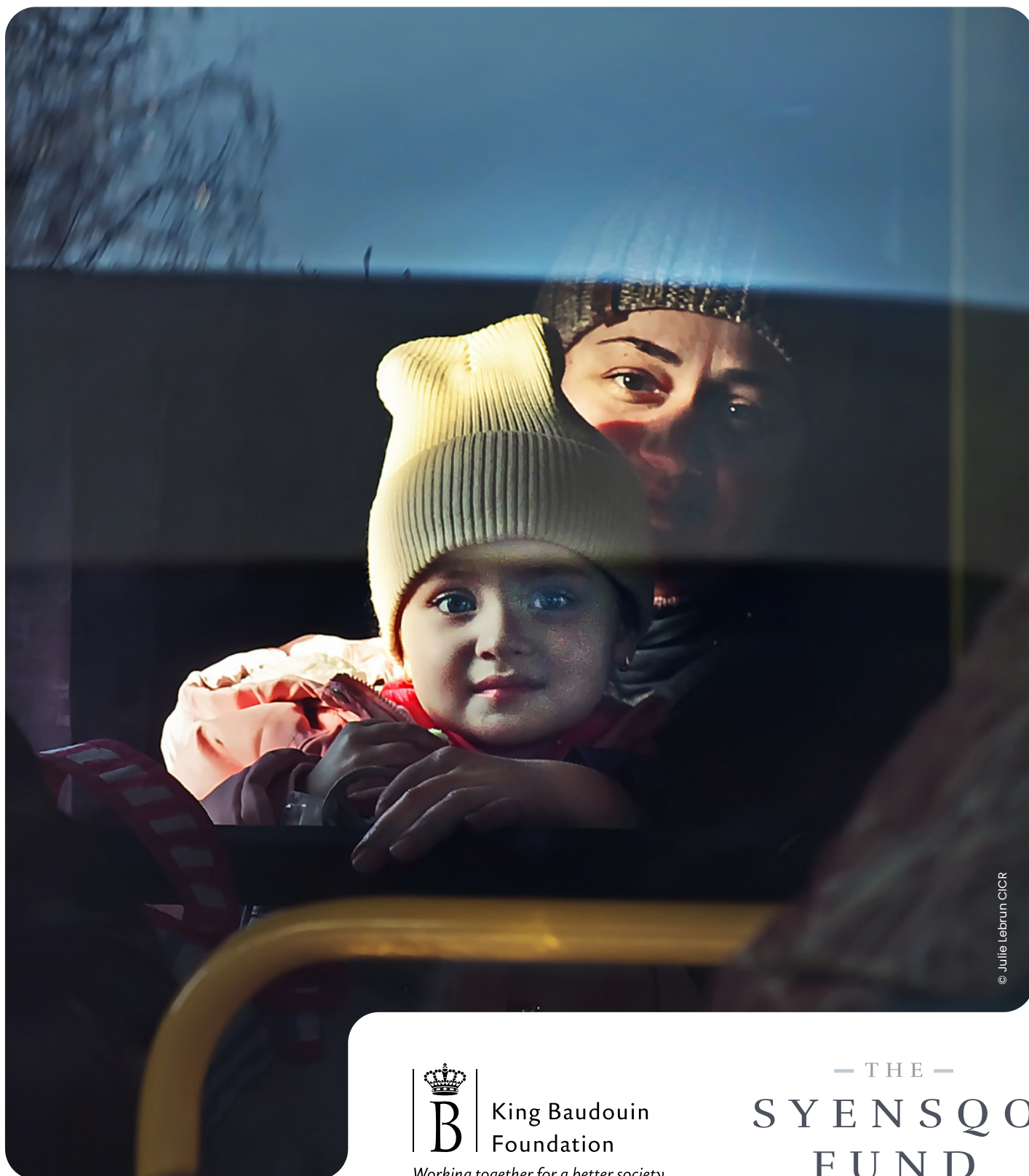


Solidarity Fund

# SUPPORTING SOCIETY THROUGH SOLIDARITY

Activity impact report 2020-2023



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King Baudouin  
Foundation

*Working together for a better society*

— THE —  
SYENSQO  
FUND



*The Solidarity Fund consistently contributes both locally and internationally to aid Ukrainian refugees. In the picture, a Ukrainian mother and child are forced to leave their native country due to the ongoing conflict.*

