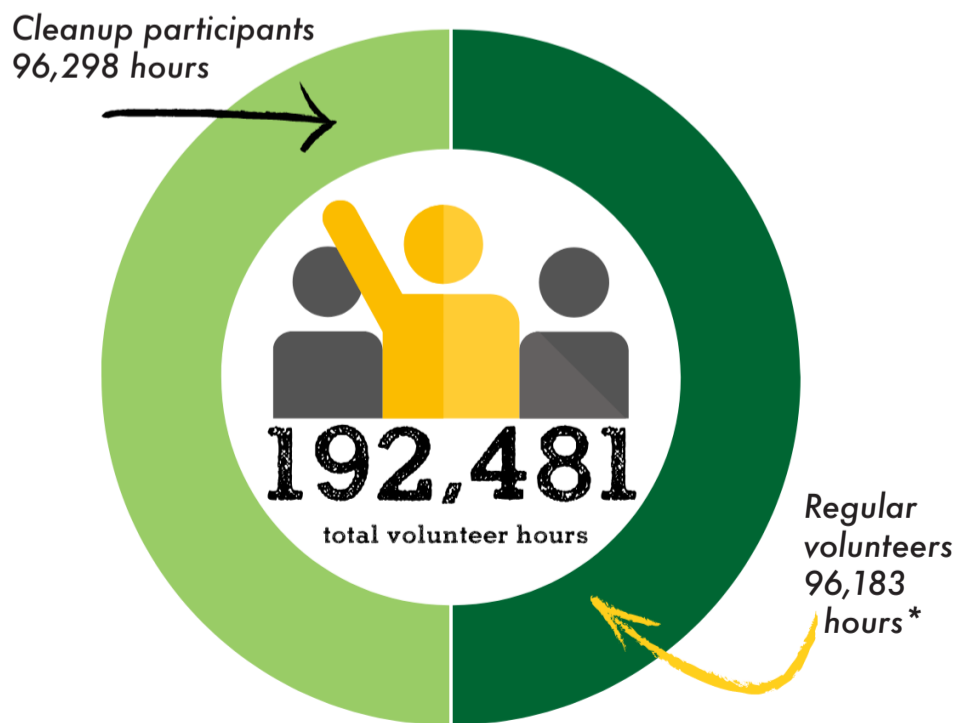


THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS

Trash Hero does not have a separate “volunteer programme”. Volunteers are the very foundation of the organisation: far from being an addition, they are essential to our work. Until mid-2018, we were an all-volunteer organisation. Even as we move towards employing full-time support staff, our volunteers remain irreplaceable. We regard paid and unpaid people equally and they work alongside each other as a matter of routine.

In 2022, around 300 regular volunteers in the global Trash Hero network gave 96,183 hours of their time to support and deliver our programmes. These committed volunteers work on the ground in our chapters, but also behind the scenes: translating, designing, accounting, marketing, managing, fundraising, doing legal work and many other tasks that keep our organisation thriving.

Together, they supported at least 96,298 more volunteer hours, given by people joining our community cleanups. These weekly events and the message they send stay powerful and authentic because they are delivered by local volunteers, who are not motivated by personal gain.



**A contribution equivalent to 56 full-time staff!*



INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

This year, for the first time since 2019, we were able to host in-person gatherings for the volunteers in our major countries of operation. These are known as “Trash Hero Family Meetings,” and they take place once or twice a year. The volunteers network, receive training and support, exchange knowledge and feel inspired to do more.

Their experience and expertise in the local context in turn informs our programmes and the way we work. Most importantly, the volunteers also learn from each other, forming connections and friendships that last far beyond the three days spent together.

In 2022, we held family meetings in Switzerland in March; in Czech Republic in May; in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand in May and October / November; and for the first time ever we held a family meeting for volunteers in Europe and Kuwait in August.

Sibil, the co-leader of Trash Hero Winterthur in Switzerland, expressed the importance of in-person gatherings after a long break. “I personally found my motivation again after the Trash Hero family meeting and [am] looking forward to the next time. I was really demotivated and now, we start again with new power.”

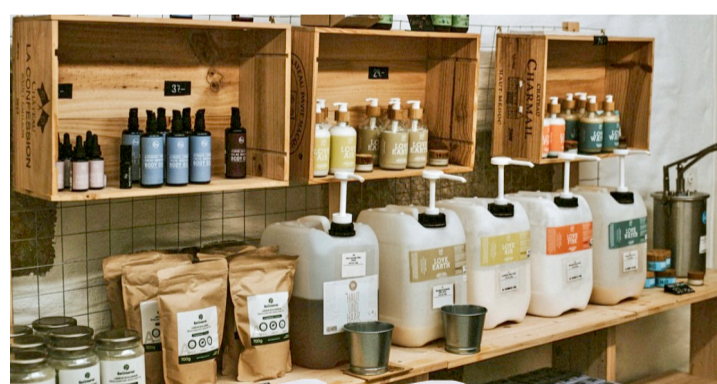
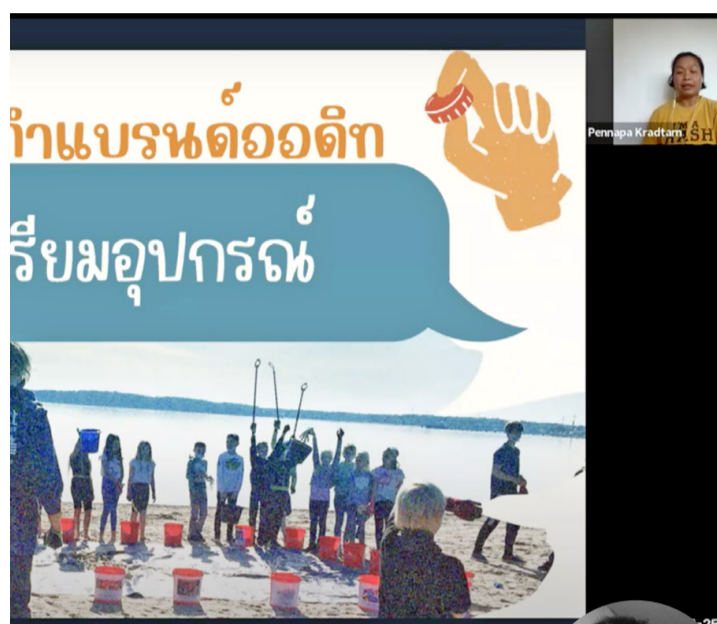
By the end of the year, 321 volunteers based in 9 different countries had taken part in these family meetings, receiving a total of 8,487 hours of training.

Throughout the year, in addition to the family meetings, we held regular online sessions for volunteers, to attend workshops and share news and updates, with an additional 553 hours of training.

In 2022 we welcomed several new volunteers to the global coordination team as well as new members of staff in Indonesia and the UK. The total number of paid positions within the global network stands at six. All posts are currently funded by Trash Hero World.



HOW WE WORK: PARTNERSHIPS



IN 2022, we continued to work closely with Break Free From Plastic (BFFP). BFFP is a global coalition of some 2,800 organisations aiming to stop plastic pollution. Trash Hero World is one of the core members.

For the fourth year in a row, our volunteers provided data for BFFP’s “Branded” report that identifies the world’s biggest corporate plastic polluters (see p. 15 for more on this project). Trash Hero Thailand and Trash Hero Indonesia were also invited to provide local language training videos for the general public, to increase participation. These are available on the Break Free From Plastic website.

Later in the year, we used our new accreditation to the United Nations Environment Programme to sponsor the attendance of core members of BFFP from the Asia-Pacific region at the first round of negotiations for the Global Plastic Treaty in Uruguay. This allowed groups who would not normally have a voice to participate in the November summit.

Our collaboration with The Story of Stuff Project, to produce dubbed versions of their animated short, *The Story of Plastic*, continued with a German language edition. This was done with the help of Dan Do Pombolot, a professional voiceover artist, who offered his services *pro bono*. We promoted the video on social media. In total, the five language versions have introduced the systemic causes of the plastic crisis to 1.3 million people worldwide.

In addition to these strategic partnerships, practical collaborations with non-profit partners such as Making Oceans Plastic Free and Social Impact have allowed us to provide reusable bags and water filters to our chapters and communities in Indonesia and further afield.

