




voices

Formerly Society for  
Threatened Peoples

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



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**IMPRESSUM**

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## Editorial

**2025 made it clear that the world's rulers will stop at nothing to secure resources for themselves and expand their power.** Militarism, force and repression are omnipresent again, from the illegal wars in Gaza and Ukraine to human rights violations in China, Russia or the USA.

The geopolitical situation is alarming and a cause of concern for many people, including those in Switzerland. **However, the people working to protect human rights and the environment throughout the world bear the brunt of the direct consequences.** Voices works with them in long-term partnerships. Our Annual Report explains how joint projects, targeted campaigns and political work in Switzerland, the Amazon and the Arctic made an impact during 2025.

**In Switzerland,** a Federal Council report confirmed that Tibetans and Uyghurs living in the country are subject to surveillance, intimidation and pressure from the People's Republic of China. The report is the result of a petition by Voices and its partners, and lays a foundation for better protection of and a joint commitment to basic rights.

**In the Amazon,** Voices launched a campaign on the MRN bauxite mine in Brazil, raising awareness of the local river communities' fears of a dam bursting. It is calling on the Swiss Glencore Group, a shareholder in the mine, to use its influence to create transparency and security.

**In the Arctic,** Voices organised workshops for Sámi activists on the financial flows that are behind raw materials projects. The aim is to give the indigenous Sámi people a say on projects that impact their territories at an early stage.

**Our partners' commitment is encouraging. And it shows that we in Switzerland can also raise our voices in support of human rights, democracy, international law and global solidarity.**

Since 1 July 2025, our organisation has been called "Voices". With our new name, new President and sharper strategy, we will continue to fight for the human rights of Indigenous and minorized communities. We need your voice to do so too – today more than ever. Thank you for your support. Our work would be impossible without it.



Anna Leissing

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Leissing'.

Director



Christine Badertscher

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Badertscher'.

President

# Business Strategy

The new strategy for 2025–2029  
while also introducing a  
Here are the key p



14,000 supporters

## Topics

Three focus areas now guide our work

- Economy & human rights
- Climate & environment
- Protection & security

Photo: Patrick Hürtimann



## What we do

### Regions

Our human rights work covers the following regions:

- Amazon
- Arctic
- People's Republic of China

Photo: Franziska Rothenbühler



# Voices 2025-2029

builds on Voices' previous work  
number of innovations.  
oints at a glance :



1 new name



Active on 3 continents

## Activities

We support our partners and their right to self-determination by:

- Targeted campaigns
- Specific projects
- Continuous awareness raising

Photo: Voices



## How we do it

## Guidelines

These guiding principles are central to our work:

- We act in solidarity internally and externally
- We act in a decolonial and antiracist manner
- We strive for structural change
- We maintain a critical and constructive attitude
- We work in partnership
- We promote knowledge and learning
- We take responsibility

Photo: Adriana Duarte Bencomo



Campaigns & projects: Climate and environment / Amazon

## Indigenous communities protecting the Amazon

The Amazon, the Earth's 'green lung' and largest carbon sink, is threatened by deforestation and resource mining. This has irreversible consequences for the climate. Voices assists Indigenous communities in protecting their habitat.

© Niklas Franzen



The river communities in Saracá, Macedônia, and Boa Nova fear that the dams at a nearby bauxite mine could break.

### January – December 2025

Cocoa farmers supported by Voices harvest 250 kg of cocoa beans from their corps.

### September 2025

By entering into the FTA with the Mercosur countries, Switzerland implicitly approves Amazon deforestation. Voices warns of the consequences for Indigenous peoples and the environment.

### November 2025

Around a thousand people join Voices in demanding that Glencore commit to safety and transparency at the MRN mine.

