

TRASH HERO

ANNUAL REPORT
2025



A world free from plastic pollution.

OUR VISION

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

OUR MISSION

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

OUR VALUES

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

OUR OBJECTIVES

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



CONTENTS

Thank you!	3
Introduction	4
Our movement	6
Programmes	8
Governance	20
Finances 2025	24
Gifts & Donations	28
Contact	30



THANK YOU!

2025 has been another year of steady progress for Trash Hero in an increasingly uncertain world. Global instability - political, economic, and environmental - continues to shape the context in which we work. Progress on international efforts to address plastic pollution remains slow, reinforcing a reality we have long recognised: there is no single solution to this crisis. Meaningful change requires persistence at every level, from global policy to local action.

In this context, our movement has remained focused and grounded. We continue to strengthen the quality and consistency of our work, particularly within local communities. Central to this is our investment in people, ensuring our volunteers have the knowledge, skills and support they need. And across diverse contexts, they continue to show up with dedication and determination. Their efforts go far beyond cleanups. They are educators, advocates, and role models, demonstrating that change is possible through everyday action. Our volunteers are truly at the heart of everything we do.

I would also like to acknowledge our partners and funders and thank them for their continued support. In a competitive and uncertain environment, their commitment enables us to maintain our independence, stay aligned with our mission, and invest in programmes that prioritise long-term impact over short-term visibility.

As a Board, our role is to provide oversight and support, ensuring that the Trash Hero movement stays true to its values while adapting to new challenges and opportunities. We are pleased to report that we remain financially stable, with secure reserves and a strong network of support.

Looking ahead, our direction remains clear: to connect local action with global change, and to keep moving forward with purpose and determination. To everyone who has contributed to this work over the past year - volunteers, staff, partners, funders, and board members - thank you. Your efforts are what make this movement possible. Together, we will continue to move forward, one step at a time.

*Roman Peter
Co-Founder & President of the
Board of Trustees
Trash Hero World*



INTRODUCTION

While the world continues to wait for a global plastics treaty, the plastics crisis does not stand still. Production rises, pollution spreads, and communities are left to deal with the consequences. In this context, Trash Hero's position is clear: we cannot and will not wait for perfect policy. We will continue to act, and to demonstrate that better systems already exist.

Trash Hero's approach is built on this idea of "proof of concept". Through our programmes, we show that zero waste is not an abstract goal, but something that can be implemented and scaled in real communities. Our cleanups are a vital starting point: not as an end in themselves, but as a way to engage people, build awareness of the problem, and open the door to deeper change.

From there, our work moves upstream. In 2025, we continued to strengthen our Trash Hero Communities programme, supporting volunteers to go beyond cleanups into advocacy, collaboration, and local solutions. This includes engaging with decision-makers, challenging false solutions, and introducing practical alternatives like tableware banks and water refill points that prevent waste. At the same time, our education initiatives - from family meetings to social media posts - are helping shift the narrative, connecting plastic pollution to wider issues such as health and climate, and encouraging more informed public discussion. We are proud to share the figures - and stories - from these efforts on the following pages.

Progress in these areas depends heavily on our strong and committed network of volunteers. Training and knowledge-sharing remain a priority, equipping people not just with information, but with the confidence and resilience to navigate complex local realities. Change is rarely linear, and setbacks are part of the process. What matters is the ability to keep going, to learn, and to stay focused on long-term impact.

This combination of action, learning, and advocacy is how we bridge the gap between vision and reality. Step by step, community by community, we are building momentum and the practical foundations of a zero waste future.

Seema Prabhu
Executive Director
Trash Hero Global Network



SHOWING UP IN 2025

A snapshot of the effort, activities and results behind Trash Hero's work this year.

EFFORT

95

chapters in

14 countries taking ongoing action.

37,104

volunteers mobilised, including

10,924 kids

124,664

volunteer hours contributed

ACTIVITIES

2,074

cleanups

237

community outreach events

59

kids events

584

refill points supported

RESULTS

115,119 kg

trash collected

1.8 million

plastic bottles &

98 tonnes

CO₂ avoided

14,425

adults and

6,856 kids

learning more about zero waste

OUR IMPACT OVER TIME (DEC 2013 - DEC 2025)

- 25,378 cleanups mobilising 599,248 volunteers including 165,842 kids and collecting 2,716,807kg trash
- 113,088 reusable bottles distributed, avoiding 44.3 million plastic bottles and 2,317.7 tonnes of CO₂ emissions
- 23,330 kids books printed in 8 languages
- (2022-25) 298 kids events, involving 21,336 kids and 700 community events, reaching 40,110 people



Click to watch the video on YouTube or visit youtu.be/KysKphkNN5g

OUR MOVEMENT

AS Trash Hero World, we bring communities together to clean and reduce waste, with the ultimate goal of eliminating single-use plastic and creating a safe circular economy, built on zero waste principles.

Volunteers are at the heart of this mission. Through our local chapters - 100% volunteer-run groups - people from all walks of life unite to organise cleanups, spark conversations, and inspire change in their communities and beyond. These efforts form the foundation of our global movement.

Volunteers give their time freely, expecting no financial reward, and by doing so, create an unmatched authenticity and impact. As locals, they know their communities best, and this makes them powerful agents of change. Their collective energy highlights the real problems of waste and empowers people to find solutions.

In 2025, around 180 regular volunteers in the global Trash Hero network gave 58,752 hours of their time to support and deliver our programmes. Together, they supported at least 65,912 more volunteer hours, given by people joining our community cleanups - a remarkable effort equivalent to having 32 full-time employees.

THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS

But volunteering isn't just about the mission - it's also about personal growth. It's an opportunity to connect, learn, and gain new skills and perspectives. At Trash Hero, we strive to ensure our volunteers feel supported, informed, and part of a global family working towards a cleaner, plastic-free world.