We continued working with Schnarwiler AG, the Swiss natural cosmetic company, to establish an alternative delivery system for personal care products. Their “Love Refill” range, which includes shampoo, conditioner, body cleanser and lotion, is 100% natural and comes in recycled glass dispensers that can be washed and refilled in participating shops around the country. Trash Hero provides ongoing advice and guidance to the project and receives a small donation for every refill made.

In 2022, the [refill network](#)¹ expanded to 106 outlets in Switzerland, an increase of 26%. In addition, 19 more hotels replaced single-use toiletries with the Schnarwiler range in their rooms, bringing the total to 30. It is estimated that the scheme has saved around 72,939 plastic bottles (200ml) in total since its start in 2018 (16,045 of them in 2022 alone). More significantly, these figures show the concept of refill has become more established and acceptable, and that refill systems can work as a mainstream solution to reduce waste.

¹ Refill map link: <https://schnarwiler-cosmetics.ch/en/pages/refill-map>

GLOBAL IMPACT REPORT

INTRODUCTION



“Understanding the problem we are trying to solve is fundamental to being a Trash Hero”

IF we don't know what the problem is, then we won't be able to find the right solution. This simple truth informed much of our activity in 2022. It was a year in which we considered the best way to consolidate our programmes and revive chapters emerging from lockdowns. We wanted to create strong foundations and a clear vision of the future.

The first in-person family meetings in Southeast Asia for more than two years were the perfect starting point. We went back to basics, looking together at the why of our mission: why is trash a problem? Who is responsible? And why do we do cleanups? Isn't the problem bigger than picking up litter?

Understanding the answers to these questions is fundamental to being a Trash Hero. This knowledge shapes our attitude and behaviour. It allows us to take the long-term view and to motivate ourselves afresh, week after week. As Rara, a volunteer from Trash Hero Muba in Indonesia, put it, understanding the problem shows us “the importance of building consistency and commitment in doing an action.”

It is also crucial, as we move into a period where much is at stake - the Global Plastics Treaty, the increasing recognition of the role of the plastic industry in climate change - that as a movement we know exactly what we are trying to solve and are on the same page. During the stop-start uncertainties brought by the pandemic, many of us had drifted or lost focus. There were many wonderful aha! moments during those family meetings.

A deep understanding of complex problems is not easy to attain, but it is necessary if we want to develop the kind of impact we are starting to see with our Trash Hero Communities programme. Volunteers are feeling more capable of being involved in local waste management projects and zero waste advocacy. They are more confident of talking about the bigger picture at their cleanups. Their natural sense of hope is now supported with knowledge and linked to action.

‘Defining the problem’ also brought new insights into our bottle programme and inspired us to make several refinements. The refill network was opened to any business offering free water refills, not just those who could sell our bottle, and the sign-up process simplified.

Throughout the year, in many different ways - volunteer training, internal communication and networking - we strengthened the values of the movement and the quality of the programmes, while still finding time for the dance challenges, games and campfire songs that keep us smiling.

On the following pages, we are proud to present the stories and data of 2022 that show our consistent efforts to make the problem of trash visible, understandable and actionable. It is only by being aware of and understanding the problem that we can move together towards the right solutions.



Seema Prabhu
Programme Director
Trash Hero Global Network

2022 NETWORK HIGHLIGHTS



JANUARY

Our “chapter family meeting” project continued into the New Year, with volunteers designing and organising zero waste events for their core team to kick start activities after COVID. With a \$65 budget and some local, in-kind donations, **Trash Hero Candidasa** in Indonesia created a fun-filled event for 36 adults and 26 children, encompassing kids activities, a waste management workshop and a celebration and reflection on their many years of Trash Hero work.



FEBRUARY

Trash Hero Koh Samui received a surprise visit from popular YouTuber, Chris Parker, who runs the channel “Retired Working For You”. He filmed an interview with chapter leader, Brent Jones, as well as donating supplies for their regular cleanup. The resulting video highlighted the plastic crisis on the island and brought our work to a very different audience. Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5dgTGHbUoWw>



MARCH

Trash Hero World gained accreditation to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). *As an organisation*, we will now be able to give input to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), in particular to the negotiations for the new global plastics treaty announced earlier in the month.



MARCH

Swiss chapters were the first in the global network since 2019 to hold an in-person country family meeting. More than 20 volunteers met up in **Solothurn** to share experience and knowledge and - of course - do a cleanup with brand audit! The energy and positive feeling created were a great sign of what was to come in Asia later in the year...



APRIL

Many chapters stopped cleanups this month, during the fasting period of Ramadan. But they were still active: **Trash Hero Langkawi** took groups of kids from the local *kampung* to the food market, planning the trip with reusable bags and containers and showing them how to ask vendors politely not to use single-use plastic for their purchases.



MARCH

WE'RE SO PROUD OF THE HARD WORK THAT MADE THIS HAPPEN!

PROGRAMMES



To celebrate Earth Day, **Trash Hero Indonesia** chapters took part in a month-long project called "Brand Audit for Earth". Together with Zero Waste Alliance Indonesia and YPBB, they collected data related to packaging and sachet waste across eastern Indonesia. Their contribution, from 28 different cleanups, resulted in a report raising awareness about single-use and multi-layer plastic and recommending policies regarding the limitation and prevention of such waste.



On land and underwater: **Trash Hero Beograd's** big summer event involved a double cleanup along the riverside in Belgrade and in the popular Ada Ciganlija lake with a team of divers from a local diving club. Participants were given a talk on waste reduction and prevention and went on to collect 136.5kg of trash.

The event was featured on RTS1 daily news, Serbia's main public broadcaster.



Trash Hero Zug became our eighth active chapter in Switzerland with their first monthly cleanup in the city centre. The rest of the year saw 7 more cleanups, with the participation of 152 people.



In Thailand, **Trash Hero Chumphon** started to log data whenever they used their 2020 Lion's Club donation of reusable cutlery and crockery at their community events. In the six months from June to December, their team catered for 780 people and avoided the use of at least 3,900 disposable plastic or Styrofoam items. The catering set is also loaned to other community groups throughout the year at no cost.

More stories can be found on our blog: trashhero.org/blog



Trash Hero Kuwait was invited to take part in a *Zwara*, a bilingual panel discussion named after a traditional Kuwaiti family gathering. The event, organised by the UN in Kuwait and Spread the Passion, a local NGO, was designed to promote volunteering and showcase local opportunities to participate. Yousef Alshatti represented Trash Hero alongside other local environmental organisations in front of a live and online audience.



When two active volunteers from Trash Hero Mersing, Ifa and Kimie, had to relocate to a new city in the far north of Malaysia they found they were missing their regular cleanup appointment. Instead of moping, they put their energy into starting a new chapter where they lived, and so **Trash Hero Kota Bharu** was born. This is one of the many ways the Trash Hero movement grows.

PROGRAMMES



JULY

The maritime services company, PT Jasa Armada Indonesia, teamed up with **Trash Hero Indonesia** to help a school in Bali reduce their plastic waste. The company funded the purchase of 80 of our reusable stainless steel water bottles and two refill points - as always provided at cost price - and Trash Hero supported the donation with an education session for students and teachers on the topic of reuse and reduction of plastic at school and in their homes. Following the successful collaboration, the school has committed to continue on its mission to reduce waste with further teaching and learning activities.



AUGUST

The SunsetBeatz Festival, held from 5-6 August in Seebad-Baldegg was largely single-use plastic free thanks to the participation of **Trash Hero Switzerland**. The volunteers managed a deposit return scheme for reusable drink cups, as well as keeping the festival site as clean as possible. More than 15,000 disposable plastic cups were saved as a result!



AUGUST

The first ever **European family meeting** took place in the Czech Republic, bringing together 26 volunteers from chapters in Switzerland, Poland, Serbia, Czech Republic and Kuwait. The three day event was an important opportunity to connect with others, build friendships and strengthen support systems - both through formal learning and informal discussions and activities such as hiking and cooking together.



SEPTEMBER

The volunteers of **Trash Hero Myanmar** met online to share updates and plan the future in the aftermath of the 2021 coup. Though smaller in number, their spirit was not diminished. Four chapters out of the previous 11 were still able to carry out cleanups: Ngapali, Minbu, Gaw Yan Gyi and Ngwe Saung; others joined to show solidarity and discuss their struggles.



SEPTEMBER

Trash Hero Bangkok organised one of the biggest cleanups of the year, with 278 participants collecting 1.16 tons of trash from the mangrove forest on the banks of the Chao Praya river. Best of all, they carried out a brand audit on a sample of the waste, amounting to 17% of the data collected in the whole country in 2022.