*Image courtesy of the Belgian and International Committee of the Red Cross*

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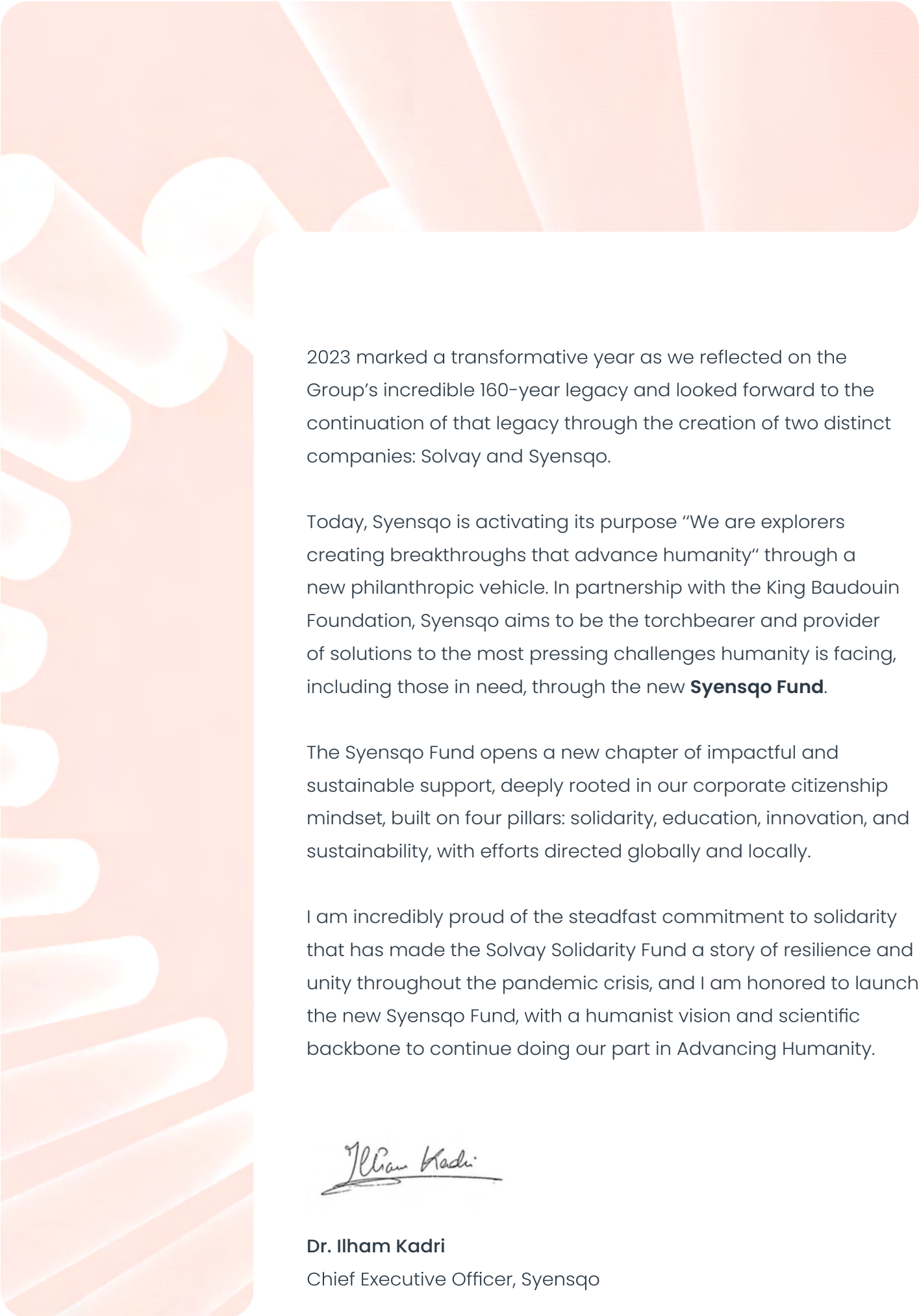
# Foreword by Ilham Kadri



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In 2020, we announced the launch of the Solidarity Fund in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Initially aimed at aiding our employees facing pandemic-related hardships, the Fund evolved, extending its support to embrace our wider community. From medical needs to education, mental health, and even the aftermath of natural disasters and conflicts, we have been truly committed to our humanist values of lending a helping hand to those in need.

Over the past four years, we have granted €10,674,225 to support communities across 16 countries through 67 projects and helped 755 employees. We facilitated the opening of a Covid-19 ward in Devnya, Bulgaria, in the midst of the pandemic, and we continue to fund Covid-19 research with the goal of preventing future pandemics. We provided aid to various countries, including Pakistan, Belgium, Germany, Turkey, and Syria, which were severely hit by earthquakes and floods. We facilitated access to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) research for students from underprivileged backgrounds. And, amidst the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, we remain committed to offering our support, delivering both on-the-ground assistance and funding for integration and rehabilitation efforts. Closing this chapter, I would sincerely like to thank our shareholders, our Board of Directors, our senior managers, and all our employees for their contributions and commitment to the Solidarity Fund.

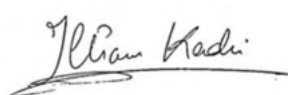


2023 marked a transformative year as we reflected on the Group's incredible 160-year legacy and looked forward to the continuation of that legacy through the creation of two distinct companies: Solvay and Syensqo.

Today, Syensqo is activating its purpose "We are explorers creating breakthroughs that advance humanity" through a new philanthropic vehicle. In partnership with the King Baudouin Foundation, Syensqo aims to be the torchbearer and provider of solutions to the most pressing challenges humanity is facing, including those in need, through the new **Syensqo Fund**.

The Syensqo Fund opens a new chapter of impactful and sustainable support, deeply rooted in our corporate citizenship mindset, built on four pillars: solidarity, education, innovation, and sustainability, with efforts directed globally and locally.

I am incredibly proud of the steadfast commitment to solidarity that has made the Solvay Solidarity Fund a story of resilience and unity throughout the pandemic crisis, and I am honored to launch the new Syensqo Fund, with a humanist vision and scientific backbone to continue doing our part in Advancing Humanity.



**Dr. Ilham Kadri**

Chief Executive Officer, Syensqo

# THE SYENSQO FUND

## Objective

Supporting a wide range of projects in countries where Syensqo is active, aimed at improving conditions for people and the planet. Committed to aiding our employees and those facing distress or enduring disasters.

## Scope

Deeply rooted in our corporate citizenship mindset, the **Syensqo Fund** will support our initiatives, centered around main philanthropic priorities:

- Protecting the Planet
- Fostering Education
- Nurturing Innovation
- Supporting Solidarity

## Governance

Administered by the King Baudouin Foundation (KBF), managed by an Evaluation Committee and overseen by a Management Committee.