The results can be seen in the responses to a survey carried out in 2025 with 156 volunteers taking part. 94% of respondents said they enjoy volunteering; 92% feel valued; and 88% feel they are making a real difference. This strong sense of purpose and belonging gives our chapters the resilience needed to carry out long term work. As Fatima from Trash Hero Larantuka in Indonesia put it, "I feel like I've become a more connected, wiser, and more useful person since joining Trash Hero. There's a real positive contribution I can make." The full results of the survey can be seen in this [blog post](#).

In 2025 we hosted several in-person gatherings for the volunteers in our major countries of operation. These are known as "Trash Hero Family Meetings". The volunteers receive training and support, exchange knowledge, build their networks 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 time spent together.





In February, we held our first ever joint family meeting for German-speaking volunteers from Austria, Czech Republic and Switzerland for a two day training in Winterthur.

In June, in Southeast Asia, we held three more family meetings: the first in Bali for our Indonesian volunteers, then two parallel sessions in Bangkok. One of these was conducted in Thai and the other in English for volunteers from around the region, including people from Malaysia, Vietnam and Kuwait.

In total, at all of these events, we hosted 114 volunteers from 8 countries. A total of 2,811 training hours were provided. Trash Hero covers all transport, food and accommodation costs for participants; and all events are explicitly designed to be zero waste.

Throughout the year, in addition to the family meetings, we held regular online mentoring and sharing sessions for volunteers, providing an additional 870 hours of training. We also completely revised our volunteer policies and handbook and gave them a dedicated online home at trashhero.family. Local language versions are in progress.



***A contribution equivalent to 32 full-time staff!**



PROGRAMMES

ACTION & AWARENESS

OUR foundational programme is built around a simple, repeatable activity: regular community cleanups led by local volunteers. While collecting trash is the visible action, the deeper purpose is not removal alone. The cleanups are designed as social, energising spaces where people learn by doing. Participants encounter the problem of plastic pollution first-hand, work together to address it, and then reflect on its causes and consequences. Because these events happen regularly and are open to all, they reach a broad cross-section of the community and keep waste and pollution firmly on the local agenda.

Conversations deliberately move beyond ideas of littering and individual blame, towards systemic issues such as the overproduction of single-use plastic packaging. Collected waste is examined, recorded and, where possible, sorted to recover recyclable or reusable materials. The limits of local waste infrastructure often become clear in this process, highlighting that even in well-resourced areas there is no effective solution for most plastic waste. Additional activities like recording the types and brands of trash collected provide further learning opportunities, as well as valuable data that can be used in research and policy advocacy.

By experiencing the issue directly, participants are more likely to carry these questions into their daily lives, influencing choices made long before something is thrown away. Over time, cleanups become a recognised part of community life, building civic pride and creating natural opportunities for collaboration with schools, businesses and public institutions. As trust grows, local leaders are often invited into wider discussions on waste and consumption, or supported to start their own initiatives (see p. 10).

In this way, cleanups act as a gateway to broader, lasting change: keeping momentum alive and shifting communities from action to awareness, and ultimately to prevention.

In 2025, a total of 115.2 metric tons of waste was removed across the network during the year by 37,104 volunteers, including 10,924 children. Trash Hero cleanups are currently taking place in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, South Korea, Japan, Kuwait, Switzerland, Germany, Czech Republic, Serbia, and USA.



2025

2,074
cleanups

37,104
volunteers

115,199
kg trash

TOTAL 2013-2025

25,378 cleanups

599,248 volunteers

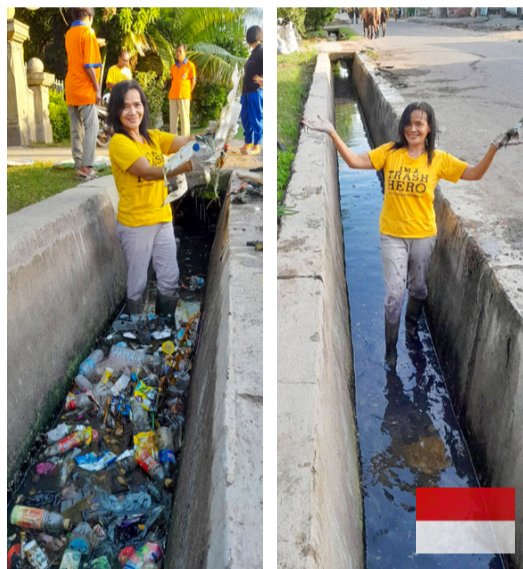
2,716,807kg trash



Trash Hero Jakarta won a national award from volunteer platform Indorelawan for 'the organisation mobilising the most volunteers during the year'. The awards were given as part of the National Volunteer Month, under the theme #BetterTogether. The chapter logged 1,021 participants at their 43 cleanup events in 2025.



Trash Hero Nagekeo worked consistently with local authorities to keep drainage channels free from trash. This is a particular danger during rainy season, as plastic waste regularly clogs drains, exacerbating flooding and increasing the risk of disease from standing water. They also carried out brand audits to highlight the companies producing this waste in full knowledge of the limitations of local waste management systems.



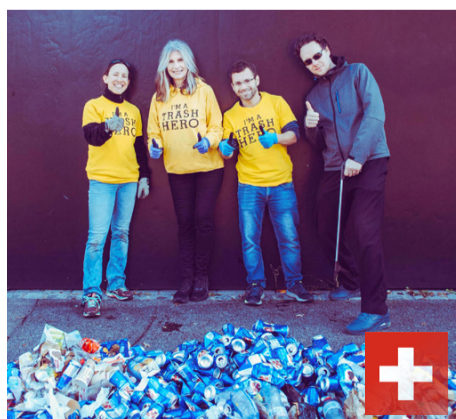
Trash Hero Kota Kinabalu were invited to share their experience and best practices when it comes to organising cleanup actions, first by a local shopping mall, and then by the Royal Malaysian Navy. They gave suggestions on how to make such events more sustainable, so that no additional waste is generated in addition to that picked up. This can be achieved through reusable equipment and zero waste catering.