SEPTEMBER

The eighth edition of **Trash Hero Pattani's** zero waste camping project saw 223 participants come together for a weekend without waste. New this time was an experimental zero waste market, with three stalls on site offering food and drink to the campers. The stallholders were able to test out the concept and see what would be required to go waste-free once back home. In all, only 38kg residual waste was generated over the 3 days - less than 56g per person.



Follow us @trashheroworld !

PROGRAMMES



Trash Hero Ende in Indonesia worked with the Flores Writers' Festival to introduce a buffet system for food and drink, in order to minimise waste at the annual 3 day event. "It was definitely a challenge!" said Berdhi Saputra, the chapter leader. "Catering companies in our area do not normally have reusable utensils. So we had to source these and also find help with the washing."

In the end, thanks to some enthusiastic volunteers, they showed zero waste catering was indeed possible - and avoided 3,200 disposable items in the process.



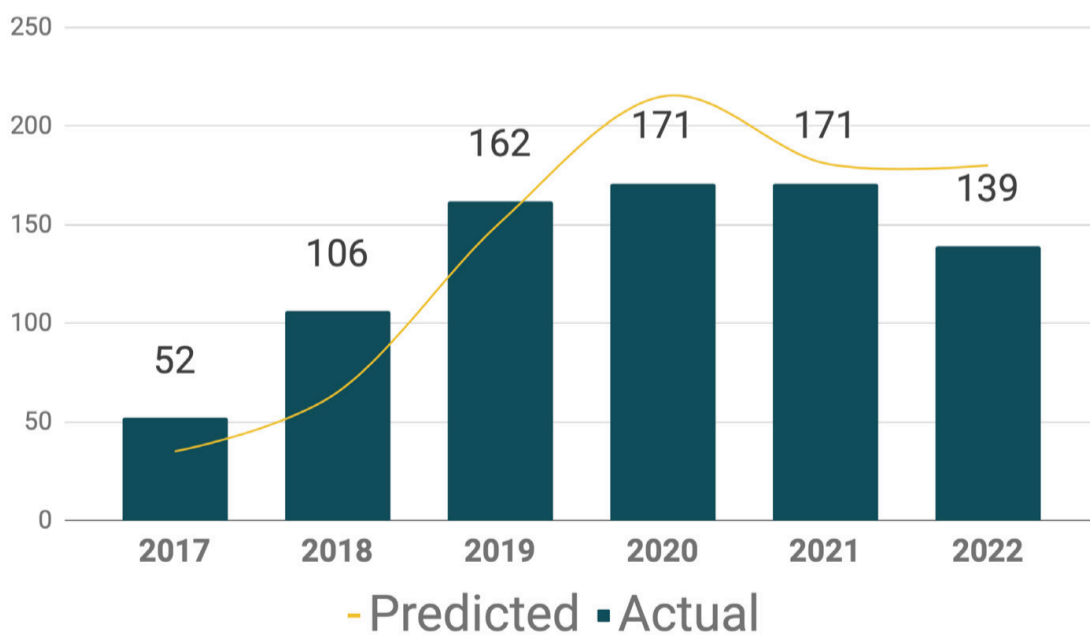
The **2022 Brand Audit Report** was submitted to the delegates at INC-1 in Uruguay, the first meeting of UN members to discuss the content of the new global plastics treaty. The report helped to show that the treaty must cover the full lifespan of plastic - from fossil fuel extraction to disposal - and put limits on its production. A large part of the plastic pollution data in the report was collected by Trash Hero chapters, showing our volunteers that actions done locally can influence global policies that hold polluters accountable.



The team from **Trash Hero Mersing** joined a Training of Trainers course, as part of their ongoing involvement with a local environmental education initiative, PEDAS. The project brings together NGOs with different areas of expertise to deliver an education programme on marine conservation to local school children. The full day knowledge sharing session will directly feed back into Trash Hero Mersing's sessions on plastic pollution.

#breakfreefromplastic

Trash Hero Thailand joins the Break Free From Plastic movement in their own right, in order to take part in regional discussions and start network-building within Thailand. Nu, our country coordinator, joined Greenpeace Thailand and other NGOs to discuss potential collaborations and campaigns around common interests, such as safe public drinking water.



GLOBAL CHAPTER STATUS

By the end of 2022, we counted 139 active chapters in 17 countries worldwide, a drop from the previous year. Many chapters who had been on a break during COVID were not able to return to regular activities; a few left to pursue other interests. On the positive side, 26 new chapters joined the network during the year, indicating that interest in volunteering is still healthy, despite widespread economic hardship.

ACTION & AWARENESS

Our core programme centres around a single activity: a regular community cleanup, run by local volunteers.

The goal is not simply to pick up trash - this will never solve the plastic crisis long-term - but to bring people together in a fun and energising activity. This creates a space where experiential learning can take place, where participants face an immediate problem, solve it by working together and finish by discussing

long-term solutions (prevention). The regular events mean we can reach a wide section of the community and keep the issues raised at the forefront of the local agenda.

Where does the trash go?

Volunteers spend 1-2 hours collecting trash, after which they are invited both to celebrate their achievements and to reflect on the questions: "where does the trash come from?" and "where does the trash go?".

We try to move the conversation away from "litter" and "irresponsible consumers" to discussions about systemic problems, namely the overproduction of single-use plastic packaging. In some areas, we examine and record the brands on the trash collected, for research purposes (see below). Then, wherever possible, participants are asked to sort the collected waste to recover recyclable and reusable material. The possible options for the trash will depend on the local infrastructure - and this is another teachable moment which shows that, even in developed areas, there is no good solution for most plastic packaging.

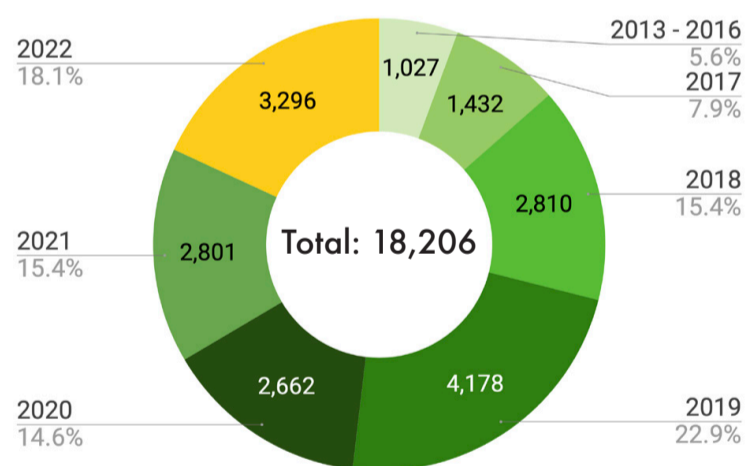
After experiencing the issue first hand, the goal is that participants keep these questions at the forefront of their minds. "Where does the trash come from? And where does it go?" become questions that influence their actions every day – not only when they throw things away, but even before they use them. Only by supporting systems and lifestyles that reduce the waste we produce, will we be able to stop picking up trash every week.

As the cleanups happen regularly and are open to everyone, they often become a fixture on the community calendar. Public spaces that are kept clean in a visible way help foster civic pride and motivate more people to join. In this way, the cleanups create natural opportunities for networking. Local businesses can get involved with their staff or sponsor materials; schools and public sector workers are other frequent participants.

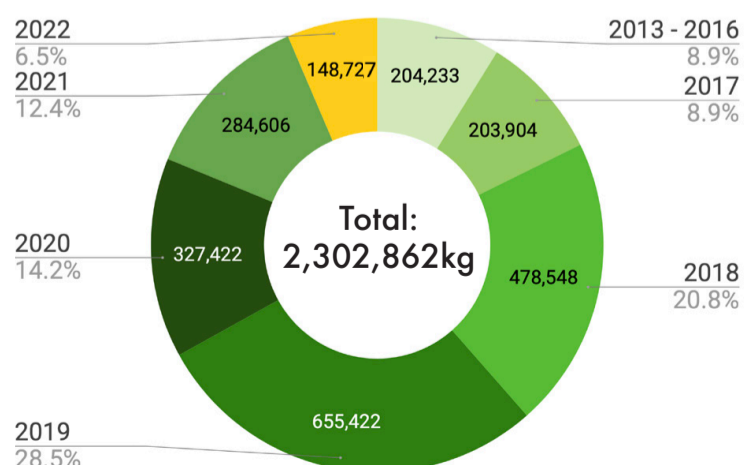
Once a cleanup programme becomes established and builds



Total number of cleanup events



Total trash collected (kg)



Volunteers to date

trust, our leaders often find themselves being invited to give talks or take part in discussions on topics such as sustainable consumption or local waste management. They may also feel able to start their own waste reduction project or support others to do so. Thus the cleanups open the door to wider change: by starting conversations about waste; and keeping up the pressure and momentum in the community to act on plastic pollution. See p.20 for more details.

