

The SDC contribution

Report on the result of the
Swiss international cooperation 2013–2016



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

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Thanks to a constantly improving system of planning, management and evaluation of its operational programmes, the SDC has the ability to objectively assess the impact and relevance of its activities in its partner countries.

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HIGHLIGHTS



HUMANITARIAN AID AND THE SWISS HUMANITARIAN AID UNIT

Emergency aid and reconstruction measures supported by Switzerland directly benefit around three and a half million people a year. Given their scale and tragic consequences, Swiss Humanitarian Aid has focused its attention on the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, and the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. (p. 8)



TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND FINANCIAL AID FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Improved management of service delivery systems has enabled almost eight million people from poor and disadvantaged population groups to better exercise their economic and social rights by increasing their access to basic resources and public services. Through its global programmes, Switzerland also contributed considerably to anchoring a concrete, measurable goal on universal access to water and sanitation in the outcome document on the SDGs. (p. 12)



TRANSITION ASSISTANCE IN THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE AND THE CIS

By supporting the transition of the Western Balkans and the countries of the former Soviet Union towards democratic systems and market economy, Switzerland helps to restore political stability and improve conditions for the people living there. (p.30)



GOOD GOVERNANCE AND GENDER EQUALITY

An independent evaluation has confirmed the good results achieved by the SDC in strengthening governance systems and increasing citizen participation in several priority countries. The OECD has confirmed the progress made towards mainstreaming the goal of gender equality into SDC programming. (p. 34)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN A CHANGING WORLD

Significant progress has been made in recent decades in reducing poverty, but greater efforts are nevertheless required to achieve the targets that have been set – particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, regions in the grip of armed conflict, where population growth remains strong.

The proportion of people living on less than USD 1.25 a day has fallen from 43% in 1990 to 21% in 2015. Extreme poverty was halved five years ahead of the 2015 deadline set by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and several other targets have either been attained or are likely to be reached shortly.

For example, 90% of children in developing regions now attend primary school; remarkable progress has also been made in the fight against malaria and tuberculosis, including improvements in all the health indicators; the likelihood of a child dying before the age of five has been cut by almost half over the last two decades; access to improved sources of drinking water has become reality for a further 2.3 billion people and the disparities in primary school enrolment between boys and girls are being eliminated in all the developing regions.

Substantial progress has been achieved in most areas of the globe, especially in East and South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, but also the Caucasus and Central Asia. The collective efforts of the international cooperation agencies and the support they give to state institutions and civil society organisations in the partner countries contributed to these encouraging results.

However, progress is slowest where the need is greatest, i.e. in the least developed countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Afghanistan and Nepal. At present, more than 1 billion people still live in extreme poverty, around 70% of whom are women. Despite the impressive achievements made in

recent years, the countries in sub-Saharan Africa still account for more than one third of this number.

In absolute terms, there are more than twice as many people living in extreme poverty today than there were three decades ago. According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), half of the world's poor will be living in fragile states by 2018, with that figure rising to almost two thirds in 2030. Armed conflicts such as those in Syria, Ukraine, Afghanistan or South Sudan tend to hit the civilian population particularly hard and drive people into poverty. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than 60 million people are currently displaced worldwide. Humanitarian crises are becoming both more complex and deadly, and are lasting longer than ever before.

In addition, global challenges such as food crises, worldwide migration and climate change frequently have dramatic consequences for poor populations, requiring both short-term and long-term measures to alleviate the effects. The prospects for peace and development increasingly depend on global factors whose underlying causes and ultimate consequences transcend national borders.

CHANGES AND INNOVATIONS COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS DISPATCH

In its efforts to address the global challenges and those involved in reducing poverty, Switzerland placed a special emphasis on several innovations and developments in its Dispatch on International Cooperation for the period 2013–2016.

Strengthening Switzerland's commitment in fragile contexts.

