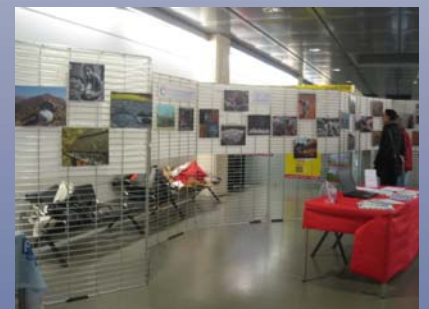




# International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA)

Presents

## Activities Report From 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012



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## Acronyms

<b>3ASC</b>	Association d’Appui aux Activités de Santé Communautaire
<b>ARCSA</b>	American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association
<b>ASWAF</b>	Africa Safe Water Foundation
<b>GROPERE</b>	Groupement pour la promotion et l’exploitation des ressources de l’environnement
<b>IRHA</b>	International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance
<b>IWRM</b>	Integrated Water Resources Management
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>PACT</b>	Parents - Authorities - Children - Teachers
<b>RUWADCP</b>	Rural Women and Deprived Children’s Programme
<b>RWH</b>	Rainwater Harvesting
<b>SDC</b>	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

In 2012, the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA) unwaveringly pursued its objectives in its four pillars of action, promoting Rainwater Harvesting and contributing to the fulfilment of Millennium Development Goals.

## Pillar 1: Formulation and execution of projects on the ground

Since its creation, the IRHA has worked to improve access to water and sanitation in children's institutions. Its Blue Schools programme, created in 2005-2006, transformed the main objective from simple water and sanitation improvements in schools, to the creation of the necessary framework for the personal growth of young people.

Nevertheless, ensuring access to water and sanitation is still central to this programme; and by the end of 2012, the IRHA started to provide 3,370,000 litres of water a year to 51 schools and orphanages.

### Outcomes of projects finished in 2012:

- 4 schools from the Blue Schools in Togo and Benin project
- 3,305 child and teacher direct beneficiaries
- 645,000 litres of water provided annually
- 14 new water tanks built
- 87 toilets and 33 urinals built
- 5,138 trees and four vegetable gardens planted
- 4 volleyball courts created
- 18 masons trained to build tanks and toilets
- 3,305 children and teachers given lessons on: "Health and Hygiene", "Environmental protection" and "Peace and Tolerance"

For the IRHA, 2012 was a year of continued work on on-going projects: with one project completed and three projects almost finished. The formulation of more projects was also begun towards the end of the year, ready for fundraising and implementation in 2013.

### Blue Schools in Togo and Benin

Sponsored by **Symphasis, Addax & Oryz Foundation and Vitol Foundation**

This project was finished in June after 16 months of implementation. It was the first project to take place in two different countries and with two local partners – 3ASC in Togo and GROPERE in Benin. The project was carried out in four schools - Dahé and Agbodji in Benin and Bogou and Dampiong in Togo - with 3,239 children and 66 teachers.



One of the new toilet blocks in Agbodji School and the vegetable garden in Dampiong School.

Drinking water and decent sanitation conditions are now guaranteed in these four schools through the construction of 14 water tanks, 87 toilets and 33 urinals. A volleyball court and vegetable garden were created in each school and 5,138 trees planted under the "A child, a tree" initiative.



One of the 14 water tanks built and Bogou School's new volleyball court.

Finally, children, teachers, masons and PACT Committee members all received training to ensure the results of the project continue long after the work is finished.

### Blue Schools in the region of Kaolack, Senegal

Sponsored by the **Canton of Geneva, SIG, Fondation Gertrude Hirzel, HSBC Bank, Bobst SA, SIGPA SA and nine Swiss Communes**

Due to delays in fundraising, work in the two schools of this project started at different times. All the project activities in the first school, Kahone 1, were completed in October. In the second school, Fass Kahone, the construction work was also finished, and by March 2013 the remaining training will be concluded. Our local partner for this project is Caritas Kaolack.