Members:

- Christian Jourquin (chairman)
- Stefan Schaefers
- Peter Piot
- Nathalie van Ypersele
- Ilham Kadri

## Means

The new Syensqo Fund applies strict governance rules to each project, which must:

- Be aligned with our philanthropic priorities
- Improve the wellbeing of end beneficiaries
- Have a significant social impact
- Support communities close to Syensqo sites
- Address societal challenges



# Solvay Solidarity Fund

## Key figures since the launch in 2020

Total amount collected  
€ 15,316,000

Total amount granted  
€ 10,674,225

Collective support  
€ 7,541,093

67  
Projects

16  
Countries



From € 10,000 to € 1,000,000

Individual support  
€ 3,133,132

1009  
Applications submitted

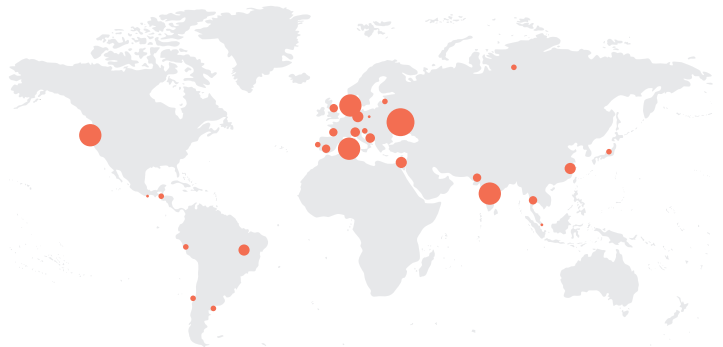
755  
Applications validated



From € 100 to € 100,000

## Geographical distribution

Argentina Belgium Brazil Bulgaria  
Chile China Croatia France Germany  
Guatemala Hungary India Italy Japan  
Latvia Mexico Pakistan Peru Poland  
Portugal Russia Singapore Spain  
Syria Thailand Ukraine UK USA



# Collective Support

Since its creation in 2020, the Solvay Solidarity Fund (SSF) has donated to 67 projects in 16 countries. The recipient organizations addressed a spectrum of needs, including emergency response to natural disasters, Covid-19, education, mental health assistance, and guidance for individuals and communities affected by the war in Ukraine.

## Covid-19: Helping communities cope

In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic swept across the world, bringing global communities to a standstill as we were all ordered to stay home and minimize in-person interactions. For many, these necessary restrictions had a devastating impact on livelihoods and mental and physical wellbeing. Through the SSF, we extended support to communities around the world, supporting them with basic needs, education and medical care to alleviate the burdens brought on by the crisis. The following cases are just a few examples of how the fund has supported those in need.

Total amount granted:

€ 2,735,502

## Asia: Support to guar farmers in India

The **Sustainable Guar Initiative** is an integrated program aimed at providing guar bean farmers in the Bikaner district of Rajasthan, India, with the tools and knowledge to adopt climate-smart agricultural practices that improve guar yield and soil fertility, protect local resources, and improve the region's climate preparedness and resilience. The initiative ensures that guar farmers can earn a better living, and lead healthier lives.



Farmers were suffering from lower revenues due to severe restrictions of movement and a lack of sanitary protective equipment to continue their work safely. Additionally, the region experienced reduced guar yield as the result of poor monsoon conditions. Through the Fund, we provided around 5,000 farmers with guar seeds and protective equipment such as masks, sanitizers, gloves and soaps. Additionally, we funded the construction of more rainwater storage wetlands to collect and store scarce water supplies for the farmers.

The amount donated also supports a variety of initiatives centered around **empowering women**. This includes offering training courses focused on hygiene, health, nutrition and digital literacy. We also funded a menstrual awareness campaign, which has so far trained more than 3,000 women and young girls on menstrual hygiene and how to create their own cloth pads. This has given women the ability to learn about entrepreneurship by giving them the skills and tools to start making and selling their own clothes, all supported through the SSF.

Finally, we partnered with **BanQu** to launch a transaction platform based on blockchain for the guar supply chain. The platform ensures full traceability and transparency, boosts equality and revenues for the local farmers, and crucially allowed them to reduce face-to-face time during the pandemic. The platform also records other actions related to the program, such as training on sustainable farming practices, school attendance for children, and initiatives dedicated to the empowerment of female farmers.



*"My family and I are very thankful for your support during these very challenging times!"*

**Guar farmer**

### Latin America: Donating food baskets to Brazilian communities

During the pandemic, many families in Brazilian communities close to Solvay did not have enough food to eat. The SSF donated money to the Brazilian **NGO Gerando Falcões' campaign** against hunger to provide 1,000 food baskets to the communities of Paraisópolis and Heliópolis, the two largest favelas of São Paulo, and Santo André city.

*"The Solvay Solidarity Fund has made an essential contribution to ensuring that more than 1,5 million people had the right to food security in the midst of a pandemic that had killed hundreds of thousands of people and devastated families across the country. We need this support to fight and break the cycles of poverty in Brazil."*

**Ellen Pimentel, Gerando Falcões NGO**

## North America: Fostering the Future of STEM

Many talented individuals from communities underrepresented in the chemical industry face barriers that prevent them from pursuing STEM-related education. This issue was further exacerbated by the pandemic as many communities faced hardship.

The SSF played a critical role in the launch of the Future of STEM Scholars Initiative (**FOSSI**). We funded the education of six talented students who all came from communities close to our Solvay sites. Through the support of FOSSI, these students received tools, guidance and mentoring in STEM-related majors to lead them to successful careers in the science industry.

One of those students was Arianna Pankey, who was majoring in biology at Howard University in Washington, DC. Like many of FOSSI students, Arianna was attracted to STEM through her personal life experiences. Her mother's diagnosis of multiple sclerosis inspired her to pursue biology and a career in research that will lead to the alleviation of the pain and suffering that her mother has endured, in addition to countless other families who have been impacted by various medical conditions.