Building on its expertise in conflict transformation gained in countries such as Afghanistan, Nepal and Mali, Switzerland has increased and consolidated its presence in volatile social, political and security environments. At the end of 2014, Switzerland's financial commitments in fragile countries and regions accounted for 44% of its bilateral aid budget. The benchmark set by the SDC until 2016 is 40%.

Reinforcing Switzerland's influence on the policies of multilateral organisations and global themes.

This relates to climate change, food security, water, migration and, since 2013, health. For example, Switzerland helped set up the new Green Climate Fund, taking a seat on the Board and contributing CHF 100 million. It was also able to play a role in shaping the sustainable development goals for the post-2015 agenda.

Stepping up Switzerland's cooperation with the private sector through public-private development partnerships (PPDPs).

New forms of collaboration have been developed, such as the partnership with Nestlé on a coffee project in Vietnam and, at a more strategic level, with reinsurer Swiss Re, providing an institutional framework for joint initiatives.

Improving the coherence of Switzerland's development policies.

In response to the recommendations of the peer review conducted by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 2013, efforts to make national policies more conducive to development were increased. The SDC also now cooperates more actively with the other federal departments on development issues.

Focusing Switzerland's international cooperation on enhanced results.

Significant progress was made due to the use of increasingly sophisticated planning, management and monitoring instruments. For example, in 2013 alone, thanks to the SDC, 300 000 small-scale farmers in West Africa (one third of whom are women) saw their harvest of millet, maize and vegetables improve by an average of 20%, with direct implications for the quality of life of the local population – especially that of the children.

RESULTS AS ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING TOOLS

This report covers the period from 2012 to 2015. The information it contains is both derived from the regular monitoring of all interventions carried out by the SDC and the results of independent evaluations.

The Dispatch on Switzerland's International Cooperation in 2013–2016 comprises four framework credits:

- i. Humanitarian aid and the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit,
- ii. Technical cooperation and financial aid for developing countries,
- iii. Economic and trade policy measures in the context of development cooperation, and
- iv. The continuation of transition assistance in the countries of Eastern Europe and the CIS.