New toilet blocks for girls (left) and teachers (right) in Fass Kahone. The white structure is a drinking water fountain.

The two 50m<sup>3</sup> underground tanks were finished in both schools, as were the 26 toilets and 13 urinals. The toilets are separate for girls and boys, and hand washing facilities have also been provided.



Reforestation in Fass Kahone: the children are given a lesson on how to plant and look after their tree.

The grounds surrounding the schools were reforested with 1,149 trees – one tree for every child. By the end of the year, the teachers and members of the PACT Committees had received or were undergoing training on hygiene, environmental protection, peace and tolerance.

### Blue Schools in the region of Ikorodu, Nigeria

Sponsored by Addax & Oryz Foundation, City of Geneva, STJ Foundation, Commune of Plan-Les-Quattes, SDC Nigeria, Bank Pictet and Fondazione Santa Lucia

This project is in Luwasa Primary and Secondary school, a large school with 1,550 children and 67 teachers. It was started in November 2011 and will be finished in April 2013. Our local partner is the Africa Safe Water Foundation (ASWAF).



Students in front of one of their new tanks and a training session for teachers and parents.

Four 50,000 litre ferrocement tanks are built and are providing water. A fifth, 100,000 litre plastic tank was being built by Labaronne Citaf in France at the end of 2012, to be installed in 2013. Construction of 47 toilets and 20 urinals, as well as reforestation of the school grounds, was almost finished by the end of the year. Nine local masons have received practical training on building the water tanks and toilets.

### Blue Schools in Tamale, Ghana

Sponsored by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

This is the largest Blue Schools project to date – working in 17 schools with 6,412 children and staff members. Following their excellent work for the project in Anwiankwanta, Ghana, Rural Women and Deprived Children’s Programme (RUWADCP) will once again be our local partner. This project will be finished in April 2013.



Toilet block under construction in Nyerezee Primary School and a finished tank in Nyankpala School.

Construction of water tanks in ten schools was finished by the end of the year: a total of 22 tanks. In one school, Nyerezee Primary, the toilets and urinals were also almost finished. At the end of 2012, work began on building the remaining toilets and urinals. Reforestation of the school grounds with 6,000 trees was started and 17 plant nurseries and vegetable gardens will be planted in 2013. All the schools were provided with four poles for two volleyball courts, with a court already erected in one of the schools.

### Blue Schools Plus in the Kaski District of Nepal

Sponsored by BOTZA Foundation

Development of the Blue Schools Plus programme, an extension to our school’s programme adapted for mountainous regions, started in March 2012 in Nepal. Four schools were chosen: Shivalay, Jateshwor, Ramkot and Arunodaya, and our local partner is Kanchan Nepal. Due to the excellent work of our partner, this project will be finished after only one year, in March 2013.



One of the two tanks in Shivalay School, this tank is finished and collecting water.

The project began with the reforestation activity, in order to coincide with the monsoon. Every child planted their own tree, and each tree has a blue name tag to encourage the children to look after it. The tanks and toilets were finished in two of the schools – Shivalay and Jateshwor - with hand washing facilities still under construction. Construction work in the other two schools began at the end of the year.



Reforestation, with every child planting their own tree, in Arunodaya School (left) and Ramkot School (right).

As an additional element, Blue Schools Plus projects introduce income generating activities that are tailored to mountainous populations. Poly houses were built in, or close by, the schools, where vegetables are grown to sell at market. These poly houses have already started to produce tomatoes. NEST-Pokhara (Nepal Education Support Trust), a supporting partner, led training on the use of these poly houses.



The poly house at Jateshwor School

## Pillar 2: Training, awareness raising and transfer of knowledge

Since its creation ten years ago, the IRHA has become a leading organisation in the field of rainwater harvesting at the international level. Its training, information and knowledge transfer programme contributes to strengthening the organisation's reputation around the world.