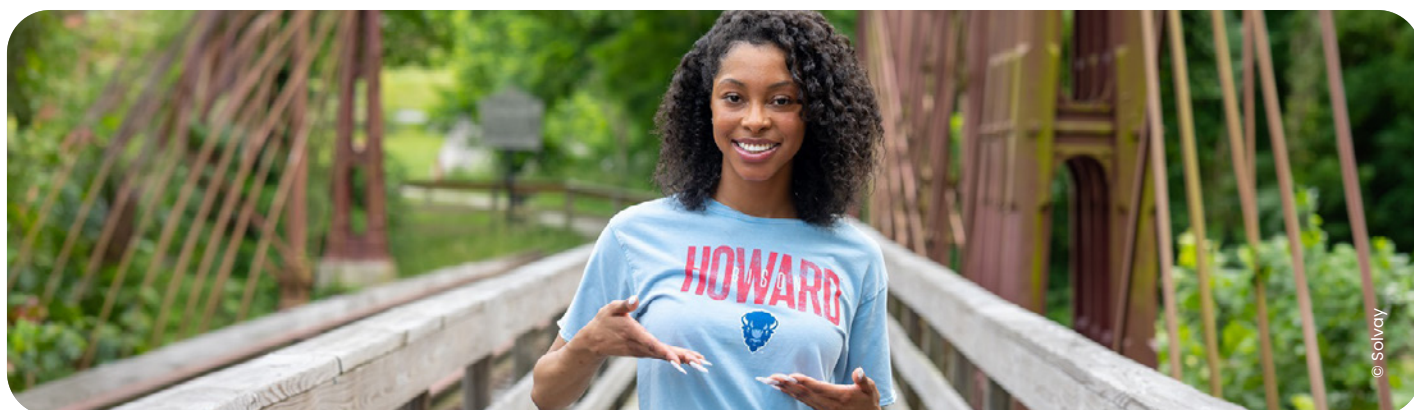
*"The fear and sense of powerlessness I felt when I was a child after my mother's diagnosis have been replaced with an insatiable passion to be the best student I can possibly be."*

**Arianna Pankey, Student at Howard University**

## Europe: Inauguration of a Covid department at Devnya hospital

The Region of Varna in Bulgaria, was severely hit by the second Covid-19 wave. The situation urgently required hospitals to open additional sections for patients affected by the virus. Following the region's urgent appeal, **Devnya hospital**, close to one of our sites, came out as the best option but was in need of total renovation.

The SSF provided the support needed to fund the remuneration of 18 medical staffers for at least three months, specialized medical equipment such as x-ray machines and oxygen supply devices, and the refurbishment of hospital rooms and other premises. In less than a month, the hospital was able to admit and treat Covid-19 patients.



*"When the Mayor of Devnya came to me with the request to renovate a section of the hospital for Covid patients, I directly forwarded it to the Solidarity Fund. The approval from the fund's Committee was received almost instantaneously."*

**Spiros Nomikos, Solvay Bulgaria**  
**Country Manager**

## Worldwide: Nurturing wellbeing and mental health

### EMPREINTE HUMAINE

To assess the wellbeing of Solvay employees, we regularly conduct internal Pulse surveys. Since 2020, we have seen an increase of 10% in employee stress levels. The reasons for this are diverse: pandemic fatigue, the war in Ukraine, and the rising cost of living. Some of our colleagues in Shanghai were hit extra hard due to the impact of full lockdowns, resulting in high stress and mental health issues.

With funding from the SSF our medical teams organized **webinars and workshops** with Empreinte Humaine for employees and managers across all regions on how to navigate uncertainty and how to adopt a 'wellbeing at work' mindset.

employees	25 sessions	1360 attendees	10 languages
managers	26 sessions	258 attendees	10 languages

### TEACH FOR BELGIUM

Young people were especially hit hard during the pandemic as they had to be educated from home, missing out on connections with their peers, as well as pivotal moments in their school career. Students from underprivileged backgrounds were particularly disadvantaged as they faced additional hurdles in accessing resources and support. This has left a mark, as teachers reported a lack of motivation among students following the pandemic. Additionally, teacher shortages have since grown in Belgium with many educators grappling with the effects of the pandemic too.

Teach for Belgium (TFB) is an NGO that aims to reduce educational inequalities. Through the project, **'Building Resilient Educators'**, the organization hopes to better understand how to strengthen the resilience of teachers working in disadvantaged schools and teach their students a similar approach.

*"During Covid-19, reports of depression and anxiety among young people doubled in comparison to pre-pandemic estimates. This crisis has made teachers and those who support them acutely aware that the mental health of their students is also their responsibility, as it is a fundamental condition for learning, thus teachers must work on their own resilience in order to fully support their students."*

**Caroline de Cartier, Director of Teach for Belgium**



*"When I entered the wellness area, L'Essentiel, I was amazed and pleasantly surprised by the space, the bright colors, the design aesthetics – from the furniture and the kitchen, to the magnificent garden. It is a place where I know I feel good, calm and serene. With activities that are adapted to my pathology, the center is a place of complete relaxation."*

**Laurence, a patient at the center**

## L'ESSENTIEL

In adherence to lockdown restrictions, wellness centers were forced to close their doors. This included many centers that provided care to people undergoing cancer treatment.

L'Essentiel Namur is a wellness center located in Belgium that specializes in holistic treatments based on the principles of **integrative medicine for cancer patients**.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, L'Essentiel was the only healing center open; the center even adopted more agile ways of working to serve the increasing influx of cancer patients. Through the SSF L'Essentiel ensured patients could still receive treatment and enjoy a warm and friendly place where they could seek solace, support, and advice on how to live with their condition.

## SUPPORT FROM NEXT GEN (SOLVAC)

Members from the Next Gen of Solvac (founding family shareholders under 45) made a significant contribution to the SSF through **fundraising efforts**. In addition to aiding employees, their donation allowed us to support research, health and social organizations in Belgium involved in the fight against Covid-19.

Through the Class Contact program, ten children who were suffering from long-term illness were able to follow lessons from the hospital or their homes. Additionally, senior individuals battling Alzheimer's disease received the necessary resources to safely remove their masks after receiving the Covid-19 vaccine and engage in social interactions, which greatly improved their wellbeing.

Furthermore, students who are homeless were provided with the support to buy essential technology and school supplies; and a wellbeing center that usually provides aid for cancer patients received the resources to expand their activities to Covid-19 workers.

<b>780</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>23</b>
patients since its opening in 2019	beneficiaries	treatments	activities offered to patients

## Covid-19: Funding research to prevent future outbreaks

Since its inception, humanity has had to endure many pandemics. The most recent Covid-19 pandemic has laid bare society's vulnerability. Furthermore, the world's continuing population growth means it is inevitable we will have to contend with new health crises in the future.

In wake of the recent pandemic, the French **National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS)** Foundation started a range of applied projects – to which the SSF has contributed – with the aim to better understand coronavirus infection mechanisms and be better prepared for future health crises.