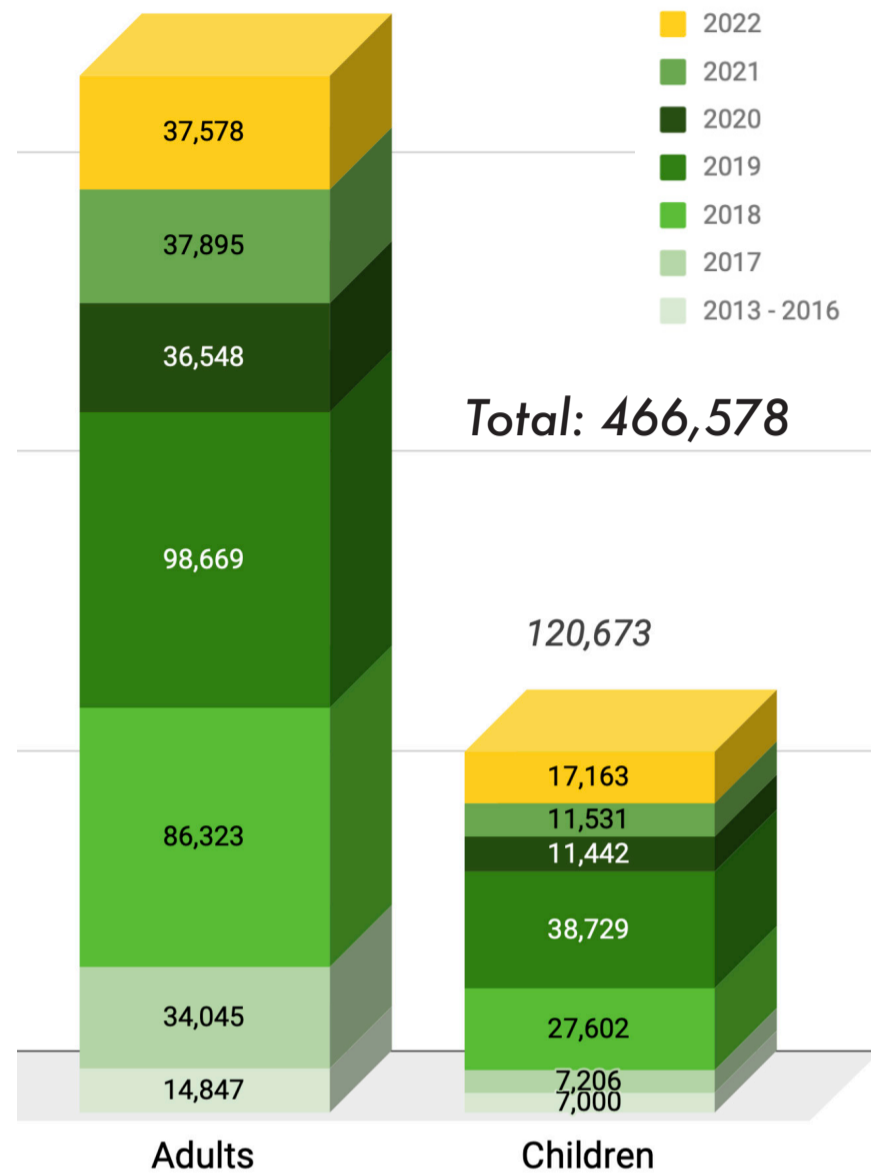
In 2022, a total of 148.7 metric tons of waste was removed across the network during the year by 54,741 volunteers, including 17,163 children.

We continued our collaboration with Break Free From Plastic by conducting “brand audits” at our cleanups for their annual study into the companies responsible for plastic pollution worldwide.

Volunteers were provided with a translated toolkit and training to record standardised data relating to the type, extent and provenance of plastic trash they collected. From October 2021 until 20 September 2022, Break Free From Plastic was supported by 14,760 volunteers in 44 countries, who conducted 397 brand audits, collecting 429,994 pieces of plastic waste. A total of 120 of these audits (30% of the total number globally) were carried out by Trash Hero volunteers.

The final report, Branded: Five Years of Holding Corporate Plastic Polluters Accountable, was released in November 2022, to coincide with INC-1, the first session of the UN negotiations for a Global Plastics Treaty. The report’s findings were submitted to delegates for their consideration. This was a proud moment for our volunteers, giving them the opportunity to see their work have even greater impact, beyond the community level.

Brand audit data helps expose the need for the treaty to cover the full lifecycle of plastic - from fossil fuel extraction to



disposal - and to put limits on its production. They help to keep the spotlight upstream, on the source of the problem, rather than downstream, clearing up the mess already made. Trash Hero cleanups are currently taking place in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Vietnam, Cambodia, Japan, Kuwait, Switzerland, Netherlands, Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Serbia, Romania, Poland and Georgia.





CLEANUPS AROUND THE WORLD IN 2022



BOTTLES & BAGS

As well as tackling the problem of waste already in the environment, we help to prevent it at the source.

Tap water is not safe to drink in the majority of Southeast Asian countries. Single-use plastic water bottles have thus become an unfortunate fact of life, with disastrous effects. To change this situation, Trash Hero chapters partner with local businesses to provide reusable stainless steel water bottles and the means to refill them while out and about.

Trash Hero branded bottles are distributed at cost to hotels, cafes and shops. These are then sold on to customers at a small profit. The profit covers the running of a refill point on the premises, which must offer free drinking water to all bottle owners, regardless of where in the network their bottle was purchased.

The refill network is publicised locally and can also be accessed on a centrally maintained map at trashhero.org/refill.



In 2022, we completely redesigned this map to enable self-registration, as well as opening it up to businesses that offer free water refills to customers but that do not currently sell our bottle. In this way, we hope to expand the network and offer more opportunities for people to refill.

In 2022, sales of Trash Hero bottles more than doubled from the previous year. This figure remains well below pre-pandemic levels, as the fallout from COVID-19 continued to impact the economy in Southeast Asia. Some partner outlets also closed, temporarily or permanently. However, the refill concept was still heavily promoted by Trash Hero World and our chapters, both online and offline at the cleanups

where our leaders use the bottles regularly. We expect sales to pick up as countries start to recover.

It is possible to measure the climate positive impact of using the bottle with our [online calculator](#)¹. The calculator is based on a study carried out by ETH-Zürich in 2019 that found, with sustained use of the Trash Hero bottle (more than 17 refills), we avoid 95% of the greenhouse gas emissions generated by drinking the equivalent amount of water packaged in single-use plastic. The calculator also works out the amount of plastic bottles and money saved by switching to reuse. Applying these findings to the bottle programme as a whole, we can assume that to date (end of December 2022), we have avoided 2017.6 metric tons of CO2 emissions, a positive impact equivalent to 698 tons of waste being recycled instead of landfilled [source: [US EPA](#)].



673
FREE WATER
REFILL POINTS



TOTAL TRASH HERO BOTTLES SOLD



The other half of this programme tackles single-use plastic shopping bags. Again, this is done in partnership with local businesses. We produce and distribute foldable, reusable shopping bags at cost. Our partners then offer or sell them to their customers. The goal here is to promote and enable behavioural change both in areas where single-use bags are still common and where bans on single-use plastic items have already been implemented.

Our bag supplier, Making Oceans Plastic Free (MOPF), is an Indonesian-based social enterprise. They produce two custom designs for us (standard and turtle pouch) by hand. Made from recycled plastic (rPET), each bag uses the material equivalent of two 500ml plastic bottles.