## Activities

The Amazon rainforest in northern Brazil is home to the country's largest bauxite mine, which is operated by Mineração Rio do Norte (MRN). The local river communities in Saracá, Macedônia and Boa Nova fear that the dams holding back the tailings from this resource mining could break. Swiss company Glencore holds a 45 percent stake in MRN. Voices launched a campaign and called on Glencore to urge MRN to provide greater transparency on the dams' construction methods, to arrange an independent safety assessment, and to develop emergency and evacuation plans in consultation with the local population.

Voices worked closely with the Indigenous Yanomami, Tupinambá and Mundurukú communities, so as to empower them to protect their rights and habitat in the Amazon.

## Achievements

In December, the Mundurukú community's organisation PARIRI opened its headquarters in the central Tapajos region. This serves as a modernly equipped coordination center for contact with village communities, a meeting place for peaceful resistance, a repository for important documents, and guest accommodation. Voices was able to play a significant role in getting it built, thanks to donations.

On Tupinambá land, three workshops were held in 2025 to train young people as communications professionals, or 'comunicadores', so that they can report on everyday life in their community.

Members of the Yanomami community were able to double their cocoa production to 250 kg of cocoa beans compared to the previous year. In addition, 13 workshops were held. Cocoa cultivation is an important alternative to illegal gold mining.

## Outlook

In 2026, Voices will continue to work closely with its partner organisations in the Amazon and to raise their concerns in Switzerland: for instance in its MRN campaign an in addressing Switzerland's (EFTA) free trade agreement with Mercosur. Voices will not accept an agreement that fails to include binding protection of human rights and the environment.

### ● November 2025

Around 300 members of the Tupinambá community demonstrate at the annual 'Grito Ancestral' to protect their habitat. Voices and its partners fund the event.

### ● November 2025

The UN Climate Change Conference COP30 is held in Belém. Indigenous communities are very present, but their demands are not given enough attention.

### ● December 2025

PARIRI opens its new headquarters on Mundurukú land in the Amazon, after construction work co-funded and supported by Voices.

Campaigns & projects: Protection and security / China

## Trade with China – not without human rights!

In 2025, Switzerland pushed ahead with expansion of its free trade agreement with the People's Republic of China. In the negotiations, however, too little attention was paid to human rights, workers' rights and the protection of exile communities living in Switzerland.

© Franziska Rothenbühler



In February, the Federal Council confirms in its report that Tibetans and Uyghurs are being monitored in Switzerland by the Chinese government.

### January 2025

Switzerland and the PRC celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations. Voices and partners demand greater respect for human rights.

### February 2025

In a report, the Federal Council confirms the Chinese government's practice of transnational repression and a lack of protection for those affected in Switzerland.

### April 2025

Voices invites two TNR experts to Bern and organizes workshops with those affected, as well as a panel discussion.

## Activities

Tibetans and Uyghurs living in Switzerland are being subjected to transnational repression (TNR) by the People's Republic of China (PRC): pressure tactics, threats and surveillance. At the start of the year, the Swiss government published a report, based on a scientific study. In this report, the Federal Council acknowledges that TNR exists in Switzerland.

Together with partner organizations, Voices called on the authorities to take concrete measures. This includes ensuring that the rights of Tibetans and Uyghurs are not sacrificed for the sake of close economic ties with the PRC.

## Achievements

The report published by the Federal Council in February 2025 and the associated recognition of the existing threat to affected communities are the result of a petition, initiated by Voices and its partner organizations in 2018. In response to the report, parliament instructed the Federal Council to do more to protect persecuted communities from TNR.

Together with other NGOs, Voices closely monitored the negotiations on the free trade agreement (FTA) with the PRC, and submitted demands to SECO, calling for binding rules on the protection of human rights and workers' rights.

## Outlook

Voices demands that respect for human rights, and the associated protection of Tibetan and Uyghur people from Chinese repression, be a fundamental part of the ongoing negotiations on an expanded free trade agreement. Otherwise, Voices will join forces with partner organizations to launch a referendum.