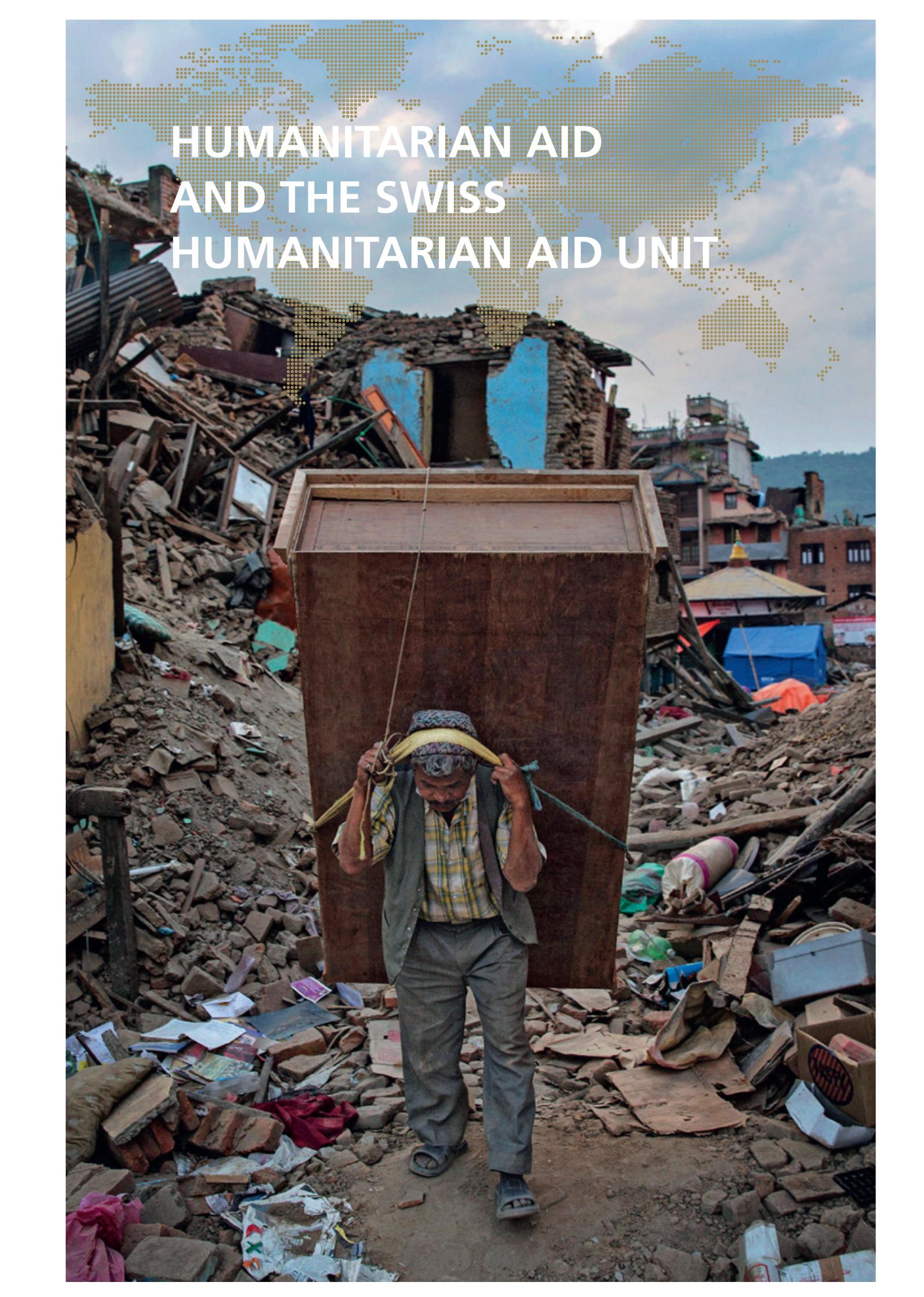
This report is based on the monitoring of the eight SDC effectiveness goals that structure the Dispatch for the period 2013–2016. The latter also addresses two cross-cutting themes: i) gender equality and ii) good governance, which are also subject to regular monitoring. The main results in these areas are also included in this report. A look at the five strategic objectives given priority in the Dispatch completes the content of this report on each framework credit.

To determine the extent to which its programmes and projects have achieved their objectives and had a positive impact on the partner countries and their populations, in 2008 the SDC began using a number of instruments that strengthen its planning and management methods based on the results at several levels of its cooperation system:

- i. Results frameworks have been set up for the cooperation strategies in their entirety;
- ii. Annual reports on countries and regions now provide a source of information that not only facilitates programming, but also helps measure and take stock of the results;
- iii. Independent evaluations are regularly conducted in accordance with the principles of the OECD Development Assistance Committee to measure the SDC's degree of effectiveness in its priority countries and sectors, and to facilitate strategic programme management.

The aim of these instruments is to allow the SDC to learn – and draw relevant lessons – from its experience, as well as to steer its interventions in an efficient manner. In addition, they enable systematic accountability with regard to how the funds allocated to international cooperation are used.

This report is based on the regular monitoring of operational programmes, but also features evaluations of the work by the SDC's bilateral and multilateral partners. Moreover, it also reflects the results of independent evaluations on the priority topics such as climate change, governance, basic education and health.



HUMANITARIAN AID AND THE SWISS HUMANITARIAN AID UNIT



Emergency aid and reconstruction measures supported by Switzerland directly benefit some three and a half million people a year. Given their scale and tragic consequences, Swiss Humanitarian Aid has focused its attention on the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, and the Ebola epidemic in West Africa.

Results in the area of emergency aid and reconstruction

Thanks to its greater presence on the ground, Swiss Humanitarian Aid is able to provide a rapid and flexible response, while focusing its resources on those most in need. By working closely with other humanitarian actors to improve the coordination and harmonisation of aid strategies and activities, it also helps strengthen national and international solidarity and crisis management mechanisms.

