



**International Geneva**  
**Directory of Swiss Global Health Actors**

**Swiss Red Cross | SRK**

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**BACKGROUND AND MISSION**

Swiss Red Cross strives to prevent and alleviate human suffering in Switzerland and abroad. It protects people's health, life and dignity. It boosts their capacity to help themselves and others. SRC is a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and acts in accordance with the Movement's seven Fundamental Principles. It works for particularly vulnerable and needy people and groups, as all people enjoy equal rights and are entitled to be a part of society.

As the only National Society recognised by the Swiss Confederation in Switzerland, and in accordance with its role as an auxiliary to the public authorities, the SRC performs a number of important humanitarian tasks. The core business areas of the SRC in Switzerland are health, social integration, and search and rescue. Services are provided in those areas by the SRC cantonal associations. The SRC concentrates its work abroad on two spheres of activity that are crucial to development and poverty reduction: health and disasters. In Switzerland, it also helps foster the general public's awareness of the links between poverty, health and disasters. It advocates the interests of particularly vulnerable people on issues related to both spheres.

**AREAS OF INTEREST**

- Development cooperation
- Humanitarian aid
- Access to health and healthcare
- Community-based health care and first aid

**HEALTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

Health is a human right and a resource for social and economic development. In keeping with the "right-to-health" approach, the SRC centres its work on access to health by vulnerable and marginalised people. With regard to the sustainable reinforcement of local health systems, the SRC works to promote both supply and demand, focusing on the interface between basic care and the population and on bridging existing gaps. When it comes to primary health care, the SRC therefore emphasises health promotion and equitable access to basic care. Health promotion is closely intertwined with the availability of clean drinking water, sanitary facilities and good nutrition. The SRC's emergency relief activities also centre on ensuring basic health care by rapidly bridging gaps in broken-down systems.

Next to primary health care, the SRC has many years of experience and expertise in the specialised medical fields of eye care and blood transfusion. It provides support for its partners, most often health ministries, in both fields at local and national level to improve quality management and advises them on policy issues. Effective and sustainable improvements in health require the use of approaches that focus on the various groups and systems. The SRC applies the following priority approaches to that end:

- Consolidating the health capacities of local communities and individuals;
- Strengthening health systems with a view to access for all;
- Promoting healthy living conditions (health determinants);
- Engaging in advocacy for health.

#### **GOVERNANCE AND STAFF**

Staff is composed of 485 people, with nearly 5000 collaborators and 58.000 volunteers. Thomas Heiniger is the current president, and 11 members of the council are supporting his work.

#### **FUNDING SOURCES AND BUDGET**

CRS for a total amount of CHF 124.000.000 is mainly funded through three streams, more or less equal in size: private actors (donations and sponsors, foundations and companies), contributions from public institutions (humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, Swiss Solidarity, the Federal government and cantons are important partners and institutional donors), and income-generating activities and other National Societies of the red cross movement. About 15% of them is spent in administration and fundraising, and the remaining part is split roughly in equal parts for Swiss-based and abroad activities.

#### **PUBLICATIONS**

Publications are available at <https://www.redcross.ch/de/node/5907/view>

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