Voices also continues to call on the Federal Council to actively involve exile communities in the development of effective measures against the PRC's practice of TNR, as well as to facilitate low-threshold contact points for those affected and to promote a raising of authorities' awareness.

### ● September 2025

Parliament adopts the motion 'Protection of persecuted communities from exertion of influence by foreign states'. The Federal Council must now provide better protection for exile communities living in Switzerland.

### ● September 2025

Martin von Muralt is put in charge of addressing TNR at federal level.

### ● December 2025

Voices screens the film 'In Search of My Sister'. Afterwards, the protagonist takes part in a discussion about Chinese TNR.

Campaigns & projects: Business and human rights / Arctic

## Protecting their own habitat with knowledge

The habitat of the Indigenous Sámi is under additional threat from a new EU law on mining strategic resources in Europe. Active knowledge about the financial sector will help the Sámi defend their rights.

© Denis Sinyakov / Greenpeace



Reindeer herding is a central element of Sámi culture and identity.

### February to April 2025

Voices holds three online workshops with Sámi representatives, in which experts convey their knowledge of the financial world.

### June 2025

At the first Lávdan Sámi Arena in Kautokeino, members of the Sámi community discuss regional challenges; Voices offers a workshop.

### June 2025

At the Nussir copper mine in Norway, Sámi activists stage protests that result in temporary suspension of blasting.

## Activities

Geopolitical interests and commercial projects, including those related to the energy transition, are threatening the habitat and cultural heritage of the Sámi: The Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA) makes it easier to mine certain resources within the EU and in strategic partner countries. Many such projects are being implemented without obtaining free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) from the Indigenous communities affected. The EU is thus violating international standards. Against this backdrop, the Sámi Council and activists are increasingly striving to exert influence on financial players at an early stage – with support from Voices.

In 2025, Voices continued to support Indigenous human rights activists from Russia, who are being subjected to criminalization and repression. For security reasons, we do not report on this work.

## Achievements

In June 2025, the first Lávdan Sámi Arena was held in Kautokeino, northern Norway. A delegation from Voices was also in attendance. In an exchange that transcended national borders, members of the Sámi community discussed the urgent challenges threatening their region and their future. A workshop offered by Voices, on dealing with financial players, also played a central role. This is because investors are often unaware that human rights are being violated during implementation of economic projects.

Prior to the workshop, four online learning events were held with a group of Sámi experts, together with external experts. Along with the workshop, these events provided the basis for a handbook, which Voices developed jointly with the Sámi and helped to finance via crowdfunding. It will be published in 2026.

## Outlook

In 2026, the handbook on dealing with financial players will be published. In cooperation with the Sámi Council, efforts will be made to make sure it reaches as many people as possible.

Voices will also support the Sámi by helping to raise awareness of the consequences of the new EU law on mining strategic resources.

### ● August 2025

During a protest at the Nussir copper mine, activists who had been demonstrating since June are carried off the site by police.

### ● November 2025

In the 'Films for Future' series, Voices and Incomindios show films about the Sámi struggle for identity and self-determination, followed by a discussion.

### ● November 2025

Sámi activists travel to Brussels for the EU's Raw Materials Week, so as to combat the promotion of mining projects on their land.

Campaigns & projects: Business & human rights / Switzerland and international

## Tools for a fairer economy

Indigenous communities around the world are threatened by economic projects. A handbook shows how they can use complaint procedures to assert their rights against firms. And with the Responsible Business Initiative 2.0, we are creating a legal basis in Switzerland.

© Pedro Armestre for Alianza por la Solidaridad-ActionAid



In Guatemala, water is withdrawn from the Cahabón River by the RENACE hydroelectric power plant. The indigenous population is affected by this.

### January 2025

Voices joins forces with committed members to collect signatures for the new Responsible Business Initiative.

### May 2025

The required signatures in favour of the new Responsible Business Initiative, and against a separate path for Switzerland, are handed over to the Federal Chancellery.