One of those projects is the creation of a screening platform, ViroCrib, to identify molecules that are effective against SARS-CoV-2 and that can also be mobilized quickly to study new viruses. The SSF supported the research project of Etienne Meunier from the Institute of Pharmacology and Structural Biology (IPBS) on developing next-generation therapies against respiratory infections by exploiting genetic variability. The findings of this research will also be applicable to viral infections beyond respiratory diseases.

Additionally, the Fund also contributed to the clinical trials of the **Medical Humanities Research Center in the province of Alessandria**, Italy, which will allow for a better analysis of cases and co-morbidities.

## Support to Ukraine: Unity amidst adversity

On 24 February 2022, the world was in shock as Ukraine was invaded by enemy forces, marking the largest attack on a European country since World War II. In 2024, it is estimated that more than 14,000 people on the Ukrainian side will be affected, with over 3,000 being civilian casualties. Additionally, one third of Ukraine's population has been forcefully displaced. When the war in Ukraine broke out, the SSF promptly mobilized to ensure the safety of Solvay staff in the region. We also extended resources to organizations supporting refugees and providing medical assistance and frontline aid.

Total amount granted:

€ 2,250,533



## Emergency help: Providing swift aid

### BELGIAN AND INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

The Belgian Red Cross is a key player when it comes to providing humanitarian aid. Based on the lessons learned from the European flood crisis in July 2021, the Belgian Red Cross set up a crisis unit to support the victims of the war.

The SSF provided the Belgian Red Cross with funds to strengthen its international operations on Ukrainian soil and its logistical support activities in Belgium to assist refugees. With the support of the Fund, the Belgian Red Cross developed a guide on the design and implementation of collective accommodation centers, which was distributed to all involved public partners.

Furthermore, the Fund's contribution made available **front-line logistical assistance** to the municipalities of Brussels and Wallonia, enabling them to welcome Ukrainian refugees with more than 800 mattresses, 3,500 beds and cots, 300 blankets, 300 bedding kits, and 2,500 hygiene kits.

And on Ukrainian soil, the funds from the SSF were used for **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) operations**, mainly in the eastern region and around conflict zones. This contribution enabled direct aid to people most affected by the conflict, including 650,000 people living in or near the affected areas in the regions of Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk and Kherson; 330,000 wounded people and their families; and 102,000 internally displaced people through distribution points in less-affected cities.



## Medical support: Caring for those in need

### HOSPITALS IN UKRAINE

The challenges of delivering routine and emergency healthcare services during wartime in Ukraine have not only strained the system but also pose a significant threat to the **recovery of war victims**. The protection of women and girls has emerged as a critical concern, with an estimated 2.5 million individuals, mainly women and girls, in need of prevention and response services to address gender-based violence.

CHU Saint-Pierre hospital, CHU Saint-Pierre Foundation, and the city of Brussels have been collaborating since June 2022 with Hospital No.6 in Kiev, which serves an 80% civilian and 20% military injured population in the armed conflict in Ukraine.

The support involves coordinating the transfer of equipment for reconstructive surgery, providing training to medical teams in surgical procedures, and contributing to the rehabilitation efforts for victims. The Brugmann Hospital also assisted by providing beds. Thanks to the SSF, Hospital No.6 in Kyiv was able to receive medical equipment for surgery, physiotherapy and motor rehabilitation. Funding was used for training sessions dedicated to the treatment of victims of sexual

violence and supporting the accommodation of women in shelters during intensified bombings, to the hospital of Lviv.

*"The Kyiv Hospital is saturated with civilian and military casualties from occupied cities and combat zones, and the surgical equipment delivered has allowed for better quality treatment, strengthening advanced surgical procedures to enable restorative surgery. To this end, several orders for the purchase of technical equipment were successfully sent to Kyiv Hospital 6, thanks to the financial support of the SSF."*

**Philippe Leroy, CEO of CHU Saint-Pierre**



## BE FOR UKRAINE

BE for Ukraine is a Belgian non-profit with the sole mission of helping Ukraine in the most effective way possible. The project was born in 2022 on the initiative of a group of friends concerned about the situation on the ground.

The ASBL is based on three axes:

- Delivering basic necessities and medical supplies to Ukraine.
- Bringing Ukrainian refugees to Belgium and placing them with host families.
- Buying, reconditioning and transporting ambulances with specialized medical equipment to Ukraine.

With the support from the SSF, the organization has been able to purchase two ambulances along with the necessary medical equipment.

## Promoting the integration and belonging of refugees

### CLUB L AND ACADEMIE ROYALE DE BELGIQUE

Club L brings together women from diverse professional backgrounds through informal get-togethers to overcome barriers between professions, generations, nationalities, cultures and political beliefs, and support each other's professional development.

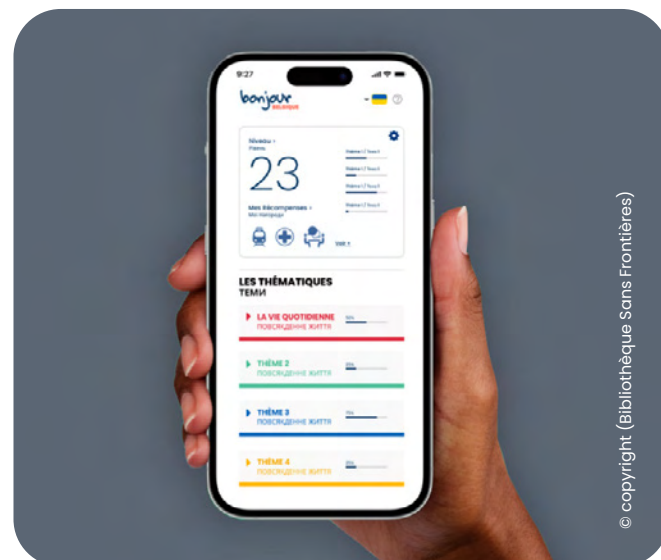
The Académie Royale de Belgique is an independent learned society that promotes science and arts on an international level.