Trash Hero Ao Nang celebrated their tenth year of continuous action, making them our longest serving chapter. The team organised a special cleanup at two island locations, with logistical support from their strong network of local businesses. 96 volunteers took part and collected an incredible 1.8 metric tonnes of trash from the National Park area.



By sorting and counting the types of waste they collect, chapters like Trash Hero Bern are able to help build a case for systemic change. In this November cleanup alone, they amassed 280 cans in an hour, highlighting the need for a deposit return scheme for recyclable and reusable containers.



Trash Hero Ho Chi Minh are one among many chapters who use old rice or fertiliser bags to collect trash. They are emptied after each cleanup and reused, meaning no additional single-use bags are needed. This is currently only possible in areas where garbage is collected in skips or similar containers.

PROGRAMMES

TRASH HERO COMMUNITIES

THIS programme focuses on preventing waste and supporting the safe, circular use of resources at the local level. It builds on the trust and visibility created through our cleanups, in communities where volunteers already have strong local relationships. From this foundation, we support the development of practical zero waste projects that respond to local needs and priorities, with the aim of reducing waste at source rather than managing it after the fact.

Projects vary by context and include improving waste separation and collection, reducing plastic use in local businesses and institutions, or preventing waste at festivals and public events. Success depends on more than technical solutions: it requires community education, strong networks, engagement with decision-makers, and sustained project management. We do not directly fund projects; instead, we ensure they are locally driven, supported and owned.

Capacity-building is therefore at the heart of the programme. Volunteers are trained as zero waste ambassadors, equipped with a clear understanding of circular economy principles and proven local best practices. They are supported to critically assess and challenge "false solutions", such as waste-to-fuel or pyrolysis technologies, that undermine zero waste goals. Learning takes place through regular online discussions, one-to-one mentoring, and in-person training.

Alongside this, we provide practical resources in local languages and connect chapters through peer support and a global expert network. A public, multilingual resource library further extends this knowledge, helping communities turn awareness into effective, lasting prevention.

All outreach work done by volunteers or staff - presentations, workshops, meetings with government etc. - is reported and assessed. In 2025, 237 such activities and events took place, a 37% increase from 2024. These events directly involved 14,425 people and often reached thousands more (in the case of media appearances, campaigns and networking events).

At the national and international level we continued to produce educational and narrative shifting social media content, as well as taking part in campaigns and policy work to further our goals of a zero waste society.



IN 2025:

237
EVENTS

14,425
PEOPLE REACHED



TRASH HERO COMMUNITIES 2025 PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS



Trash Hero Bayan in Lombok engaged local cashew nut farmers in a community composting project. Over several months, the team taught them how to separate and compost their food scraps using simple methods. The farmers were able to improve soil quality, grow healthier cashew trees, and nearly double the value of their harvest. To date 30 households and 40 farmers have joined the project, and village chiefs have expressed interest in making this type of food waste management mandatory in the district.

Trash Hero chapters in Chonburi, Thailand, co-hosted a one-day film festival in conjunction with DASTA (a public body for sustainable tourism). The full day event, called “Changing Climate, Changing Lives”, showcased short films from young Southeast Asian artists that explore the human stories and impact of climate breakdown on local communities. **Trash Hero Ko Sichang** took part in the morning and afternoon panel discussions about the films, while **Trash Hero Pattaya** organised a cleanup for participants between sessions.



Trash Hero Ternate were signed up by their local Radio Republic Indonesia (RRI) station to be regular guests on a weekly talk show. They were tasked with explaining different aspects of the waste crisis, and the solutions that people can build together. In rural areas like North Maluku, local radio plays a crucial role as a primary source of information for the community. Over the course of the year, Trash Hero Ternate was able to bring these important issues to thousands of people.

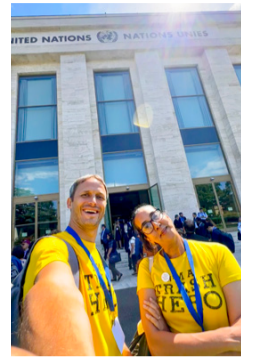


As part of the 532nd anniversary celebrations of the city of Singasana in Bali, **Trash Hero Tabanan, Yeh Gangga and Sesandan** were given a space to educate the public about plastic waste. They manned a booth for 3 days and nights, sharing information and games to engage visiting families. The regency has expressed its commitment to maintaining harmony with nature and ensure the best heritage for future generations.

Trash Hero Switzerland took part in the country's first ever Big Plastic Count. The citizen science campaign that started in 2022 in the UK asks people to record the number of plastic items they throw away during one week. 11,586 people in Switzerland took part, logging 215,463 pieces of plastic. The [resulting report](#) highlighted that 95% of this waste was burned or exported and called for more investment in reusable packaging and refill infrastructure.

TRASH HERO COMMUNITIES 2025 PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Trash Hero Chumphon took their reusable tableware to a Street Art Festival in the city. It was used to cater for more than 1,000 workers and visitors who came to see the new mural honouring the late King Bhumibol - all without single-use plastic. The team's "community tableware bank" has been lending reusable cups, cutlery and dishes to event organisers free of charge for the last 4.5 years. In 2025, it was used at seven events in total, avoiding an estimated 23,350 pieces of single-use plastic, and strengthening the case for all types of gatherings to be zero waste.



Salvatore Di Nolfi/Keystone via AP

The global plastics treaty had its final scheduled round of talks in Geneva, known as INC-5.2. **Trash Hero World** attended the 12-day event as an official observer and part of the global NGO coalition monitoring the process and advocating for a strong treaty. In the end, no deal was achieved, and talks were left in limbo. Far from being a "failure", as many headlines suggested, we believe this was a win for the ambitious countries who refused to accept the weak text proposed at the last minute. A full report, including the possible pathways for finalising the treaty, can be found at trashhero.org/plastics-treaty-reset-moment/

Trash Hero Lübeck in Germany held a two-hour workshop on cigarette butts in an unusual venue - on board the historic Fehmarnbelt, a floating lighthouse on the Untertrave river. Participants learned about the toxicity of plastic filters and their impact on soil and water when they are discarded. At the end, they were also treated to a special tour of the boat from Captain Holger!