### The IRHA website and other social media

- An average of 540 visits to the website a day
- 568 Facebook fans
- 133 Twitter followers

In 2012 the IRHA website grew as more activities and achievements were added. By the end of the year, the website was almost fully available in French, and this work will be finished in 2013. There was also a significant increase in the average number of daily visits to the website.

The number of fans of the IRHA Facebook page increased steadily over the year – from 440 to over 560. The number of interactions also increased significantly. The number of followers of the IRHA Twitter account almost doubled since the end of 2011, reaching 133 in December.

### The IRHA Newsletter “bRAINstorming”

- 7 editions of bRAINstorming in 2012
- All editions published in English and French
- Over 4,000 recipients
- 16 guest articles by experts and IRHA members

### Publication of IRHA articles

This is an important part of our work - demonstrating and promoting the uses and benefits of rainwater harvesting to the general public. The publication of articles helps get our message across to a wider audience, making them an extremely useful tool for awareness raising.

In 2012, the IRHA wrote articles on rainwater harvesting for several publications:

At the start of the year, we were invited to contribute an article about rainwater harvesting in an urban centre for the [Sustainable Cities](#) (Annexe 1) publication. This book was launched in June at the Rio+20 Conference and then distributed to a wide range of stakeholders, such as members of ICLEI and Green Buildings Councils.

Other IRHA articles include an article on rainwater harvesting in the [Kashmir Observer](#) (Annexe 2) in celebration of World Water Day, and an article about our Blue Schools Programme in the [Mvua newsletter](#) (Annexe 3) .

Articles were also written about the IRHA, including in two Swiss-based online magazines - [GenevaLunch](#) and [Aquaduc](#).

## Young Rainwater Harvesters

Awareness raising activities to promote and teach the younger generations about the importance of rainwater and its management.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Global Youth Conference

On 2<sup>nd</sup> May, Vessela Monta, the IRHA Executive Director, took part in the 5<sup>th</sup> Global Youth Conference. Organised by the Earth Focus Foundation, the theme of this annual event was “A Global Revolution of Green Solutions”. Children and young adults attended this three day conference to learn about green solutions to the world's most pressing challenges.



Ms Monta's presentation on the Water Panel.

Ms Monta took part on the Water Panel with a presentation about RWH, including how it can be a green solution to the current global water crisis.

## Raindrops Geneva Award

An international art competition to promote the use and benefits of RWH within the general public.

### Raindrops Geneva Award 2011 Exhibition

In 2011, the IRHA, in collaboration with Photojournal, held the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of Raindrops Geneva Award, receiving almost 500 photographs showing the uses and benefits of rainwater harvesting.



The exhibition at the University of Geneva.

On 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March 2012, an exhibition of these photographs was held in Geneva, in celebration of World Water Day. SWISSAID Geneva organised a roundtable, “L'eau cotée en bourse” (Water, publicly traded?), at the University of Geneva, and the IRHA was invited to display 30 of the best Raindrops photographs, helping to raise the Genevan public's awareness of the practice and benefits of RWH.

### Launch of Raindrops Geneva Award 2013

On 5<sup>th</sup> June, World Environment Day, the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Raindrops Geneva Award was launched. Like the very first competition - which was held in 2007 – this edition is for posters that illustrate the advantages of rainwater harvesting.

The three best posters will be awarded prizes and used for awareness raising activities. This competition will close on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013, and the winner posters will be announced in November.

## Organisation/participation in activities promoting RWH

*Activities to raise awareness of rainwater harvesting in order to increase the use and management of this vital resource.*

The IRHA staff and members profit from every occasion to promote both their work and rainwater harvesting in general:

- Through the activities of the International Environmental House, where they participate in workshops and roundtable discussions.
- Within the events organised in Geneva by the authorities and the UN.
- With presentations in front of civil society, such as the Kiwanis Carouge club.