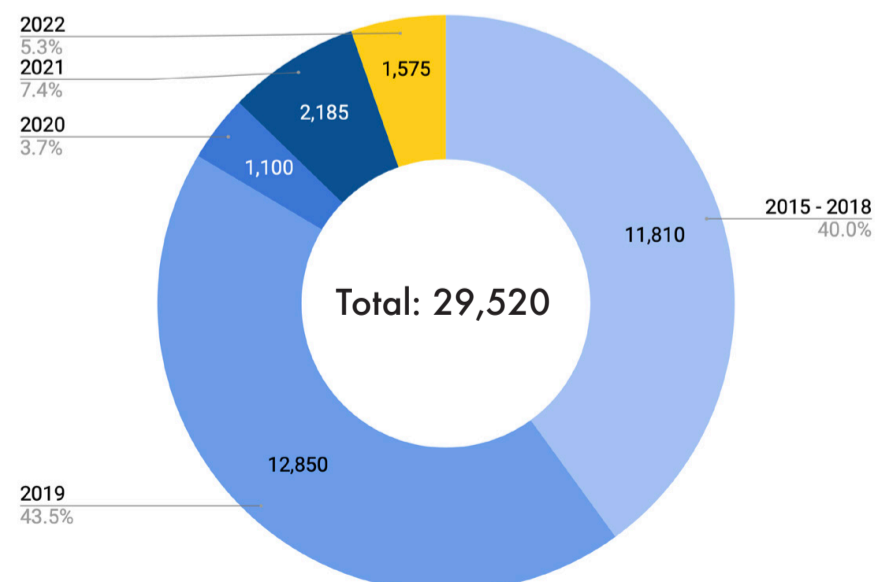


In 2022, we sold a total of 1,575 bags, well below the previous year. As we sell all Trash Hero products at cost price (the same amount we pay for them) this did not affect our income, only our impact.

In total, over the lifetime of this programme we have distributed 106,188 bottles and 29,520 bags. We estimate this has avoided the use and waste of some 49.5 million single-use plastic items² (38.8 million bottles and 10.8 million bags).

¹ Online bottle calculator: <https://trashhero.org/bottle-impact-calculator/>
² based on a calculation of 1 use per day for a year (365 plastic bottles or bags saved per 1 reusable alternative)

TOTAL TRASH HERO BAGS SOLD



KIDS & EDUCATION

THE Trash Hero Kids' programme was launched in 2018. We give primary school children a positive, hands-on experience of environmental stewardship, to try and counter the prevalent throwaway culture.

We use an active learning approach. A story book presents the problem of plastic pollution in a simple way and shows children that they have the power to change this situation through their own actions.

An activity programme accompanies the story and provides the opportunity to put learning into practice, with challenges such as beach cleanups, turning trash into useful objects, and refusing single-use plastic. A points and rewards system helps to motivate children over the long term and celebrate their achievements. Repetition is built in to develop a sense of responsibility and create good habits.

Two implementation strategies are available: the first is to work directly within a school, usually with one class; the second is to run the programme via an existing weekly cleanup activity. Teaching materials and rewards (T-shirts and certificates) are supplied free of charge and in local language so there is no barrier to entry.

The in-school projects require teacher buy-in. Once that happens, the time and resources needed from volunteers are much reduced and activities can be integrated into the curriculum. With the non-school-based projects, we reach smaller numbers of children but have found that in many cases, they are more fully engaged. As schools across Asia returned to normal, in-person teaching in 2022, the kids' programme saw increased interest. To accommodate this, we printed a total of 4,500 new books in Thai and Indonesian languages.

In total 1,185 new children joined the programme during this year, in 29 locations in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Switzerland. A total of 61 special kids' education events were held, involving 2,516 children. And children were actively involved in our public cleanup events throughout the year, with more than 17,163 of them joining with their family or school.

Our collaboration with The Story of Stuff Project to produce dubbed versions of their animated short, The Story of Plastic, continued with a new version in German. The four-minute long animation is based on the Emmy-award winning documentary of the same name, and presents the big picture of plastic pollution in an easily digestible form - ideal for teenage viewers.



TRASH HERO COMMUNITIES

THE goal of Trash Hero Communities is to lay the ground for working zero waste projects in our main areas of operation. These projects might be related to improved waste separation and management; reducing plastic usage in commerce and institutions; or preventing waste at local festivals and events.

As of December 2022, almost three-quarters (72%) of our chapters are well-established, meaning the volunteers have organised 50 cleanups or more in the same area. This length of time and commitment usually means:

- a) these volunteers are very passionate about the waste situation where they live; and
- b) they are in a good position to do something about it. Their regular activities have started to build trust and credibility.

We have seen a few volunteers in such a position go on to create zero waste projects such as community waste banks or composting schemes, or advise others how to do the same (see our [2020 Annual Report](#)). However, for the majority of our volunteers, there remains a gap in the knowledge, skills and understanding required to take any discussion or idea to the next level, so the potential for change is lost.

A key goal of Trash Hero Communities is to bridge this gap. During 2022, we continued our training to help volunteers in Southeast Asia understand the concept and value of a circular economy and the best practices at the local level. Three sessions at each of our twice-yearly family meetings were dedicated to these topics alone; and the issues were also introduced to our European chapters at the August family meeting in the Czech Republic.

In Indonesia we developed local language presentations about zero waste and, in December, started to train volunteers to deliver them to local community groups (“training the trainers”). Our multilingual resource library on our website was kept updated, gathering the latest information, analysis and reports on the various topics and debates surrounding plastic pollution. All materials are available online as a resource for the general public.

Globally, our volunteers reported 123 community outreach activities in 2022 - educational talks, webinars and presentations, as well as local networking and meetings with decision-makers. These activities, involving 3,119 people, help normalise the concepts of reduction, reuse and zero waste, counter industry misinformation at the grassroots and beyond; and spark the practical projects that will prove zero waste systems are possible and beneficial for all.

You can read more about some of these stories in our 2022 Network Highlights, on p. 10



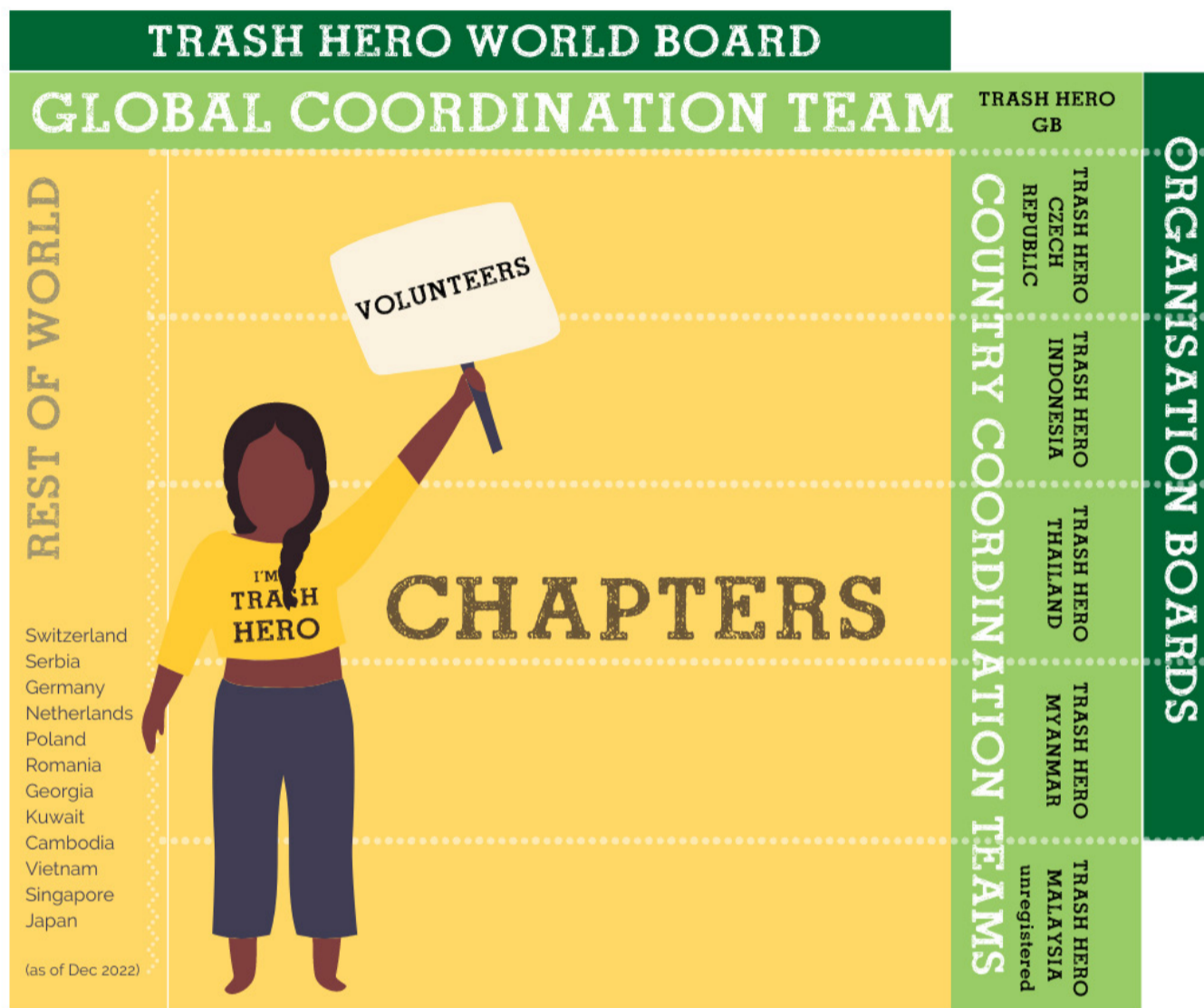
GOVERNANCE

Trash Hero is a global volunteer movement, led, supported and governed by Trash Hero World through its Board and the global coordination team.