The ongoing war has severely impacted the Ukrainian scientific community, with many scientists forced to leave their homeland and abandon their research. Those staying behind often face the challenge of losing access to critical research resources. In response, Club L collaborated with the Académie Royale de Belgique to award one of the 'Peace, Science, and Arts' prizes. These prizes aim to **support the work of Ukrainian researchers and artists**, as well as Russian individuals who oppose the invasion and have been directly affected by the war.

The SSF contributed to the scientific bursary awarded to Aurika Paskar, enabling her to further her **research in Human Rights**.

*"Our purpose was to support an exceptional woman who had to leave Ukraine during the war as to allow her, despite the war, to pursue her research, her activity and thus contribute to building the future of a free, democratic Ukraine."*

**Mrs. Adrienne Axler, Club L**



Bibliothèques Sans Frontières Belgium (BSF Belgium) is dedicated to improving access to culture, information and education. With over 65,000 Ukrainian refugees arriving and continuing to arrive in Belgium, BSF Belgium has developed a free smartphone application called 'Bonjour Belgique' to aid them in their integration. The app offers interactive exercises for **learning French and Dutch from Ukrainian**, offering practical scenarios for everyday situations, as well as a library of cultural content and information on Belgium.

*"Bonjour Belgique completely meets my needs for learning French, particularly in a context where I don't have a lot of free time, but I still need to be able to learn French as quickly as possible, for myself and my family."*

**Ukrainian refugee**



## **BONJOUR BELGIQUE**

Since the onset of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, 6.2 million Ukrainians have sought refuge in the EU and neighboring countries. For these refugees, integration into their host countries is complicated by the challenge of transitioning from the Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet.

In order to reduce cultural and language barriers and expedite the integration of Ukrainian refugees into society, the funding provided by the Solidarity Fund played

a pivotal role in the development of the application.

*"Knowledge of the host country's language is key to facilitate the integration of refugees: to find their way around, to undertake the administrative procedures for integration or simply to integrate and project themselves. The Solidarity Fund supported BSF in the implementation and localisation of Bonjour Belgique in Dutch, allowing the application to be available all around in Belgium and therefore expanding its beneficial impact to Ukrainian refugees."*

**Dimitri Verboomen, Director**  
**Bibliothèques Sans Frontières Belgium**

## MAGNIFICENT

"Magnificent" is a non-profit project where women, men and children refugees from Ukraine can receive new or almost new clothes and shoes on a weekly basis. The shop, based in Tervuren near Brussels, provides clothes, books, and a beauty studio and is run on by a group of volunteers.

Support from the SSF covered the store's rent and other expenses related to the maintenance of the premises.



## A HELPING HAND FROM SOLVAY EMPLOYEES

Employees around the globe were encouraged to translate corporate actions into local initiatives using money made available through the SSF. The sites have been working with their local communities to provide much-needed aid and assistance for relief efforts or for providing more direct support for Ukrainian refugees in their local areas. In addition to initiatives at sites in Spain, Italy, Belgium, France, two of the most notable efforts were launched in Rheinberg, Germany and Włocławek, Poland.



In **Rheinberg**, Solvay employees converted apartments located at the site into housing for refugees. Volunteering their own free time, employees renovated and furnished eight apartments to give shelter to 35 Ukrainian refugees.

*"The willingness among colleagues to help and donate is enormous. On short notice, employees renovated and furnished the apartments on their own, including the plant's fire department, which pitched in to paint walls on their own time."*

**Norbert Mülders, Rheinberg's Site Manager**

In **Poland**, employees worked with the local city hall to identify and collect the items most needed by refugees in the area. They also organized fundraising for a local foundation, and had all employee contributions matched through the SSF.

*"As soon as the war started we decided we needed to do something to help refugees in the local area who had made the difficult decision to leave their homes and cross the border into Poland."*

**Joanna Smolińska, Site Human Resources Partner in Włocławek**

Inspired by this activity, employees in **Lyon, France** and at our Headquarters in **Brussels, Belgium** also joined the effort, collecting vital aid that was transported to the site in Poland and supporting incoming refugees in any way possible.

*"I was deeply shocked when the war started. I am from Moscow and I came to Belgium four years ago. I have relatives living in Kyiv so I felt I had to help somehow. I live in Tervuren, a municipality near Brussels, where the first refugees arrived without knowing the language or the culture of Belgium. The majority came from eastern Ukraine where the war was raging. On this side of the country, the population mainly speaks Russian so I volunteered to be a translator for the municipality, take care of transporting people, give presentations on how to manage a budget, understand the cost of living in Belgium and local administrative procedures."*

**Sergey Morozov, Peroxides Sales Specialist at Brussels Campus**



## Natural disasters: Showing compassion in crisis

In the past years, the world has borne witness to a variety of natural disasters, including destructive earthquakes and devastating floods. These events have impacted the lives of millions of people with many losing their homes and loved ones. Through the SSF we have helped accelerate support on the ground, providing those in need with food, housing and medical aid.

Total amount granted:

€ 2,555,058

### Floods in Belgium, Germany and China

In the summer of 2021, Belgium, Germany and China were hit hard by devastating floods with many Solvay communities affected.

In Belgium, the SSF provided funding to the **Belgian Red Cross** to give 40,000 people access to emergency and clean-up efforts and, provide them with food and other resources. The amount donated also allowed firefighters in the Walcourt region to buy equipment for clean-up operations. The grant also helped dozens of schools in Walloon Brabant and Liege replace furniture, repair damage, and ensure students suffered as little disruption to their education as possible.

In Germany, the funding aided **Lebenshilfehaus**, a home for young people with disabilities of which 12 inhabitants tragically lost their lives in the floods. And in China, we donated to the **China Foundation**

**for Poverty Alleviation** (CFPA) to support the emergency aid effort and post-food reconstruction.

### AMONSOLI

Action Mondiale pour la Solidarité (AMONSOLI) is an association located in the Verviers region of Belgium. The organization devotes itself to the **socio-professional and cultural integration** of people largely from immigrant backgrounds through diverse activities that range from parenting and citizenship workshops to continuing education. One of its activities is 'the homework school', which sees approximately 100 children between 6-12 years participate during their extracurricular time.