## Knowledge sharing

*The IRHA's important work to share its knowledge of rainwater harvesting, with the view of both increasing awareness and use of this practice.*

### Rainwater harvesting lecture at ETH Zurich

On 5<sup>th</sup> December, Vessela Monta, the IRHA Executive Director, was invited to Zurich, Switzerland, to lead a course on "Lessons in RWH", as part of a Water Resources Seminar. This seminar, organised by the Hydrological Department of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, was tailored for students of the Master of Advanced Studies in Sustainable Water Resources.

Ms Monta highlighted the three aspects of good rainwater management: retention, infiltration and direct use. She spoke about its pertinence in climate change policy and its value in the mitigation process by reducing the (hidden) energy consumption of mains water provision. She finished with group work on case studies of rainwater harvesting in rural, urban and industrial contexts.

### Work on a new Plumbing Code in Ghana

Urban populations from many countries in the world, pushed by constantly increasing water shortages, start to practise rainwater harvesting without any formal framework of rules or regulations. However, in consideration of public health, rainwater harvesting should be implemented in buildings according to rules which must enter into the National Plumbing Code of each country. The IRHA started to work on this issue, choosing Ghana as the first country where national authorities are looking to update their Plumbing Code in this way.

The IRHA analysed the current Ghanaian policy and prepared a Rational which was presented to the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing of Ghana, and to the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). This first step led to the formulation of a project to introduce rainwater harvesting in the Plumbing part of the Building Code of Ghana. The practical realisation of this project is planned for the beginning of 2013.

## Pillar 3: Empowering the rainwater harvesters' movement

119 members from 46 countries

The IRHA, as an umbrella organisation, has the important task of reinforcing the existing Rainwater Harvesting movement, building an alliance of rainwater harvesters.

### Strengthening the position of IRHA as a global centre for the promotion of rainwater harvesting

Following a submission to a national competition organised by ASHOKA, a global organisation that identifies and invests in leading social entrepreneurs, the IRHA was selected with seven other organisations, as a nominee in the contest "Impact".

The training provided by ASHOKA helped the IRHA to improve its Business Plan and clarify its position in the complicated world of international NGOs.

### Facilitate the organisation of national rainwater harvesting associations

From the start of the IRHA's activities, special attention has been dedicated to introducing knowledge and practice of rainwater harvesting into local or national NGOs.

During 2012, this led to the creation of two new organisations - one in Pakistan and the other in Liberia. The link between them and the IRHA is strong, and the IRHA is engaged in guiding them.

### Promotion of the work of our members

In 2012, two newsletters were dedicated to the activities and achievements of the IRHA members. In February the Private Sector members had the opportunity to provide articles about their products and services, or a general overview of the company. Later in the year, in November, the Organisation members supplied articles about their activities in 2012.

Several members also contributed articles for other editions of the newsletter that fell within their area of expertise, particularly for the edition on artificial groundwater recharge.

### Journalists for Rainwater Harvesting

18 journalists from 11 countries

A new IRHA membership category was created in 2012 called "Journalists for Rainwater Harvesting".

This group is a platform to bring together the talents of journalists in order to raise the profile of rainwater harvesting. By reporting about rainwater harvesting in their local, regional or national area, journalists are perfectly placed for this important task.

The Journalists for Rainwater Harvesting research and write articles – as well as produce photo documentaries and short films – about rainwater harvesting. These are then published in their local media, including local or national newspapers, magazines and newsletters, in order to raise awareness in their own countries. The IRHA also publishes the links of all the articles on its website, as well as on Facebook and Twitter.



### Strengthening the IRHA Secretariat

An important part of our work to reinforce the rainwater harvesting movement started in the IRHA office: throughout 2012 our staff members and volunteers worked hard to make the IRHA the international platform for rainwater harvesting.

We started with changing our office, too narrow for the four to six people working in it. Still situated in the International Environment House in Geneva, it provides us a little more comfortable ambiance for our busy working days.