### June 2025

Voices attends a SIRGE Coalition meeting and develops joint strategies for enforcing Indigenous rights in the context of the energy and mobility transition.

## Activities

Alongside legal proceedings or UN mechanisms, complaint procedures can also offer a way of taking action when Indigenous rights are violated. A total of 52 countries worldwide have committed to following the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct. If these standards are breached, the communities, individuals or organizations affected can file complaints with the National Contact Points (NCPs). Voices represents civil society at the Swiss NCP and, together with partners, has produced a handbook that shows Indigenous communities how to proceed when filing a complaint, step by step.

## Achievements

In early 2025, Voices was involved in mobilising support for the Responsible Business Initiative and, as part of the Swiss Coalition for Corporate Responsibility (KKV), submitted over 287,000 signatures in May 2025, calling for a law to ensure that Swiss corporations protect human rights and the environment.

Voices published the handbook at the end of 2025. It was developed in close collaboration with the SIRGE (Securing Indigenous Peoples' Rights in the Green Economy) Coalition, OECD Watch, Indigenous experts and NGOs. It is available in English, Spanish and Portuguese. The 70-page publication explains the OECD guidelines, highlights their particular relevance to Indigenous peoples and explains the complaint process, step by step, with practical advice and example cases.

## Outlook

In 2026, Voices plans to hold workshops on this new tool, together with partner organizations, so as to raise awareness of it and to ensure that it can be used by Indigenous communities as a means of defending their rights.

As part of a new strategy, Voices has made 'business and human rights' one of its key topics. Voices is helping to enshrine the rights of Indigenous communities and minoritized groups in Swiss economic and trade policy, as well as among commercial players. Moreover, as part of the Swiss Coalition for Corporate Responsibility, Voices will continue to strive for a responsible economy that respects human rights and the environment.

### ● September 2025

Voices supports the Nuclear Weapons Ban Initiative as a member of the civil-society-based alliance behind it, because Indigenous communities are severely affected by the nuclear industry's uranium mining.

### ● December 2025

Voices, in collaboration with SIRGE and other partner organisations, publishes a handbook on the OECD complaint mechanism.

# voices

Together. Loud and Clear.  
For Human Rights.

## Name change

As of the 1st of July 2025, our organization, formerly known as the Society for Threatened Peoples, is now called 'Voices'. This name change reflects an increased focus on the core objective of Voices: to collectively ensure that the many voices calling for human rights worldwide are heard.

The name is not entirely new: It is a word that was always used for our members' magazine – and our new logo, with its colouring and distinctive 'V', also continues what has gone before. The term 'Voices' is short, can be used in all languages, and emphasizes the strength and resilience of Indigenous communities and minorized groups.

© Susanne Goldschmid / Ex-Press



## New president

Voices has a new president: In May 2025, National Councillor Christine Badertscher (Green Party, Bern) was elected as our new president. Her focus is on human rights, international law, democracy and sustainability.

The position had been vacated by Lisa Mazzone, who stepped down after seven years, and is also president of the Green Party of Switzerland. Her work focused on corporate responsibility and on transparency in the Swiss gold trade: She took Voices to the Federal Supreme Court to demand disclosure of Swiss refineries' gold suppliers.

We wholeheartedly thank Lisa Mazzone for her lengthy and dedicated service, and warmly welcome Christine Badertscher as our new president!

©Voices



### Benefit concert

The interns at Voices constitute an essential pillar of the organization: highly trained and passionate, they make an important contribution. This year, fundraising intern Giulia Cilli succeeded in once again securing a Bernese band for a benefit concert: RotRaum, whose drummer is also a former Voices intern, waived their fee to support Voices. Thank you so much for that!

### War in Gaza

In October 2025, an agreement between Israel and Hamas came into force. Nevertheless, the situation remains fragile. Voices welcomed the measures taken by Switzerland to support the US peace plan, but also pointed out that they did not go far enough. As the depositary state of the Geneva Conventions and the seat of the UN Human Rights Council, Switzerland has a special responsibility regarding peace and human rights in the region.