In armed conflict situations, emergency aid primarily seeks to respond to the basic needs of those affected.

The rapidly rising number of victims of armed conflict, particularly in Syria and Iraq but also in South Sudan and the Central African Republic, has prompted Swiss Humanitarian Aid to reallocate a large part of its resources to those regions.

In these regions in particular, the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are key partners. As depositary state of the Geneva Conventions and home to the ICRC, Switzerland has a special relationship with this organisation. In 2014, Switzerland contributed CHF 130 million to the ICRC, making it the organisation's third largest donor.

It is estimated that around one million people in conflict zones benefit from Swiss support to the ICRC. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which also receives Swiss support, in turn provides assistance to almost half of the world's 67 million displaced persons, refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people.

Each year, Switzerland makes 80 to 100 specialists from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA) available to its UN partners. It also works together with local and international NGOs and initiates direct action through the SHA. It comes to the aid of approximately 3.5 million people each year through these channels. For example, humanitarian equipment and tents were delivered to 8000 victims of the Syrian conflict living as refugees in northern Iraq to help them survive the winter.

- **In the occupied Palestinian territory**, the SDC employs humanitarian aid and development cooperation instruments. This approach allows it to respond quickly to crises while maintaining long-term commitments to support structural reforms and strengthen state capacities.

During the conflict in Gaza in summer 2014, this approach allowed the SDC to allocate an additional CHF 5 million to meet emergency humanitarian needs (health, food, shelter) while maintaining its long-term support in other fields.

When natural disasters occur, Switzerland's rapid response mechanism allows it to intervene immediately and address the most pressing needs.

On the ground, Switzerland participates in local and international aid efforts and helps strengthen them. It consults with local authorities to identify the zones where no other organisation is operating to enable rapid intervention there. The effectiveness of this approach has been demonstrated regularly: for example, following Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) in the Philippines in November 2013, the floods of May 2014 in the Balkans and the Nepalese earthquake of April 2015, and during the Ebola epidemic in 2014.



EBOLA: SWITZERLAND TOOK PART IN EFFORTS TO CONTAIN THE EPIDEMIC

As part of the concerted approach adopted by the international community, Switzerland played an active role in efforts to contain the Ebola outbreak that affected several West African states in 2014.

It supported the ICRC and local NGOs in particular and provided medical supplies and protective equipment to the Ministry of Health in Liberia. At present, the number of new cases has fallen dramatically and new infections are being treated in a much more effective manner. However the need for continued vigilance is still great.

Reconstruction measures concentrate on the poorest communities with the greatest need. One million people a year are estimated to benefit.

- **In Sri Lanka**, where Switzerland's engagement came to an end in 2015, more than 5000 families affected by civil war in the provinces of Jaffna and Kilinochchi benefited from Swiss support in rebuilding their homes. All have been given legal title to their property and were able to complete construction work.

Switzerland's excellent reputation in this area has allowed it to attract co-financing for reconstruction projects. Several innovative projects realised in cooperation with local partners have influenced national construction standards and were subsequently integrated into the national policies of the respective countries, such as in Haiti, Pakistan and Myanmar.

Switzerland's international cooperation pays particular attention to the idea of transitioning from humanitarian aid to development cooperation.

In Myanmar, where emergency aid was provided in the wake of Cyclone Nargis, Swiss support between 2009 and 2013 resulted in the construction of 42 schools that can also serve as community shelters should another cyclone hit.

At present, Myanmar is an example of transition from a mainly humanitarian approach to a wider approach that includes various international cooperation instruments. The SDC's bilateral development cooperation and Swiss Humanitarian Aid department, the Human Security Division (HSD), the Directorate of International Law (DIL) and the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) coordinate their activities in order to maximise their effectiveness and complementarity.

By contrast, any deterioration in the situation calls for emergency and humanitarian support from the international community and a possible temporary reduction in the activities geared towards long-term development.