Our team consolidated in four full time workers: Pierriek Imhof manages all our Blue Schools projects and with many new projects starting, he will be very busy in 2013. Hannah Price covers the IRHA's communications, including the newsletter, website and all the social media. Bertrand Calame keeps the IRHA running behind the scenes through the accounting and fundraising, while in his "free hours" he takes in hand formulation of new projects. And Vessela Monta closes the loop, constantly working to move the IRHA higher with regard to professionalism and reputation.

We are pleased to welcome a new member to our Board of Directors: Bob Boulware. Former ARCSA President and prominent figure in the rainwater harvesting movement, he is now our Vice-President.

We could not keep going without our dedicated team of volunteers: Gerald Mills-Lampthey, who kept our computers running all year, and Mafalda Tudal and Maya Majzoub, our hardworking translators. We also welcome a new member to this team, Ritu Pradesh, who is helping us with our marketing. Finally, we have a few new members in our Advisory Board: Richard Bonnarens, Dominik Bretinger and Frédérique Letellier.

The IRHA was also strengthened by becoming a member of the Swiss Water Partnership - an independent, value-based platform that brings together members from the Swiss academic, civil society, public and private spheres.

## Pillar 4: Political work to position RWH in development agendas

In order to pursue the development of its implementation work with the Blue Schools programme, the IRHA's primary task must be to continue the political work for the promotion of rainwater harvesting at all levels.

- Organisation of a meeting with representatives of Missions to the UN in Geneva from the countries where the IRHA implements its projects
- Participation in the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum
- Promotion of RWH in Swiss policy

### Political work with authorities from project implementation countries

*The IRHA's work in schools brings with it new knowledge, behaviour and infrastructure. Political leaders in the implementation countries need to be informed of these positive changes taking place in their schools.*

*It is extremely important to work with the authorities of the countries where Blue Schools projects have been carried out. Once a project is finished, the new infrastructure (including the tanks and toilets, etc.) then belongs to the national authorities – such as the Ministry of Education – and it is their responsibility to maintain it. The Ministry of Health can monitor the improvement in children's health after gaining access to clean water and decent sanitation. At the national level, the Blue Schools programme can become their national policy: this is what we are working towards.*

#### "A Glass of Rainwater?"

On 13<sup>th</sup> November, the IRHA organised a meeting and discussion with representatives from the Missions to the United Nations of the countries where the Blue Schools programme has been implemented. The idea behind this annual meeting is to discuss how to work with the missions to increase the IRHA's reach in their countries.



*Representatives from the African Union, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo were present at this meeting.*

The meeting introduced the representatives to the concept of rainwater harvesting, as well as the work that the IRHA carries out. A large emphasis was put of the Blue Schools Programme.

All the attendees were very impressed with the concept of rainwater harvesting; promising the help of their embassies, and ideas began to be formulated for future collaboration.

## Political work at the international level

*To promote the contribution of rainwater harvesting to the Millennium Development Goals.*

### Participation in the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum

The world's largest meeting around water: the goal of the 2012 Forum was to tackle the challenges facing the world and to bring water high on all political agendas.

On 14<sup>th</sup> March, two members of the IRHA Secretariat, Vessela Monta the Executive Director and Hannah Price the Communications Officer, travelled to Marseille to attend this conference.



*The Swiss Pavilion and the Raindrops display.*

The IRHA was invited to the Forum by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), who ran the Swiss Pavilion. For the whole week of the Forum, the four winning photographs from Raindrops Geneva Award 2011 were displayed here.



*"The Great Blue Schools Challenge" and "The Big Rainwater Quiz"*

On the Friday, the last full day of the Forum programme, the IRHA held a presentation on the Swiss Pavilion. The presentation began with "The Great Blue Schools Challenge", which introduced the story of the Blue Schools programme, from its conception and development to its current status. The second part of the presentation, "The Big Rainwater Quiz", with four volunteers from the audience answering multiple choice questions about rainwater harvesting, brought fun and knowledge to the public.



*The Big Rainwater Quiz!*

The IRHA team left the Forum with several new contacts and ideas for new technologies that could help improve aspects of the Blue Schools programme.