At its heart is a growing grassroots network of chapters: unincorporated, community-based organisations, that run our programmes. Each is affiliated to Trash Hero World and their national Trash Hero organisation, if one exists.

National Trash Hero organisations are established in countries with a large number of chapters, to facilitate programme coordination and represent local voices both on the national stage and within the movement. Each is a registered, not for profit entity with its own unpaid board of trustees.

Trash Hero GB is part of the global coordination team, working with Trash Hero World to support the movement.



Action
 Coordination
 Governance

Legal status

Trash Hero World is a non-profit association, registered in Switzerland (UID CHE-234.539.479) and exempt from taxes under Swiss law (Register no. 1993507, Canton Luzern). We have no religious, political, or government affiliation. The association is governed in accordance with its Articles of Association by an unpaid board of trustees, drawn from diverse backgrounds in business and professional life. Trash Hero is a registered trademark, protected internationally through WIPO and extended to all major countries of operation and beyond in 2021. In this matter, we are grateful for the specialist support of attorney Daniel Greif, who has acted as our Worldwide Trademark Counsel in a *pro bono* capacity since 2014.

Organisational structure

The Trash Hero World network consists of the Swiss registered non-profit association, Trash Hero World; the foundation Yayasan Trash Hero Indonesia; the non-profit associations, Trash Hero Thailand, Trash Hero Myanmar and Trash Hero Czech Republic; the community interest company Trash Hero GB CIC; and many unincorporated Trash Hero chapters worldwide.

All these entities (incorporated and unincorporated) are considered part of Trash Hero World for operational purposes.

In 2022, we continued our work to create a formal structure for global governance that will both regulate our rapid expansion and give our volunteers a greater voice in decision-



making. The Board made substantial progress in its review of the proposed revisions, with the continued pro bono support of the leading Swiss legal firm, Meyerlustenberger Lachenal. We are very grateful for their ongoing assistance.

Board members

Rahel Schaub, President
Silvia Frey, Actuary
Silvia Selber-Deluca, Treasurer
Stephanie Bieri, Legal Advisor
Rolf Gmür, Committee Member

The global coordination team is led by Roman Peter, who gives his time voluntarily. In 2022, we funded the salaries of two staff in the global programmes team and three staff in the country coordination teams, through our partners in the UK, Indonesia and Thailand. In Switzerland, we directly employed a full time Office Manager, as well as a short-term marketing and fundraising intern. All other work is carried out by volunteers.

Principal risks

Trash Hero World is committed to an ongoing process of identifying risk and managing it appropriately. Below we outline our approaches to major risks, including planned further actions.

Lack of diverse funding sources

Approach: Now with a stronger financial foundation in

place, in 2022 we invested in research to identify potential new donors and areas of grant-making, particularly at an international level. With the support of Gewerbe-Treuhand AG from Switzerland we transitioned to new accounting software which will make financial reporting more robust and flexible enough for a wide range of funders.

Inability to maintain quality at scale

Approach: In 2022, we started reviewing staffing projections for the coming years and planning accordingly. Recruitment and onboarding processes for both staff and volunteers are being refined, with a new volunteer agreement to ensure cultural fit. Key processes are being documented. Internal communication, monitoring and reporting are being improved.

Fraud, corruption, theft

Approach (ongoing): Transparency is a key organisational value. We enforce strict control mechanisms for expenses, accounting and reporting at all levels of the organisation. We make consistent use of formal banking facilities for any transactions above the level of petty cash. Internal rules are in place to bar cash funding at chapter level, with only publicly acknowledged donations in kind allowed.

Inadequate governance and compliance within the network

Approach: In 2022 we continued work on our global governance reforms and improved our communication of organisational values. There was stricter enforcement of policies and procedures to ensure rules apply to all individuals at all levels of the organisation. We also extended our intellectual property protection to 6 new jurisdictions.

Key person dependency

Approach: Key people in the organisation have been identified and we continue to document standard operating procedures, processes and critical knowledge, to enable cross-training. In 2022, we continued to expand our programmes team to better distribute key roles and tasks.

Reputational damage caused by partner actions

Approach: In 2022, we updated and translated our ethical funding policy into major network languages and ensured its inclusion in all partnership agreements in order to protect our interests. We will offer detailed guidance on the use of our ethical funding and partnership policy to all decision-makers.

Safeguarding

As a values-led organisation, we have always been committed to maintaining the safety and protection of the communities with whom we work, and children in particular. Existing measures include a child protection policy and a volunteer code of conduct, setting out the standards of behaviour expected from all volunteers and staff in relation to each other, our programme participants, and other relevant parties. These are accepted in writing by all chapter leaders and the content is revisited twice a year at the family meetings.

Strategic priorities for 2023

A summary of our strategic plan, that reflects the long-term goals of the organisation, is provided below; the full plan can be downloaded at: trashhero.org/way

STRENGTH

As our organisation grows, we want it to remain strong and keep our family feeling. It is important to balance consistency and creativity, so that members can write their own stories, while staying on the same page. We will:

- Give volunteers and staff opportunities to connect and learn new skills and knowledge
- Ensure rules come from “collective intelligence”, are clearly linked to organisational values and well-communicated
- Maintain an open and transparent organisational culture
- Regularly assess risks, performance and progress at all levels
- Report and celebrate impact internally and externally

INFLUENCE

Trash Hero should be more visible both locally and globally. We strive to reach new audiences and to establish authority on zero waste issues wherever we are heard. We will:

- Create maximum impact with every piece of work
- Build a strong (social) media presence and following
- Increase our knowledge and education offering
- Provide training in communication, storytelling and other soft skills
- Explore new ways to report impact

CHANGE

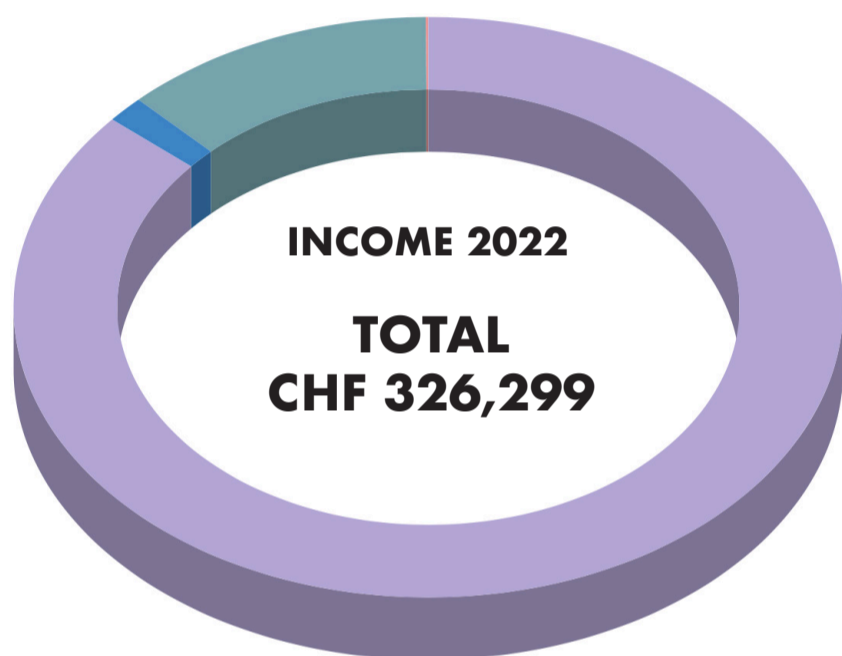
We want to make real progress towards zero waste. The momentum for zero waste lifestyles should grow, while being supported by structural and systemic changes at the local and global level. We will:

- Consolidate the Trash Hero Communities programme, with training and support materials for volunteers
- Join or create in-country networks for knowledge exchange
- Focus more on education and data collection at cleanups
- Simplify and expand the Bottles & Bags and Kids & Education programmes
- Tell more success stories and expose false solutions and greenwashing

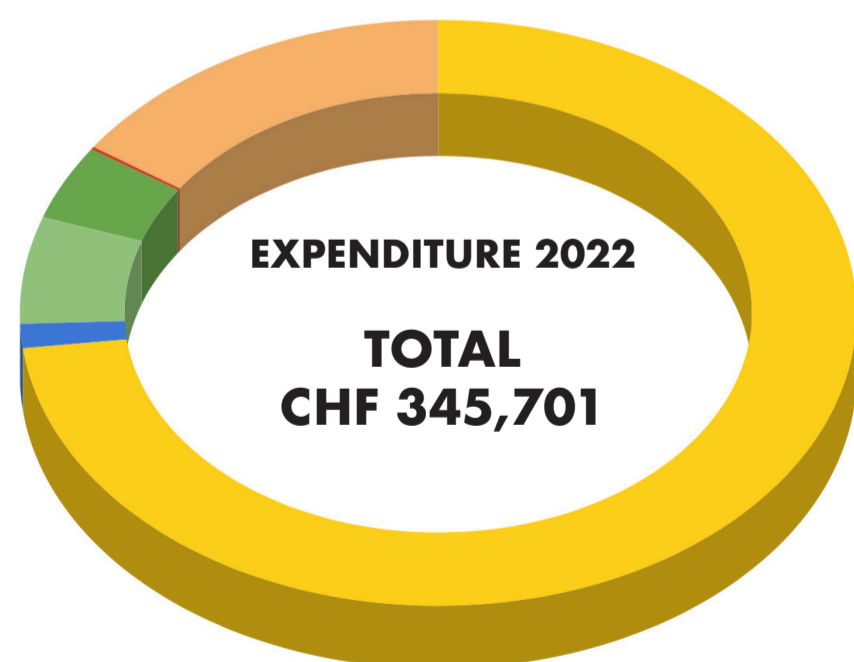


FINANCIAL REVIEW

In 2022 we were finally able to deliver our programmes again without restrictions and to host our Family Meetings in Southeast Asia and, for the first time, in Europe. But even as activity grew, income was lower than in previous years, which resulted in an end of year deficit. Overall, the continuing if somewhat reduced inflow of donations, together with the generous support received in past years (that could not be used due to the pandemic), means we can look back positively on the financial year 2022. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported us financially - no matter what the amount.



Grants & Donations: 281,264 | Trading activity 4,846
Partnerships 39,853 | Event-related 336



Programmes 298,654 | Merchandising 5,425.5
General Operations 24,097 | Fundraising 16,883.5
Financial costs 641 | Reserves 63,000

In 2022, net donations (from organisations and private individuals) reached over CHF 281,246, which is around a third less than in the previous year (CHF 414,553). On one hand we received no large private donations and on the other foundations were more reluctant to provide funding.

We are therefore all the more happy and grateful for the support we did receive this year, which has provided financial security for our activities.

Grant-making bodies accounted for more than half of our funding in 2022. Of course it is not only the large amounts that count: every single donation is appreciated, be it from companies or private individuals.

Of our total voluntary income, CHF 189,459 was designated for specific purposes by the donors (restricted income); the remainder was unrestricted.

Our Trash Hero products (reusable bottles and bags etc.) remain very popular in Switzerland. However, since only a few events and presentations were held in 2022 (which is also reflected in a drop in related income to CHF 336), sales of Trash Hero items fell by more than half compared to the previous year and amounted to CHF 4,846. These sales were made at cost price (without profit).

Our partnerships continued to provide secure and regular income in 2022 and we were able to record our highest ever earnings in this area. We are very grateful! All such partnerships are chosen and managed in a way that our values and independence are not compromised.

Final income in 2022 was CHF 326,299. Although less than in previous years where we have seen a steady increase in donations, the income is still at a very good level and we are striving to increase it again to move Trash Hero forward.

Of this, we used CHF 298,654 directly for our programmes. A significant proportion of these costs is attributable to the working hours of the employees in our global network, who coordinate, support and monitor the activities of our volunteers on the ground. This work is essential for the smooth and effective running of the projects.

The additional expenditure compared to the previous year (CHF 190,550) is due to the fact that all on-site activities

*For easy reference, CHF 1.00 is more or less equivalent to USD 1.00.

were possible again. We were therefore able to hold two rounds of in-person family meetings in Southeast Asia, as well as the first joint meeting for our European chapters.

A total of CHF 248,424 (previous year CHF 194,778) was spent on global capacity building, which we define as increasing our resilience and ability to deliver our mission. We continually invest in vital training, planning, systems and structures that enable us to operate and scale effectively.

Much of this investment has improved our programme delivery and has therefore been included as programme costs in the financial statements overleaf. However we believe it is important to note the total figure separately here.

We were able to extend our trademark protection to six more countries. This investment will protect the Trash Hero name and brand for existing and future chapters in our network.

The total cost of raising funds and general operations was CHF 40,980.68, under 12% of total expenditure. While fundraising costs remained steady, operational costs rose temporarily. This was due to the transition of our accounting, previously handled by volunteers, to a new system, which involved training and additional working hours for staff.

We are grateful for the continued contributions of all volunteers, in-kind donors and professionals offering *pro bono* services. This solid foundation of support from them and others gives us the means to increase our reserves, despite an annual deficit. These funds, now amounting to six months of normal operational costs, not only ensure the continuation of our projects, but would also cover the salaries of our employees should income decrease.

The following costs, which were paid directly by funders in Indonesia, are not included in the financial statements: CHF 125 for T-shirts for our volunteers

Reserves Policy

The Board recognises the need to build reserves to ensure continuity and financial stability for the organisation as we grow.

In 2019, we started to create reserves to a level equivalent to several months of core programme operation. In 2022, further reserves were built, amounting to six months of these operating costs. We intend to use these reserves in the following manner:

- to alleviate uncertainty over future income. If predicted funding does not materialise, e.g. if a grant is not renewed, the reserves will allow time to develop new sources of income or to cut back on related expenditure with minimal impact.
- to cover any increased cost in programme materials and support due to foreign exchange fluctuations. A large part of our expenditure is overseas.
- to protect our work from disruption due to short-term deficits in cash flow, e.g. money may need to be spent before a funding grant is received.

The Board intends to monitor and periodically review the amount of reserves held to ensure that they are adequate to safeguard our obligations, without tying up funds that could and should be spent on growing and improving programme delivery.

Statement from the Board

The Board of Trash Hero World is satisfied that the Financial Statements give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the Association and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure.

We have also reviewed the Association's financial position, taking into account the level of liquid assets, the annual budget and the measures for management of risk. Reserves have been increased in order to have greater financial security in the future.

As a result, we believe that Trash Hero World has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and is well placed to continue to manage operational and financial risks successfully.

We are grateful for the assistance of Lufida Revisions AG - specialists in financial auditing and consulting for SMEs and non-profit organisations - who conducted our certified financial audit on a *pro bono* basis and in accordance with Swiss law of obligation.