@FEHMARNBELT

AUCH DER KAPITÄN WARGANZ FASZINIERT AM THEMA **Workshop**



Trash Hero Yogyakarta co-hosted a Piknik Bebas Plastik (plastic-free picnic), a community and family-friendly gathering billed as a practical space to learn, connect, and celebrate both traditional and modern cultures of reuse. Now in its second year, the event attracted dozens of people, who joined workshops and sharing sessions on sustainable practices. In the words of one collaborator, "the Plastic-Free Picnic is not just an event, but an invitation to change our consumption habits together".



Trash Hero Ende were invited by the local government to give input at their "100 days of strategy" meeting. The volunteers shared their insights into the root causes of waste with the Regent and Vice Regent, highlighting the need for waste separation and urging strict regulation of illegal dumping, burning and single-use plastic. Enforcement was a key issue and Trash Hero supported the Regent's call for better application of the Environment Agency's existing rules, with education and community engagement.

TRASH HERO COMMUNITIES 2025 PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Trash Hero chapters in multiple countries took part in a first-of-its-kind pilot project to audit supermarket packaging practices worldwide. The project from Break Free From Plastic, follows on from their successful six year brand audit campaign. This time, the spotlight is being turned on supermarket chains and their significant role in plastic pollution. Trash Hero volunteers in **Thailand, Malaysia, Switzerland and the UK** supplied 35 audits for the report, which shows most stores are ignoring easy measures to reduce waste.



Trash Hero Jakarta was invited to speak at the opening event of the People and the City festival, held in collaboration with the UN in Indonesia, Indonesia Hidden Heritage, and the Jakarta Maritime Museum. Their presentation - about how zero waste is not a new concept, simply the philosophy and practice of our ancestors - was brought to an audience of heritage experts, government officials and students, showing them how the spread of single-use plastic is damaging not only the environment but culture itself. Reviving local wisdom can guide new generations towards reuse, redesign and a sustainable future.



Trash Hero Langsuan hosted an organics workshop for 31 adults and 5 children to learn the importance of separating organic waste. Participants learned how this practice helps mitigate disease, combat climate change, and restore soil health. The workshop included an overnight camp at a model permaculture farm where attendees used local produce and practised their zero waste skills. The event was supported by GAIA Asia-Pacific as part of their International Zero Waste Month 2025.



Trash Hero Switzerland was invited by the Schmetterling Residential and Vocational Centre for Disabled adults in Cham, to join their sustainability project week. Over five days, residents learned about plastic waste, started sorting their own trash, did cleanups in local parks, and created art from the waste they collected. The carers kept a diary of the week, which we shared on social media channels as a testament that zero waste is for everyone.



TRASH HERO COMMUNITIES 2025 PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

An important part of the Trash Hero Communities programme is **social media engagement**. Posts explaining complex topics, busting myths, or sharing news, research and solutions help to shift the narrative on plastic pollution and build our reputation as a source of truth in an uncertain world. We publish both in English and in other languages, with content tailored to the local culture. Each chapter also has their own channels through which they report activities and engage with the concerns of their local community.

We do not have the resources to track all these channels but we can confidently say that across the network, we reached millions of people in 2025.



Trash Hero World continued its collaboration with **Schnarwiler AG**, the Swiss natural cosmetic company.

The “Love Refill” range, launched in 2018, provides toiletries in recycled glass dispensers that can be refilled in participating shops around the country, or by post. With Trash Hero guidance the entire supply chain is now single-use plastic free.

In 2025, the products were available at 25 outlets in Switzerland. Four more hotels in Switzerland introduced the products in their guest rooms, replacing single-use packaging, which brings the total number of hotels using these refillable toiletries to 41.

Sales of new bottles and refills fell slightly compared with the record year of 2024; still, overall, 24,260 plastic bottles (250ml) were saved.

Since its start in 2018, 132,047 bottles have been sold or refilled through the scheme. Assuming these products replaced the disposable 30ml packaging commonly used in hotels, we can say we have avoided a waste mountain of 1,100,392 plastic bottles.

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.

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

Products: <https://schnarwiler-cosmetics.ch/en>



WATER REFILL NETWORK

The Trash Hero water refill network is a practical zero waste initiative that turns waste prevention into a shared, community-wide effort rather than a personal burden. By engaging local businesses as active partners, we address one of the most common sources of plastic pollution: single-use water bottles. This is particularly effective in regions like Southeast Asia, where tap water is not drinkable.

Refill partners are recruited by our chapters and through our online channels. Once registered - at no cost - they are promoted on social media and listed on a searchable online map (trashhero.org/refill). This helps residents and visitors find refill points easily and rewards businesses for offering a public good. In this way, sustainable behaviour is supported by everyday infrastructure, not individual effort alone.

Branded stainless steel water bottles can optionally be provided to refill partners at cost price. These can be sold on to customers for a small, fixed markup, which helps to cover the cost of the water provided.



To make their impact visible, bottle owners are able to calculate the amount of plastic, money and greenhouse gas emissions saved through refilling, with our [online calculator](#). This is based on an independent 2019 study by ETH-Zürich measuring the climate impact of our reusable bottle.

Applying this study's findings to the refill network as a whole, we can assume that from 2014 - 2025, we have avoided 2,317.7 metric tons of CO2 emissions, a positive impact equivalent to 819 tonnes of waste being recycled instead of landfilled [source: [US EPA](#)].