## Promotion of RWH in Swiss policy

### Advocacy for changing the Swiss law for water

The work to introduce sustainable management of rainwater started in 2009. Due to the Fukushima nuclear disaster, and the ensuing changes in Switzerland's energy policy, the fight for better management of rainwater fluctuated throughout 2012. The IRHA collaborated with Ms Adele Thorence - elected in March 2012 as Vice-President of the Swiss Green party - on the texts proposed for approval:

- a) A Parliamentarian initiative (Annexe 4), which was introduced in October 2010 and passed in a Commission of the States Council on 5 March 2012. With 7 voices supporting the initiative, 1 person abstained and 18 voices against, it was not approved.
- b) Immediately afterwards, Ms Thorence introduced a Motion (Annexe 5) to the Parliament, asking for a new study on the usefulness of sustainable rainwater management. On 11 November 2012, the Motion (Annexe 6) was rejected by the Parliament.

The positive effect of these failures is not negligible. For the first time in Switzerland, there were very high level political discussions about the usefulness of an "other" rainwater management. Parliamentarians are beginning to change their minds about rainwater harvesting - previously considered as 'a technology for the developing countries'. Green roofing, a branch of the variety of rainwater harvesting practices, starts to be accepted as compulsory for buildings with flat roofs in cantons and towns.

The IRHA advocacy is going on, and it is sure that one day, Switzerland will follow the example of Germany, France, USA and many other countries, by introducing a change in its legislation allowing truly sustainable management of rainwater.

### Water-Energy Nexus in Switzerland

In August 2012, the company Bloomberg New Energy Finance and the *Réseau Vert Arc Lémanique Vaud / Valais* held the inauguration of the movement "Shift to Green" in Diablerets, Switzerland.

The IRHA was invited to take part, and Vessela Monta travelled to Diablerets to attend. This was a clear recognition of the efficiency of Rainwater Harvesting for Energy saving. The contacts created during the meeting are a starting point for common action for the future on Water(rainwater)-Energy Nexus.