©Omar Ashrawy / Shutterstock

Voices calls on Switzerland to provide long-term support for reconstruction, to recognize Palestine as a state, to end military cooperation with Israel, and to impose sanctions on high-ranking Israeli government officials and violent settlers, as well as to consistently commit to human rights, to the promotion of peace and to dealing with the past in Israel and Palestine.

© Citupi Amazonia



### UN Climate Change Conference in Belém

On the 22nd of November 2025, the UN Climate Change Conference COP30 came to an end in Belém, Brazil. The goal of phasing out fossil fuels and establishing tangible climate protection measures was not achieved. Even though more members of Indigenous communities than ever before were present in the vicinity of the conference, yet they were insufficiently heard. Their demands for

protection of the Amazon were not incorporated into the latest resolutions.

If protection efforts fail, the consequences for the climate will be severe and irreversible. The way of life of the communities in the Amazon region offers concrete solutions for climate protection.

## Financial Report

Voices can look back on an intensive year. With revenue of CHF 2'111'582.38, we are slightly below the prior year's revenue. We were able to use part of our reserves to expand our substantive work, which is why we are reporting a deficit of CHF 96'956.88 this year.

Once again, we were able to invest more in our programs, which has enabled us to run more effective projects and campaigns. This is another strategic element of our work: we work more closely with affected communities, provide more support for their projects and enable them to demand their rights more successfully. While membership fees and donations have fallen, purpose-specific donations have increased slightly. This is a success of our efforts to diversify our income.

Our work would not be possible without the generous support of our members, donors, foundations, institutions and the public sector. Voices would like to take this opportunity to express its sincere thanks for this support. It is committed to using the available resources efficiently and in a targeted manner, as well as to managing them carefully.

### Balance sheet as on 31 December 2025

ASSETS	2025	2024
LIQUID ASSETS	624 470.49	828 145.05
OUTSTANDING ASSETS / RECEIVABLES	4 429.33	3 878.37
OTHER SHORT-TERM RECEIVABLES	843.10	0.00
ACCRUED INCOME	16 288.40	29 824.47
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>646 031.32</b>	<b>861 847.89</b>
TANGIBLE ASSETS	8 875.55	14 180.90
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL ASSETS</b>	<b>8 875.55</b>	<b>14 180.90</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>654 906.87</b>	<b>876 028.79</b>

LIABILITIES	2025	2024
TRADE PAYABLES / CURRENT LIABILITIES	60 698.69	64 530.72
ACCRUED EXPENSES / DEFERRED INCOME	26 160.95	53 909.56
<b>TOTAL BORROWED CAPITAL</b>	<b>86 859.64</b>	<b>118 440.28</b>
FUNDS	89 245.66	161 997.95
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>89 245.66</b>	<b>161 997.95</b>
ORGANISATIONAL CAPITAL	575 758.45	779 810.61
NET PROFIT / LOSS	-96 956.88	-184 220.05
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>478 801.57</b>	<b>595 590.56</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>654 906.87</b>	<b>876 028.79</b>

## Income statement for 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

INCOME	2025	2024
SALES REVENUE	728.80	878.80
MEMBERSHIP FEES AND DONATIONS	1 518 703.50	1 681 899.25
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INSTITUTIONS, FOUNDATIONS AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR	590 156.88	581 315.89
OTHER INCOME	1 993.20	3 369.95
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2 111 582.38</b>	<b>2 267 463.89</b>