This Annual Report has been approved by the Board of Trash Hero World on 28 March 2023 and is signed as authorised on its behalf by:



Rahel Schaub
President
Trash Hero World

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022		2021	
	CHF	%	CHF	%
ASSETS				
Cash in hand	4,059.01	0.6	4,934.12	0.8
Bank deposits	311,527.52	47.8	338,807.88	54.5
Merchandise inventory	21,100.00	3.2	23,549.00	3.8
Debtors	20.45	0.0	3,681.03	0.6
Accrued income	2,072.85	0.3	314.10	0.1
Reserves	313,084.48	48.0	250,026.63	40.2
Total	651,864.31	100	621,312.76	100
LIABILITIES				
Trade creditors	3,511.85	0.5	3,510.90	0.6
Employee withholding tax	0.00	0.0	47.25	0.0
Accrued expenses	50,000.00	7.7	0.00	0.0
Funds brought forward from previous period	367,754.61	56.4	244,739.48	39.4
Reserves	313,000.00	48.0	250,000.00	40.2
Funds carried forward	-82,402.15	-12.6	123,015.13	19.8
Total	651,864.31	100	621,312.76	100

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. The financial statements have been prepared using the accruals basis. The currency used is the Swiss Franc (CHF) which is approximately equivalent in value to the US dollar (CHF 1 = USD 1).
2. Trash Hero World relies - perhaps more than most non-profit organisations - on the contributions of volunteers and *pro bono* professional services. In total, around 300 people give their time regularly, performing many roles, from senior management to admin, fundraising, accounting, legal work and programme delivery. Due to the geographical distribution of these volunteers, and the absence of any reliable measurement basis, their contribution has not been recognised in the accounts. However, we are incredibly grateful for their support.
3. All merchandise (reusable bottles, bags, t-shirts and others) is sold at cost price, with no mark-up, and is considered to be mission-related trading.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Total 2022 CHF	Total 2021 CHF
INCOME		
VOLUNTARY INCOME (Grants & donations)		
Individual giving (unrestricted funds)	41,686.27	100,238.13
Individual giving (restricted funds)	80,000.00	60,000.00
Corporate giving (unrestricted + restricted funds)	4,623.47	13,416.05
Institutions (unrestricted + restricted funds)	6,240.73	4,802.00
Foundations & non-profit (unrestricted funds)	39,254.50	91,200.00
Foundations & non-profit (restricted funds)	109,459.12	144,897.74
Total	281,264.09	414,553.92
EARNED INCOME		
Trading activity	4,846.33	8,015.02
Partnerships	39,853.23	29,763.12
Other income (events, presentations, talks)	335.70	975.00
Total	45,035.26	38,753.14
TOTAL INCOME	326,299.35	453,307.06
EXPENDITURE		
PROJECTS & PROGRAMMES		
Action & Awareness	-147,703.63	-82,026.82
Bottles & Bags	-45,447.30	-41,244.19
Kids & Education	-53,651.59	-23,631.74
Trash Hero Communities	-51,851.52	-43,647.32
Total	-298,654.04	-190,550.07
COST OF MERCHANDISE	-5,425.48	-9,531.64
TOTAL COST OF RAISING FUNDS (voluntary income)	-16,883.43	-16,542.59
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES	-24,097.25	-12,473.61
TOTAL FINANCIAL COSTS (transaction fees, currency exchange gains / losses)	-641.30	-397.62
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	-345,701.50	-229,495.53
Extraordinary income	0.00	17.35
Allocation to cash reserves	-63,000.00	-100,000.00
Net income / deficit for the year	-82,402.15	123,828.88
Funds carried forward	-82,402.15	123,828.88

GIFTS & DONATIONS

Ongoing donations allow us to effect change confidently and continually. Your gifts help make it possible to train and support volunteers who bring their communities together to clean and reduce waste.

Thank you for this valuable support.

MAJOR DONORS IN 2022

The following organisations and individuals gave gifts of CHF 5,000 and above during 2022:

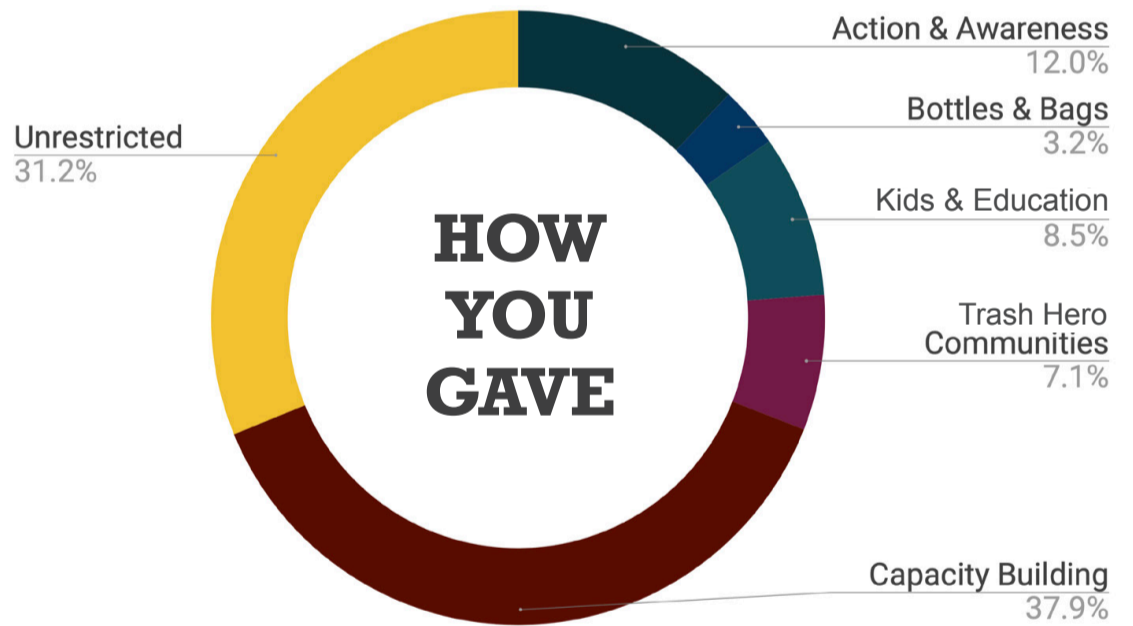
- Ocean Family Foundation
- Stiftung Ormella
- Stiftung Nord-Süd
- Stiftung Drittes Millennium
- Temperatio-Stiftung
- Stiftung Pro Evolution
- CHARISMA Stiftung für nachhaltige Entwicklung
- Unscientia Stiftung
- Antonis Schwarz
- Beatrice Fischli Hendry
- Canadian Fund Local Initiative
- Michael Marks Foundation

We are also extremely grateful to those individuals, companies, non-profits and foundations around the world who gave equally generously but who did not wish to be named in this report.

And of course, we want to thank all of our supporters, regardless of the amount given: every franc is appreciated and we will continue to make every centime count.

Thank you!

[CLICK TO WATCH OUR "THANK YOU" MOVIE ON YOUTUBE >>](#)



DONOR STORIES



Donations in kind

Our chapters around the world are heavily reliant on donations in kind to run their programmes. Local sponsors will regularly provide cleaning materials, refreshments, printing costs and, in some areas, transport. Seeking this support is a deliberate strategy as it increases community engagement in our projects. It also avoids the need for our volunteers to collect cash donations, which maintains trust and transparency.

It is difficult to put a financial value on these contributions. We can say that from the smallest minimart owner to the big five star hotel, the support received is all priceless!



Making vows to save the planet

When Martina and Massi decided to get married, they felt it was important to use the occasion to support a project close to their hearts. The couple, from Germany and Indonesia, were aware of the global trash problem and had seen the work Trash Hero was doing in Massi's home country.

After spending their honeymoon in Bali, they witnessed first hand the threat to the beautiful nature on the island. They did several cleanups with other tourists during their trip and saw that more awareness was needed, particularly with regard to burning plastic - a common practice in Southeast Asia.

Donating their wedding gift funds to Trash Hero therefore felt like the right choice, both a celebration of their new life together and a better future for the planet.



Meet a "regular" hero

Like our volunteers, Vanio Deppeler understands that lasting change takes time. The Swiss resident of Niedergösgen therefore committed to give to Trash Hero on a regular basis. "For 4 years I have been supporting Trash Hero monthly. Plastic pollution is an important and complex issue that we cannot ignore and that concerns everyone. With my donation I can make a difference that can be felt all over the world, for a clean future for all of us."

Regular donations like these mean we can plan and support long-term programmes like zero waste training for volunteers, environmental education for kids, and community outreach work in Southeast Asia and beyond. Thank you to Vanio and to all our regular donors!

**TRASH
HERO**



TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Trash Hero World

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fundraising@trashhero.org

 [trashheroworld](https://www.facebook.com/trashheroworld)

 [trashheroworld](https://www.instagram.com/trashheroworld)

 [company/trashhero](https://www.linkedin.com/company/trashhero)

 [trashheroworld](https://www.youtube.com/trashheroworld)

 [trashheroworld](https://www.tiktok.com/trashheroworld)

Donations may be made to:

Raiffeisenbank Oberseetal, Switzerland

IBAN: CH25 8080 8007 8875 3059 8

International: SWIFT-BIC RAIFCH22XXX

Or directly via trashhero.org/donate