Following the uprisings in the north of **Mali** in 2012, the SDC suspended its cooperation and development efforts in the Mopti and Timbuktu regions, focusing instead on the south and notably the region of Sikasso. At the same time, the SDC contributed to humanitarian aid measures intended to protect and assist those forced to flee the conflict.

Humanitarian programmes were stepped up in 2014, with particular emphasis on food security and the protection of vulnerable groups. For its part, the HSD is assisting with the peace dialogue in Mali, providing support to the mediation of the Economic Community of West African States. Against this background, Switzerland's approach to cooperation, based on a mix of instruments and conflict-sensitive project management, proved to be effective, allowing the SDC to remain in Mali at a time when other international actors have had to pull out.

Results in the field of disaster prevention

Switzerland possesses vast experience and enormous innovative drive in disaster risk reduction, which is a key part of the SDC's programmes.

While natural disasters strike both rich and poor countries, the consequences differ greatly depending on the level of a country's development. In an instant, an earthquake or flood can destroy development progress achieved over several decades. Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is vital to ensuring sustainable development and boosting the resilience of the affected populations in our partner countries on all continents.

- As an example, **in Nicaragua and Honduras**, Switzerland is partnering with 10 universities to support 34 communes numbering 40 000 inhabitants in identifying and mapping the locations that are particularly susceptible to natural hazards and drawing up adequate prevention measures.
- **In Morocco and Jordan**, training provided by Swiss experts has enabled the local search and rescue units that intervene in the wake of earthquakes to obtain official UN certification.

Several OSCE member states have enhanced their national disaster prevention mechanisms and concluded regional mutual assistance agreements. During its chairmanship of the organisation in 2014, Switzerland successfully lobbied for a forward-looking approach to disaster risk management, which included the establishment of a political process and availability of project funding.

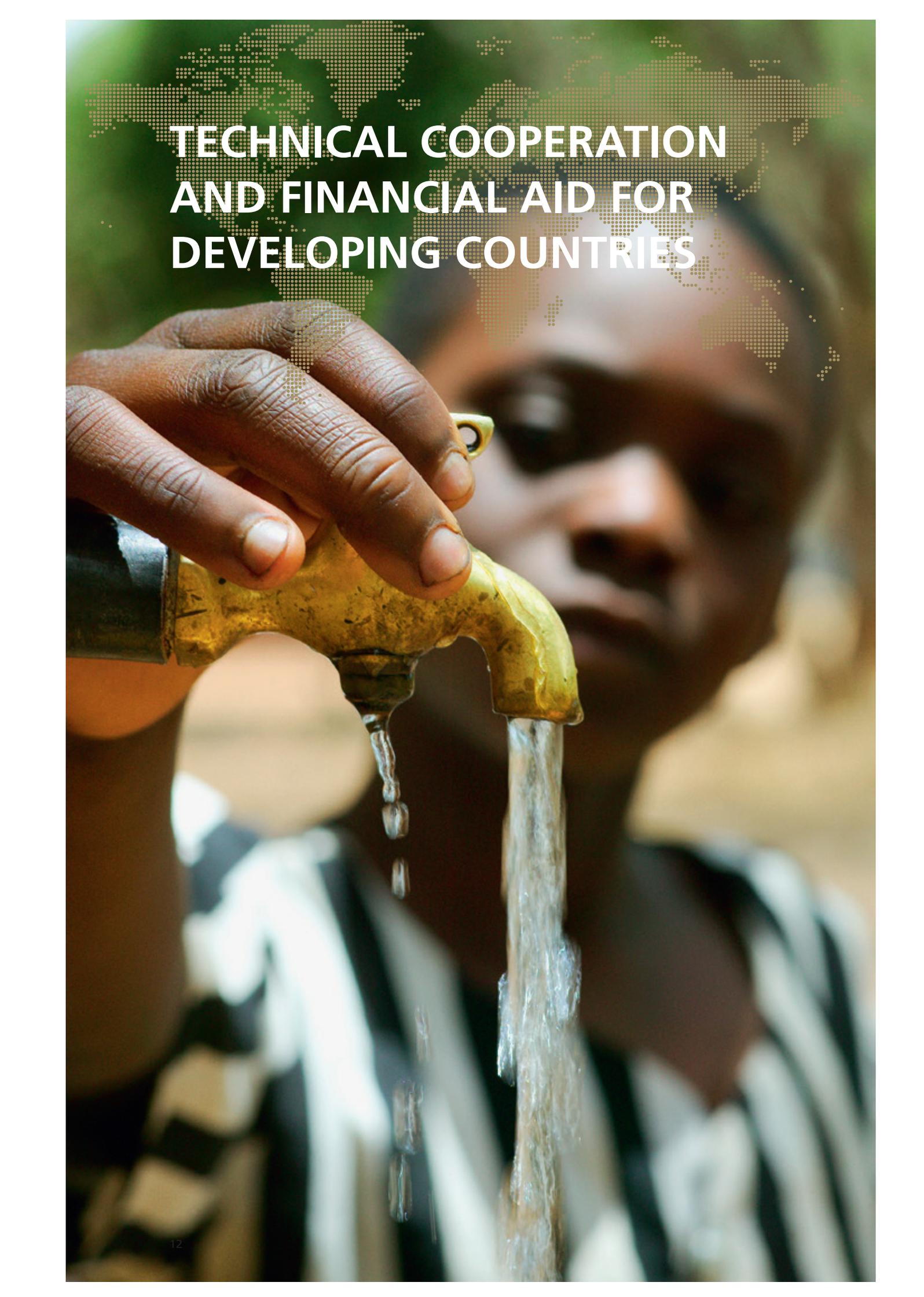
Results in helping shape multilateral policies