EXPENDITURE	2025	2024
PROGRAMMES	1 365 749.79	1 428 290.23
PERSONNEL EXPENSES	374 079.63	442 634.45
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	93 568.06	89 217.67
FUNDRAISING COSTS	456 076.07	389 259.85
DEPRECIATIONS	5 305.35	6 098.65
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>2 294 778.90</b>	<b>2 355 500.85</b>
<b>OPERATING RESULT</b>	<b>-183 196.52</b>	<b>-88 036.96</b>
FINANCIAL INCOME	-6 344.76	-1 565.31
EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS	0.00	-21 849.00
<b>RESULT BEFORE CHANGE OF FUNDS CAPITAL</b>	<b>-189 541.28</b>	<b>-111 451.27</b>
TOTAL FUNDS CAPITAL	92 584.40	-72 768.78
<b>ANNUAL RESULT</b>	<b>-96 956.88</b>	<b>-184 220.05</b>

### General accounting principle

The financial reporting of Voices complies with the professional financial reporting recommendations Swiss GAAP FER 21 and core FER, and with the Swiss Code of Obligations. This financial report represents the actual situation regarding assets, finances and profits.

The 2025 financial report was approved by the executive board on 16 March 2026 for the attention of the members' assembly.

The complete annual financial statement and audit report can be ordered from Voices or downloaded from the website: <https://www.voices-ngo.ch/annual-report/>.

# Activity Report

## Who we are

Voices Switzerland is an association according to the Swiss Civil Code and is the Swiss section of the Society for Threatened Peoples International. Further sections of the STP International exist in Germany, South Tyrol / Italy and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The STP has representatives in various other countries.

## What we do

- We support local efforts to strengthen the human rights of minorities and indigenous communities.
- We document and seek penalties for the violation of collective and individual human rights, call for clarification, punishment and compensation in this regard, and seek solutions together with the affected communities and all stakeholders.
- We protect the interests of our partners in dealings with authorities and decision-makers, in cases where they cannot do so alone.

The substantial activities carried out in 2025, the successes achieved and the outlook are described in the annual report. The financial successes are listed accordingly in the Financial Report section.

## Organisation

**Our executive board is elected for two years (re-election is possible) and is made up of the following people:**

Christine Badertscher (president, elected until 2027)  
 Miges Baumann (vice-president, elected until 2026)  
 Lea Ackermann (elected until 2027)  
 Muriel Bonnardin (elected until 2027)  
 Mark Pieth (elected until 2027)  
 Eva Schmassmann (elected until 2027)  
 Franziska Stocker (elected until 2027)  
 Claudia Stürzinger (elected until 2027)

In 2025, the executive board met four times and worked for a total of about 120 non-remunerated hours for Voices.

## The management of Voices was carried out by the following person:

Anna Leissing (since 2024)

In the course of 2025, a total of 15 permanent employees and 10 interns worked for Voices. Internships usually last 6–12 months.



### Our supporters

Most income is generated from membership fees and donations made by individuals. At the end of 2025, Voices had about 14'000 active supporters – as in the previous year. The recruitment of members and donors simultaneously serves to raise public awareness of the organisation's objectives. New members and donors are recruited by means of stand campaigns, at events, on doorsteps, via mailings and on the internet.

We have received donations and grants from foundations, organizations, and public authorities to support various campaigns and the implementation of impactful projects. These include the City of Geneva, which provided CHF 45'000 to support a project promoting Indigenous women, and the Catholic City of Zurich, which contributed CHF 5'000 to support a project promoting an Indigenous community in the Amazon.

Voices would like to take this opportunity to express its heartfelt thanks to all its members, donors, foundations, organisations and public sector supporters for their generous support. Without them, our work would not be possible. Voices would also like to express its sincere gratitude to the members of the board, the staff and the interns for their untiring commitment and immense enthusiasm for human rights. And lastly, we wish to express our gratitude to all our programme partners, who persistently stand up for their rights, often in the face of serious threats and enormous risk, and who have our utmost appreciation.

Support  
Indigenous and  
marginalised  
communities with

a membership



a donation



or a bequest



**Protecting human rights is only possible  
if we work together.**

Your donation strengthens the rights of oppressed  
communities worldwide. Thank you for your generous  
contribution.

Donations: IBAN CH05 0079 0016 2531 7232 1

**Thank you!**



**voices**

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