In addition, with the distribution of 113,088 reusable water bottles during the same period, the scheme has avoided the use of at least 44.3 million single-use plastic bottles. This figure is based on an assumption of the bottle being used once per day for a year (365 plastic bottles saved per reusable bottle) + an assumed 5 refills a day per refill point from 2023 - 2025. As of December 2025 we have 584 refill partners in the network.



584

FREE WATER REFILL POINTS



The refill network works particularly well on small islands like **Koh Phangan** in Thailand, where waste management facilities are limited and costly, usually involving transport to the mainland. Here, in 2025, our volunteers - who pick up thousands of water bottles every year at their cleanups - were able to recruit an additional seven businesses to our network, bringing the total number of partners on the island to 43. This makes it very easy for tourists and residents to carry their reusable bottle on a daily basis.

In neighbouring **Koh Samui**, which reached 46 refill points in 2025, new partners included Meal Prep Samui (pictured right), who also chose to sell our bottle.



Trash Hero volunteers on the island of Flores in Indonesia were also very active in 2025, recruiting ten new refill partners in **Ende, Labuan Bajo and Kelimutu** - from clinics to hotels and tour operators. These conversations with business owners are not only beneficial for the practical results they bring, but for the change in mindset they can inspire. By inviting businesses to rethink their practices, we can plant the seeds for further measures to eliminate single-use plastic.



PROGRAMMES

TRASH HERO KIDS

CHILDREN have always been an enthusiastic presence at our cleanups. The Trash Hero Kids programme builds on this natural interest, transforming simple acts like picking up trash into official superhero status - and the foundation of long-term environmental stewardship.

At its heart is an illustrated story book introducing “Trash Hero”, a fictional character who shows children why plastic pollution matters and how their everyday actions can make a difference. The story is paired with a points-based activity system designed to encourage repeated, habit-forming behaviours such as joining cleanups, refusing single-use plastic on a daily basis, or separating waste correctly. Children who complete the programme receive a t-shirt and certificate to recognise their commitment. To date, 23,330 books have been printed in eight languages (Indonesian, Thai, Burmese, Malaysian, Czech, German, Arabic and English). All these materials are distributed free of charge.

The programme is delivered through local chapters and/ or in partnership with schools. In Chumphon, Thailand, a network of 117 Trash Hero schools has been established, with teachers training and mentoring peers. It has also been used as a springboard for other activities such as whole school composting and reducing single-use plastic in the school canteen and tuck shop.

In total, 629 new children in Thailand, Indonesia and Switzerland joined the structured programme this year. Beyond this, 59 dedicated education events engaged 6,856 children, and almost 11,000 children participated in our regular community cleanups alongside families and schools.

Trash Hero World also develops multilingual videos, posters and offers a dedicated website area to support learning about plastic pollution. In 2024, we launched a free, self-paced online course for teenagers to learn about zero waste, combining social media outreach with deeper educational materials, quizzes and reflection tasks. The full series is available at trashhero.org/eyzw and is also featured on the [BFFP Youth website](#).

Together, these activities nurture informed, confident young people equipped not only to act, but to advocate for real solutions to plastic pollution.



10,924
KIDS AT CLEANUPS

629
NEW BOOKS
DELIVERED

59
EVENTS

6,856
KIDS INVOLVED





When a **Trash Hero Biak** cleanup on Pulau Owi, a remote island in Papua, attracted an unexpected number of local children, the team decided to return. Over the next few months they harnessed the children's love of the sea to teach them about ocean protection and waste reduction, with the help of the Trash Hero Kids book. The results surprised even our volunteers: they found out that the children had organised a zero waste Christmas celebration on their own initiative.



Trash Hero Pattani recruited 158 children at 3 schools in the first semester of 2025 to join their kids programme. As well as training the teachers to deliver the activities, the team also tried to engage school administrators. When successful, this enabled a wider support for the activities. In one school, for example, they were able to provide a dedicated and permanent area for waste sorting. In another, they adopted a policy of only reusable cups in the canteen. The programme in Pattani is delivered with the support of Save the Children, as part of their CINTALAM project.



To mark World Environment Day, two chapters in Myanmar, **Trash Hero Minbu** and **Trash Hero Gaw Yan Gyi**, held a series of special events for children. Activities included waste sorting games, presentations, crafts and tree-planting. In total, 230 children took part.



Trash Hero Pacitan conducted a three week introduction to a zero waste lifestyle for 200 children at the Ar-Rahmah Islamic Boarding School. In the first week, students were given a questionnaire to assess their knowledge of waste and their current habits. In week 2 they were asked to carry out a waste audit in order to learn about the impacts of different types of packaging. In the final week, they discussed solutions and were assigned tasks to implement them.



Trash Hero Tuaran were invited to take part in the annual Children’s Day celebrations at SK. Bolong school. Their booth attracted well over 300 children throughout the day, eager to learn about plastic pollution and its impacts on the world around them.

Volunteers at Trash Hero Koh Chang worked with teachers at the local village school to deliver a 5 week programme of activities to 78 kids focused on waste sorting, recycling and building sustainable habits. The final week included a big cleanup to which the local community was invited.



Trash Hero Palangka Raya visited 170 children at three different kindergartens over the course of 2025, to plant the seeds of environmental awareness in an age-appropriate way. Volunteers played games and sang songs with the children before inviting them to do a cleanup of the school grounds, which was reportedly done with great enthusiasm!



Trash Hero Switzerland gave a talk about zero waste principles and practice to 40 middle-schoolers at the Inter-Community School in Zurich.





GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL INFORMATION

GOVERNANCE

Organisational structure

The Trash Hero network consists of the Swiss-registered non-profit association, Trash Hero World (THW); the foundation Yayasan Trash Hero Indonesia (THI); the non-profit associations, Trash Hero Thailand (THT) and Trash Hero Myanmar; the registered charity Trash Hero UK (THUK); and many unincorporated Trash Hero chapters worldwide. Each chapter is run by volunteers and affiliated to Trash Hero World and their national Trash Hero organisation, if one exists.