In July 2021, many of the organization's beneficiaries were severely affected by the European floods. The organization offered its premises as shelter for these families. The SSF contributed to the purchase of a new facility for the organization, which allowed the association to keep offering its services. The organization has also increased its scope of activities and supports women who are the victim of gender violence.

*"We know how essential our social and professional integration and actions for coexisting are for vulnerable populations and their children."*

**Olivier Schroeder, Deputy Director**  
**ASBL Amonsoli**

## Floods in Pakistan

In the summer of 2022, record monsoon rains and melting glaciers in Pakistan's northern mountain regions unleashed unprecedented flooding that submerged a third of the country under water. Fueled by the climate crisis, these rains and floods were the worst in the country's history, affecting an estimated 33 million people, destroying millions of acres of crops, and leaving some communities with no access to clean water and entire villages cut off from critical services.



## NETWORK FOR HUMANITY

Network for Humanity and Social Development (NHSD) is an NGO located in Islamabad, Pakistan and provides aid to a number of social challenges, such as disaster risk education, health, and empowerment of vulnerable communities, among other concerns.

After disaster struck in the Sindh region, NHSD implemented the **'Funding for Flood Affecteds in Sindh and Balochistan'** to which the SSF provided financial support. The initiative provided relief by distributing food rations, clothes, tents and cooked meals in the devastated villages.

## WORLD CENTRAL KITCHEN

In response to these tragic circumstances in Pakistan, the non-governmental organization World Central Kitchen (WCK) partnered with Instant Aid to distribute fresh meals and water in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Thousands of meals were distributed to displaced families living in camps. Due to the high level need increasing across various affected regions, the WCK accelerated their response to **food-kit provisions**, supported by the SSF with the aim to distribute more than 191 tons of food in the region.



## Floods in Croatia

### NGO KKDIAMANT (UDRUGA KASACKI KLUB DIAMANT)

NGO KKDiamant is an organization located in Šeovica, Croatia, which initially was founded to support communities impacted by the Croatian Independence War, and has since continued to support individuals in managing anxiety and stress through equine therapy. The organization teaches participants valuable skills such as discipline, structure and consistency to foster a sense of stability and responsibility among diverse groups, including but not limited to those of various ages, abilities, identities, and backgrounds.



In 2021, the Fund supported the NGO with the construction of a covered riding arena, increasing operational availability to 300 dates per year. However, in June and July 2023, persistent flooding and a severe storm tore the arena down and destroyed the bedding.

The SSF allocated a grant towards the reconstruction of the riding arena, covering the overall infrastructure as well as essential expenses such as bedding, the installation of a security fence, and electrical enhancements.

This investment ensures that the NGO can continue providing the community with a safe and stimulating environment for both **physical and mental recreation**. Once completed, the organization plans to broaden the scope of the restored arena as a venue to host community events and summer activities. Construction is expected to commence in 2024, pending favorable weather conditions.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Lana Hamberger, HR Partner at Syensqo and Zagreb citizen, was on the lookout for equine therapy to support her son who is on the spectrum. Subsequently, she was introduced to NGO KKDiamant and came to witness first-hand what the organization means to its community.

*"You have this unique place of intergenerational solidarity with people of different ages and backgrounds coming together. The riding arena provides a safe, closed environment for riders and the horses to just focus on the task at hand without outside distractions. And for parents it's great too, because they can watch their children learning and growing from the sidelines. I have seen my son grow in self-respect and self-esteem. The Fund is not investing money into generating economic results, but in improving the life of people in the regions where we operate. There is a lot of potential to inspire future generations."*

**Lana Hamberger, HR Partner at Syensqo**

## Earthquake in Turkey and Syria

On 6 February 2023, southern and central Turkey and the northern and western part of Syria were struck by a devastating earthquake. An estimated 14 million people were affected and 1.5 million were left homeless. Over 59,000 people lost their lives. The earthquake has also done catastrophic damage to agricultural infrastructure, impacting many people's livelihood, destroyed water systems, and cut communities off from critical healthcare services.



### AFAD (MINISTRY OF INTERIOR DISASTER AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY)

AFAD is an institution operating in Turkey that aims to prevent disasters, mitigate disaster-related damages, deliver post-disaster relief, and promote cooperation among various government agencies.

In the wake of the earthquake, AFAD took the lead in establishing tent and container cities equipped with suitable bedding and organized transportation for **citizens who lost their homes**. AFAD also collaborated with public institutions, organizations and NGOs to deploy field kitchens and mobile kitchens, food banks and ovens to ensure people received warm and nutritious meals. Additionally, the organization assisted medical teams by offering essential services such as care, housing, heating, food, cleaning and hygiene.

The SSF's grant to AFAD's Earthquake Humanitarian Aid Campaign helped finance the immediate procurement and delivery of heaters to 5,700 families to meet the urgent needs of citizens in the aftermath of the disaster, in severe winter conditions.

### AHBAP

AHBAP – meaning 'friend' in Turkish, is a charitable organization based on collaboration, solidarity and helping those in need. The association offers both material aid and financial support to a variety of causes that contribute to creating compassionate communities and preserving and enhancing local culture.

To aid those affected by the earthquake, AHBAP has been responsible for procuring essential equipment, beds, blankets, as well as providing food and water. Moreover, in the wake of this natural disaster, many educational facilities were destroyed or damaged, resulting in the disruption of the education of nearly 4 million children in Turkey. AHBAP has made the **re-establishment of learning environments** a priority and has committed to building more



libraries, music and technology classrooms for their AHBAP schools.

The SSF contributed to AHBAP's relief efforts, ensuring that the people affected received proper care during the cold weather conditions. Additional funds were allocated to address the educational requirements of students whose schools faced damage or destruction. This grant facilitated the construction of a new 12-classroom school..