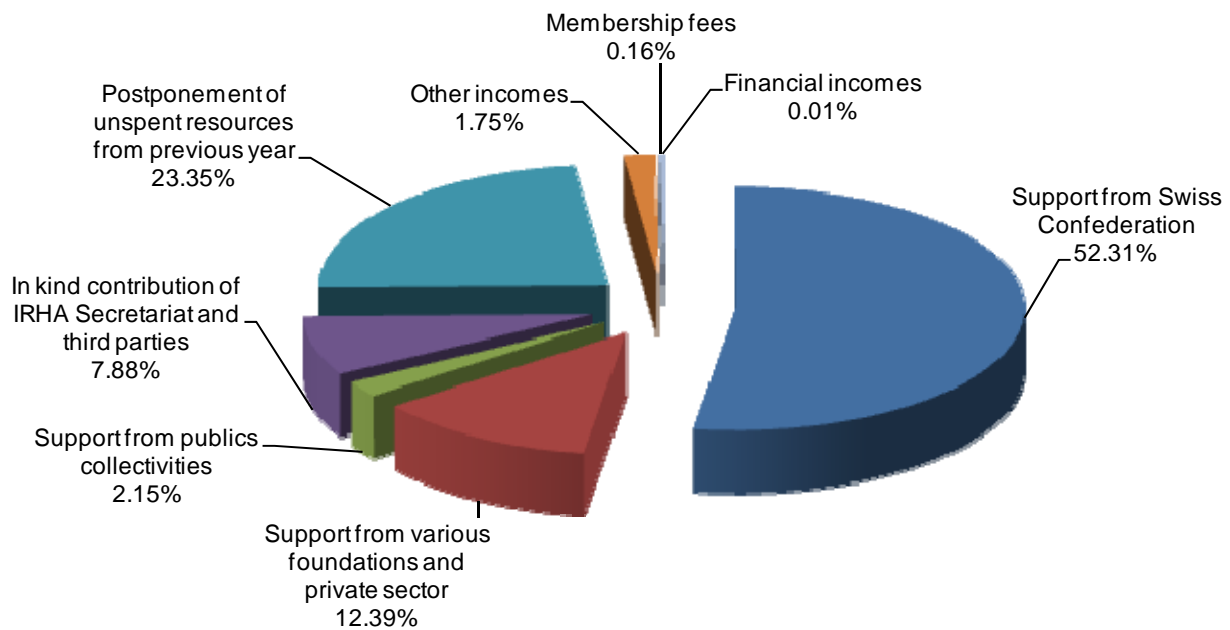
## Financial Report

2012 brought a lot of work on our desks and desktops, which is always a good sign for financial success. We worked mainly on projects formulated the previous year, and often with the same financial partners as before. The faith of the partners is very encouraging, and we hope that the quality of our work will ensure this trend continues.

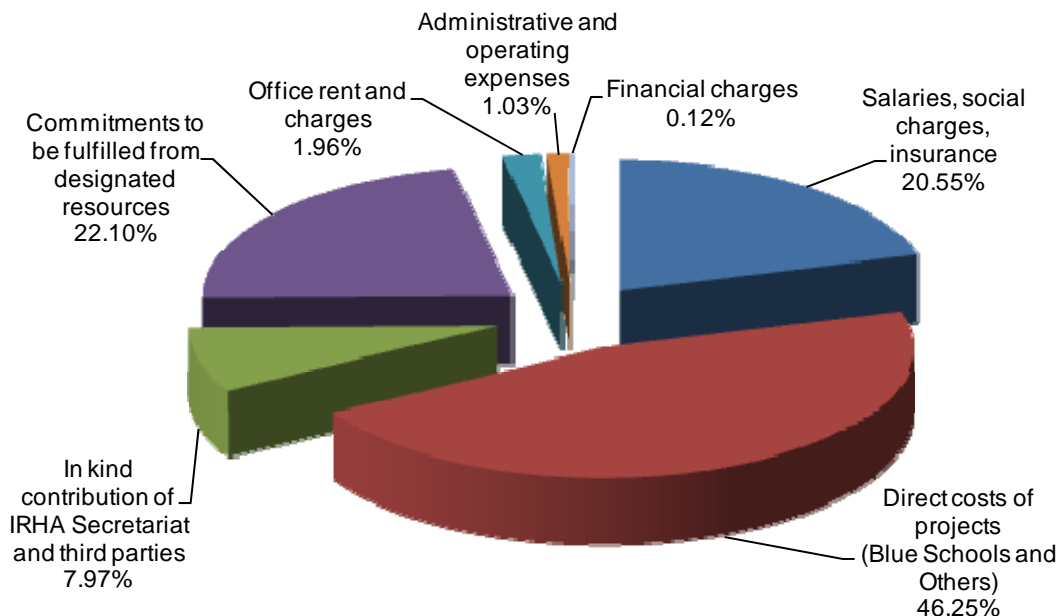
We are deeply thankful to all donors, public and private, who confirmed or started to express their trust in our professionalism and engagement:

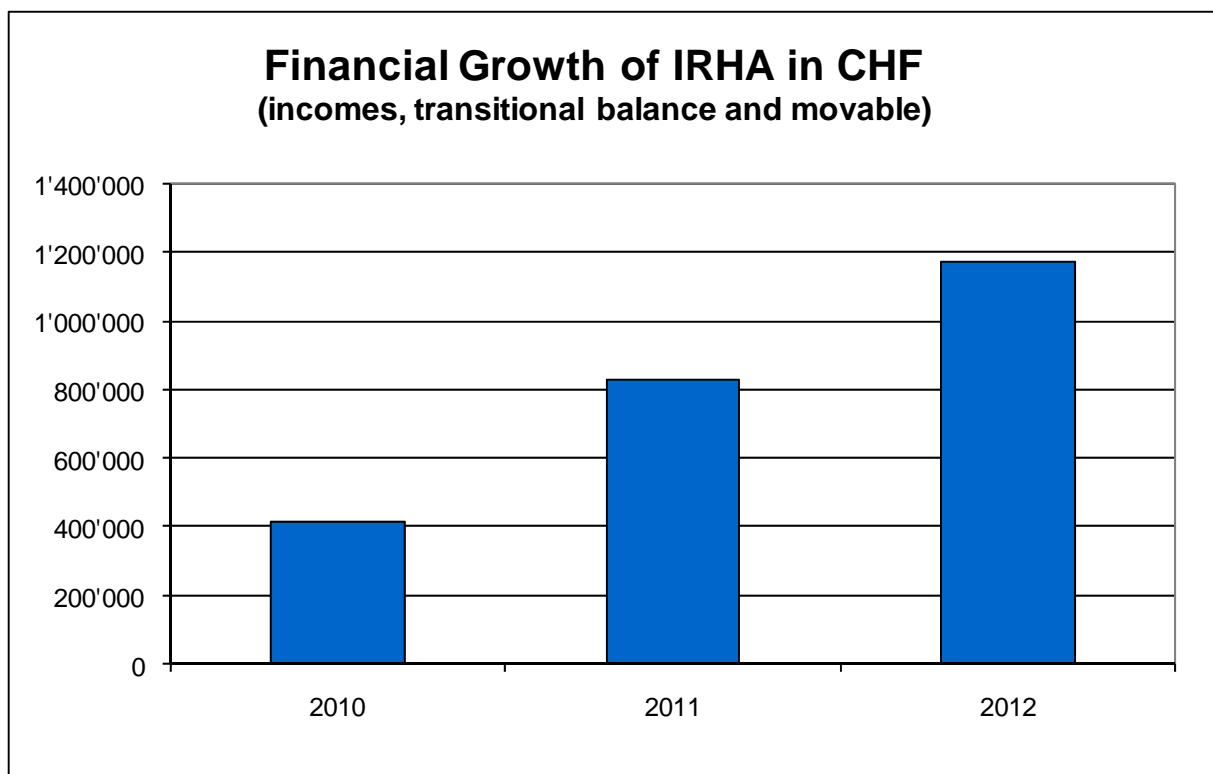
- SDC
- SDC of Nigeria
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- BOTZA Foundation
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- Santa-Lucia Foundation
- STJ Foundation
- HSBC
- Pictet Bank
- Bobst SA
- SIGPA SA
- Services Industriels de Genève (SIG)
- Municipalities of Meyrin, Plan les Ouattes, Lancy, Pully, Grand-Saconnex, Thônex, Puplinge, Bardonnex, Gy, Vandoeuvres and Vernier

**IRHA - Incomes and voluntary contributions in 2012: 1,256,064 CHF**



**IRHA - Expenditure and voluntary investments in 2012: 1,142,380 CHF**





## Conclusion

We are afraid of repeating the same conclusions as in our 2011 report. But the review of our 2012 activities shows the increasing importance of IRHA as a leading rainwater harvesting organisation and as a partner in development.

If our growth is undisputable, our duty is to change this trend into a non-reversible and stable condition of the organisation. Better targeted fundraising; close collaboration and partnering; following up with our local partners; organising better interaction with our Group of Advisors and the Board of Directors; and development of each of our four pillars: these are the challenges 2013.

To those who are reading our Report: can you come on board and help the IRHA with even a simple and single act our fight for a better world?

Geneva  
February 2013

*If you wish to view any of the annexes, please send a request to [secretariat@irha-h2o.org](mailto:secretariat@irha-h2o.org) and a soft copy will be emailed to you.*

## Annexes

1. Sustainable Cities
2. Kashmir Observer
3. Mvua newsletter
4. Parliamentarian initiative for rainwater
5. Motion introduced to the Parliament
6. Answer of the Federal Council