The network is led, supported and governed by Trash Hero World through its Board and the global coordination team. All these entities (incorporated and unincorporated) are considered part of Trash Hero World for reporting purposes.

We also work with Friends of Trash Hero World, a non-profit corporation with 501(c)(3) status in Washington, USA, who raise funds to support our mission.



THW Board members

The Trash Hero World board is made up of five unpaid Trustees:

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



Global coordination team

In 2025, Trash Hero World funded the salaries of seven network staff, through our partners in the UK, Indonesia and Thailand, as well as one member of staff in Switzerland. All other work is carried out by volunteers. Staff members as of Dec 2025:



Rima Agustina,
Network Programmes
Coordinator, THI



Diah Ayuditha,
Country Admin,
THI



Gina Gegana,
Education Officer,
THI



Daryl Gema,
Network Digital
Designer, THI



Seema Prabhu,
Network Executive
Director, THUK



Yusuf Pratama,
Network Data
Officer, THI



Rahel Schaub,
Head of Finance &
Fundraising, THW



Supawan
Srirattana, Country
Admin, THT

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 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.

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) 2-6, 8 and 11-16.



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: In 2025 we focused on finding new donors and areas of grant-making, particularly at an international level, through our new 501(c)(3) legal vehicle in the USA and the registered charity Trash Hero UK.

Inability to maintain quality across the network

Approach: In 2025, we defined new staff positions to ensure consistent and efficient operations for the coming years. Key processes continued to be reviewed and documented. Internal communication, monitoring and reporting are being improved.

Fraud, corruption, theft

Approach (ongoing): Transparency is a key organisational value. In 2025, we maintained strict control mechanisms for expenses, accounting and reporting at all levels of the organisation and improved procedural documentation. 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.

Key person dependency

Approach: Key people in the organisation have been identified. We continue to document standard operating procedures, processes and critical knowledge, to enable cross-training. In 2025, we expanded our programmes team to better distribute key roles and tasks.

Reputational damage

Approach: In 2025 we revised all organisational policies and created new ones. Our ethical funding policy continues to protect our reputation and independence. We have clear guidelines for collaborating with other organisations to ensure no conflicts of interest in our activities. We maintained our international trademark protection and extended it into new classes in key jurisdictions.

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 safer recruitment policy designed to deter and detect inappropriate conduct; a child protection policy; and a 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.

HOW WE WORK

OUR work is guided by the simple principle that meaningful environmental change happens when people lead by example and act where they live. We translate the global challenge of plastic pollution into practical and consistent community-driven actions that build trust over time. In this way, we have seen behavioural and systemic change grow from local commitment and cooperation, rather than large financial resources.

We currently deliver three programmes - Action & Awareness, Trash Hero Communities and Trash Hero Kids - designed to be accessible, non-political and rooted in everyday participation. The programmes are run through volunteer-led community groups known as chapters. These are formed only where a team of residents are ready to commit. It is important that each chapter can fully understand and engage with its particular local context and needs and not be seen as “outsiders”. At the same time, they remain connected to a global movement. Trash Hero World provides training, guidance and materials, alongside network monitoring and coordination that maintain quality, leverage resources and allow chapters to learn from one another.

To strengthen transparency and community trust, we do not finance any normal chapter operations. Instead, they are coached to seek local in-kind support, fostering resilience and shared ownership. Trash Hero World itself is financed through donations, grants of different kinds, and some earned income. Our [ethical funding policy](#) informs our approach to all such arrangements.

Collaboration is equally central to our approach, at both the local and global levels. By working with organisations that share our goals, we extend our reach and deepen our expertise. Trash Hero is an active core member of Break Free From Plastic, contributing to regional working groups, published reports and communications work. Our membership in GAIA (Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives) and IPEN (International Pollutants Elimination Network) connects us to global expertise on climate, health and zero waste, ensuring our local work remains informed by the latest science, research and best practices.

The majority of our work (around 80%) is carried out in Southeast Asia, with the rest in Europe and America. A list of active chapters can be found at trashhero.org/our-network



Strategic priorities for 2026

A summary of our current strategic plan is provided below. This plan is due for review in 2026, but still reflects the broad long-term goals of the organisation, focused around building a strong and influential movement, making real progress towards zero waste.

STRENGTH

We will:

- Give volunteers and staff opportunities to connect and learn new skills and knowledge
- Maintain an open and transparent organisational culture
- Regularly assess risks, performance and progress at all levels
- Report and celebrate impact internally and externally

INFLUENCE

We will:

- Create maximum impact with every piece of work
- Build a strong (social) media presence and following
- Increase our knowledge and education offering
- Explore new ways to report impact

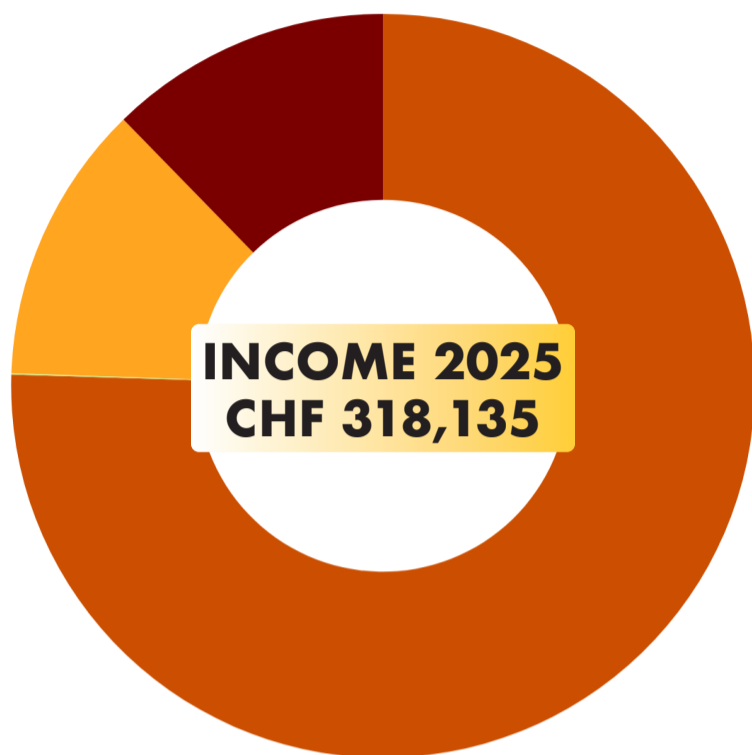
CHANGE

We will:

- Provide ongoing training and support materials for volunteers doing community work
- Support in-country networks for knowledge exchange
- Focus more on education and data collection at cleanups
- Increase local zero waste projects
- Tell more success stories; and expose false solutions and greenwashing

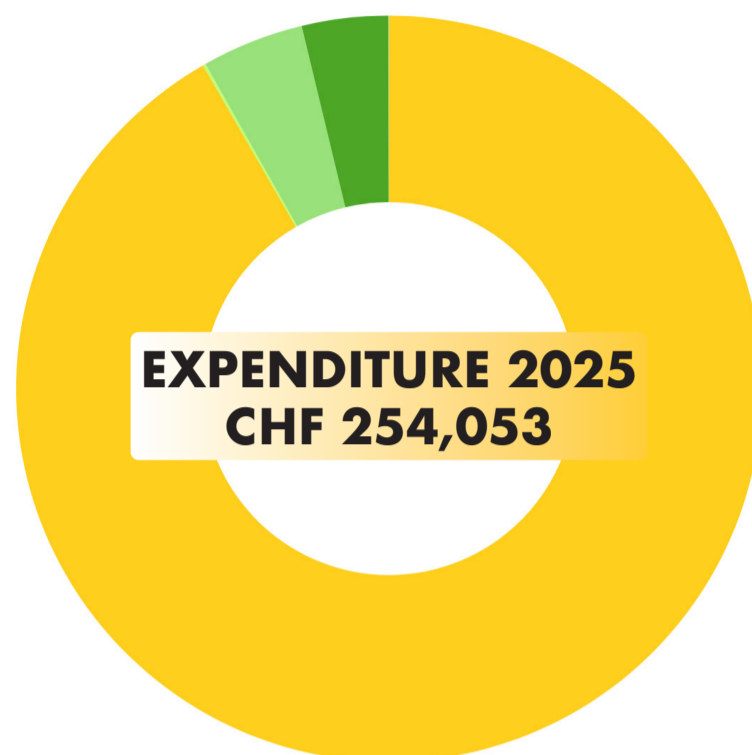


FINANCIAL REVIEW



INCOME 2025
CHF 318,135

Grants & Donations: 240,136 | Trading activity 185
Partnerships 38,695 | Network in-kind contributions 39,119



EXPENDITURE 2025
CHF 254,053

Programmes 233,583 | Merchandising -313
General Operations 11,278 | Fundraising 9,547
Financial costs -42 | New reserves 0

IN 2025, Trash Hero World’s income from direct donations reached CHF 240,136*. In addition, contributions from organisations in the global Trash Hero network amounted to CHF 39,119, which directly covered part of their operational expenses. This resulted in a total income of CHF 279,255, almost CHF 10,000 more than in the previous year. Donations from individuals have declined again, while we have received more funding from foundations and non-profit organisations. Country organisations have more than doubled their part.

Grant-making organisations remained our largest source of funding in 2025. However, it’s not just the large amounts that count for us - every single donation is important.

Donations from companies have declined slightly.

Sales of our branded Trash Hero products (reusable bottles and bags etc.) were very limited. All sales are made at cost price (without profit). Some of the materials in storage were used for our projects in Switzerland and Germany, which explains the income in cost of merchandise.

In 2025, an outstanding amount from a long-standing partnership

was settled, resulting in a more than doubling of this revenue. We remain open to new partnerships, but when making our selection we ensure that our values and independence are not compromised.

Our final income in 2025 was CHF 318,135. This is almost 10% more than the previous year’s income.

Of this, we used CHF 233,583 directly for our programme activities. These costs consist of the working hours of the employees in our global network, family meetings, legal services and brand protection, programme materials and other expenses.

While the total project expenditure is only slightly lower than in the previous year, there has been a significant shift between projects, particularly from Action & Awareness to Trash Hero Communities. This was due partly to the expansion of the THC programme and its need to provide individually-tailored training and materials to support volunteers, as well as to fulfill the broader public education goals. A&A is comparatively less resource-intensive, as well as being more well-established, which reduces the training requirements.

We extended our trademark protection to two more countries and registered it in additional classes. In addition, the first registrations expired after 10 years were renewed. This investment will protect the

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

FINANCES

Trash Hero name and brand for existing and future chapters in our network.

Fundraising and general administration costs were reduced again and amounted to CHF 20,825. This represents only 8% of total expenditure.

Together with a minor extraordinary income of CHF 194, we closed the year with a positive annual result of CHF 64,276. All restricted funds were used for their intended purpose this year, and the annual surplus strengthens our financial stability for future activities.

Trash Hero World is grateful for the continued contributions of all our volunteers, in-kind donors, and professionals offering pro bono services. This includes members of the management team, hours spent on administrative, fundraising, accounting and legal work, as well as the delivery of our programmes. Our relatively low expenses are due to their incredible generosity.

Rahel Schaub
Head of Finance & Fundraising
Trash Hero World



Reserves Policy

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

We have therefore created reserves that will cover the budgeted salaries and programme costs across the network for at least 6 months. 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 fund 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 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. No additional reserves were created this year as we are financially secure enough to be able to maintain operations for at least six months.