### **INTERNATIONAL BLUE CRESCENT RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION (IBC)**

IBC is an NGO that strives to improve the lives of those in urgent need and the most disadvantaged in the world, implementing health, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, and food security projects. The organization takes an impartial approach, upheld by its belief that all people have the right to be treated with dignity and have the right to shelter, food, healthcare and proper standards of living.

IBC's presence in Azaz in northwestern Syria enabled the organization to immediately assess the situation and organize aid when the earthquake hit. In collaboration with other organizations, IBC provided basic needs to 600 homeless families (approx. 4,200 people) in the form of food parcels, warm clothes and hygiene kits.

The SSF grant helped IBC to assess people's needs in the severe winter conditions and distribute food packages, hygiene kits and warm clothing to families.



*"Our house was severely damaged in the earthquake and we had to leave our house. My children are very young and not being able to feed them adequately made me very sad as a mother. Thanks to the food package support of IBC and Solidarity Fund, they fell asleep with a full stomach for the first time. Thank you very much for not forgetting us."*

**Syrian citizen**

*"Whether our support is extensive or modest, it ensures that at least one child receives proper nutrition, or a woman gains access to hygiene kits, particularly in times of disaster."*

**Salima Biglary, IBC programs and Partnerships Coordinator**



# Individual Support

When the Solvay Solidarity Fund was founded, its initial purpose was to support employees, their loved ones and Solvay communities through the hardship of Covid-19. While the scope has broadened since, employees remain key recipients of support, which includes financial aid, days off, help to families in distress, wellbeing, mental health support, and more. Since its creation, the SSF has approved approximately 755 applications for assistance.

Total amount granted:

€ 3,133,132

1009

applications  
submitted

755

applications  
validated

## Lightening employees' burden during Covid-19

In 2022, Chinese authorities bestowed the title of "National Harmonious Labor Relations Company" on the Solvay China branch, recognizing the Company's constructive relationship with employees and noting the significance of the SSF. We were one of only a few foreign names to earn this distinction, which recognized 350 enterprises across the country.



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*"The SSF is an outstanding initiative and highly recognized by employees who feel protected and safe working at this company. The Fund has already provided assistance in several areas, including China's Henan province, which received financial support when it suffered from severe floods in 2021 — a powerful action demonstrating our commitment to social responsibilities in China. The number of applications related to Covid-19 peaked during April and May when a massive lockdown was called for in Shanghai where people were facing real hardships."*

**Claire Wang, Country Human Resources Manager, China**

*"The SSF is an example of an employer going way beyond what is expected. One of our employees was diagnosed with Guillain-Barre syndrome after his Covid vaccination and was in critical condition. The SSF paid his medical bills and he is on his way to full recovery. It is also common in India to have older parents and grandparents living together, and the SFF helped fund treatment for these family members. The fund is saving lives."*

**Sandeep Patkar HR manager, India**

*"SSF applications increased in Japan as a result of several different sets of circumstances: the number of people infected with Covid-19, inflation and the depreciation of the Japanese yen. As the cost of living increased, some of our colleagues could no longer afford certain child/elderly care services. The Fund provided them with financial support and paid holidays. One of our colleagues affected by Covid-19 had to return to work even though she had not fully recovered from the virus' long-term effects. She was no longer eligible for sick leave, but that changed when applied for SSF support and was granted an extra 10 days of paid leave."*

**Wakana Tsugawa, Site Human Resources Partner, Solvay Japan**



## Supporting colleagues affected by war conflicts

Following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, we worked to ensure the safety of Solvay employees and their families in Ukraine, offering help and support to those who chose to leave and those who chose to stay. We set up a support network to foster regular contact with our employees and provide assistance as needed. One of our colleagues who had traveled to Russia to meet customers just before the invasion found himself separated from his family. We managed to evacuate his family from Ukraine to Croatia, which was no simple feat as Oleg was in Russia on a Russian passport.

*"We came together as Solvay employees and called on all of our networks to provide Oleg with a visa and safe passage through Turkey, Serbia and finally Zagreb, where he was reunited with his family. It was a real team effort with people from across the company pitching in to offer whatever help and expertise they could. Even the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) was involved."*

**Werner Cooreman, Chief Security Officer**

## Donating annual leave

In addition to financial assistance, employees can request extra days off to cover family needs or other urgent reasons. In 2020,

colleagues had the opportunity to donate days from their annual leave with the intention to allocate them to employees who needed time off to take care of family during the pandemic. The Fund has accumulated 807 days, which have been used for various purposes.

**807**

days collected

**678**

days allocated

*"We regularly communicate about how money from the Solidarity Fund is being used to support those in need, but the Fund's role in providing colleagues with time off when they need it most is not so well known. Often this time off can be just as useful to our colleagues – if not more so – than financial support."*

**Géraldine Ceusters, Occupational psychologist, Belgium**



When Belgium was hit by severe floods in the summer of 2021, Natacha was one of many whose home was submerged in the rising waters. Additional days of annual leave donated by colleagues allowed her to have the necessary time to deal with the situation.

Guenal's family were caught up in the earthquake that hit Turkey in 2023. Due to damage to communication lines, he was unable to reach his parents and other family members. When he eventually got confirmation everyone was safe, he applied for and was granted ten days of paid leave in addition to his annual leave and left for Turkey with a van filled with relief supplies to distribute to his family's community.

*"I had only been at the Group for 18 months and didn't expect to be able to benefit from the Solidarity Fund. The additional days off enabled me to go through this testing time with less anxiety, giving me more time to recover and manage all the tasks, such as finding another place to live and clearing out my house."*

**Natacha Dehalu, HR Strategic Business Partner**

*"I would like to sincerely thank the people who shared their compassion with me and my family and made this trip possible. The solidarity shown by the Group shows how much value they place on their employees. I am very grateful and proud to be part of this company."*

**Guenal Yilmaz, Filmline & Secondary Operations Operator**