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 especially encouraged to see that the first organisations in the global Trash Hero network are moving towards financial self-sufficiency. Some costs that were previously covered by Trash Hero World were able to be paid directly through local fundraising. This income has been included in our financial statements to reflect the contribution to our global impact.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported us financially, regardless of the amount.

A special thank you goes to the Swiss company, 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 23 March 2026 and is signed as authorised on its behalf by Roman Peter, President.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	2025		2024	
	CHF	%	CHF	%
ASSETS				
Cash in hand	1,434.00	0.2	1,389.30	0.2
Bank deposits	350,005.54	51.0	285,429.60	45.9
Merchandise inventory	13,215.00	1.9	13,967.00	2.2
Debtors	498.59	0.1	1,670.07	0.3
Accrued income	7,776.55	1.1	6,140.15	1.0
Reserves	313,084.48	45.6	313,084.48	50.4
Total	686,014.16	100	621,680.60	100
LIABILITIES				
Trade creditors	787.45	0.1	730.27	0.1
Accrued expenses	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0
Funds brought forward from previous period	307,950.33	44.9	285,008.80	45.8
Reserves	313,000.00	45.6	313,000.00	50.3
Funds carried forward	64,276.38	9.4	22,941.53	3.7
Total	686,014.16	100	621,680.60	100

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. The financial statements have been prepared using the accruals basis.
2. 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.
3. The annual financial statements include funds raised directly by other organisations in the Trash Hero network and used during the financial year. These have been included as "Network In-kind Contributions".

FINANCES

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Total 2025 CHF	Total 2024 CHF
INCOME		
VOLUNTARY INCOME (Grants & donations)		
Individual giving (unrestricted funds)	39,733.61	26,844.73
Individual giving (restricted funds)	47,481.90	108,856.00
Corporate giving (unrestricted + restricted funds)	3,377.60	3,705.15
Institutions (unrestricted + restricted funds)	900.00	4,607.82
Foundations & non-profit (unrestricted funds)	48,000.00	26,860.00
Foundations & non-profit (restricted funds)	100,642.88	82,500.00
Network in-kind contributions (restricted)	35,009.37	14,922.13
Network in-kind contributions (unrestricted)	4,109.82	1,630.83
Total	279,255.18	269,926.66
EARNED INCOME		
Trading activity	184.87	4,193.63
Partnerships	38,695.05	17,223.15
Other income	0.00	218.38
Total	38,879.92	21,635.16
TOTAL INCOME	318,135.10	291,561.82
EXPENDITURE		
PROJECTS & PROGRAMMES		
Action & Awareness	-70,754.78	-109,982.96
Kids & Education	-28,517.75	-40,205.58
Trash Hero Communities	-134,310.00	-87,722.13
Total	-233,582.53	-237,910.67
COST OF MERCHANDISE	313.00	-5,250.75
TOTAL COST OF RAISING FUNDS (voluntary income)	-9,546.80	-15,399.57
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES	-11,278.28	-14,089.92
TOTAL FINANCIAL COSTS (transaction fees, currency exchange gains / losses)	41.65	4,030.62
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	-254,052.96	-268,620.29
Extraordinary incomes	194.24	0.00
Allocation to cash reserves	0.00	0.00
Net income / deficit for the year	64,276.38	22,941.53
Funds carried forward	64,276.38	22,941.53

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 2025

The following organisations and individuals gave gifts of CHF 5,000 and above during 2025:

- CHARISMA Stiftung für nachhaltige Entwicklung
- Stiftung Drittes Millennium
- Margarethe und Rudolf Gsell Stiftung
- Stiftung Nord-Süd
- Stiftung Pro Evolution
- Uniscientia Stiftung
- Walo Kamm Foundation
- Project ECHO
- Antonis Schwarz
- Beatrice Fischli Hendry
- Familie Aeschbach / Grossmann

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.

2025

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS:	CHF	92,011
ACTION & AWARENESS:	CHF	20,000
TRASH HERO COMMUNITIES:	CHF	123,043
TRASH HERO KIDS:	CHF	5,000
FAMILY MEETINGS:	CHF	82
TOTAL DIRECT DONATIONS:	CHF	240,136



DONOR STORIES



Racing towards a better future

Jonas Fischer and his brother organised a weekend go-kart tournament for two teams in which each of the 32 participants contributed an entry fee. The pot of money collected was destined to be given to the charities supported by each team captain, with the winning team receiving the largest share. This year, Jonas's team won - and Trash Hero World was his chosen cause. We were thrilled to receive 1,344 euros from the event, which also helped to raise awareness for the issues we are tackling among the drivers, their families and spectators.



Our American friends

Friends of Trash Hero World, our new legal vehicle in the USA, got off to a flying start, raising a \$4,800 donation for Trash Hero Thailand. This was put to immediate use to fund the family meeting in Bangkok, an important part of the volunteer calendar (see p. 7). The 501(c)(3) status of FOTHW allows US donors to claim tax-deductible contributions.

Small change for big change

VIVARTE in Horgen, Switzerland is a small family business. When the staff received some unexpected tips for their gift wrapping service in December, they decided together to donate them to Trash Hero. It is kind gestures like these that make our movement so strong. And every penny donated will be put to good use!



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; and 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. But from the smallest minimart owner to the biggest five star hotel, all support received is priceless!

Trash Hero World were also very grateful to receive an offer of free accommodation during the global plastics treaty negotiations in Geneva in August. We were hosted by Ariane Cherix, a supporter who lives just a few minutes walk from the Palais des Nations, saving us a potentially very large hotel bill.



Donations may be made to:

Trash Hero World
 Raiffeisenbank Oberseetal, Switzerland
 IBAN: CH25 8080 8007 8875 3059 8
 International: SWIFT-BIC RAIFCH22XXX
 Or directly via trashhero.org/donate



TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Trash Hero World

Hauptstrasse 32, 6034 Inwil, Switzerland

+41 (0)76 683 3317

trashhero.org

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)

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