Switzerland is recognised as a reliable and credible partner. It is closely involved in the reforms aimed at strengthening the humanitarian system's capacity for response.

The scale, complexity and duration of humanitarian crises coupled with the decline in funding have left the humanitarian system in need of fundamental reform. Switzerland is active in this area and seeks to strengthen the humanitarian system's capacity to respond, especially in fragile contexts. Clearly, some progress has already been made and is starting to bear fruit, particularly in terms of leadership and the coordination of responses – in Syria, the Central African Republic and South Sudan, for example.

Switzerland also advocates improving agency effectiveness. It actively supports this process, primarily by making SHA expertise available. In Syria, thanks to SDC support, the introduction of a cash and voucher system by the WFP and UNHCR has permitted assistance to be provided to two million Syrian refugees while reducing the costs of intervention and benefiting the local economy.

In terms of influence, Switzerland is recognised as a reliable and credible partner by all its partner organisations. As a result, it is able to play an active role within large multilateral organisations and influence certain decisions by UNHCR, UNOCHA and UNICEF.

A close-up photograph of a hand turning a brass faucet. Water is flowing from the spout. In the background, a man's face is blurred. A dotted world map is overlaid on the top half of the image.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND FINANCIAL AID FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Improved management of service delivery systems has enabled almost eight million people from poor and disadvantaged population groups to better exercise their economic and social rights by increasing their access to basic resources and public services.

Technical cooperation and financial aid for developing countries is implemented by means of regional cooperation activities that contribute to reducing poverty in 20 countries and regions in Africa, Latin America and Asia, around half of which are affected by conflict or are considered fragile.

The SDC also seeks to improve the capacity of poor countries to adapt to global change by channelling support into innovations that help overcome the problems posed by poverty and development, and playing a role in shaping the international normative framework. Through its work with the 13 priority multilateral organisations it supports, the SDC helps implement major projects and global policies that encourage the development of national legislation.

Results in improving access to resources and basic services

The more than 800 projects in which the SDC is involved focus bilateral cooperation on various priority themes that address the needs of the partner countries and regions.

Promoting local governance has successfully increased civic participation in political decision-making processes.

The SDC works on different dimensions of local governance to ensure the involvement of the public. For example, it supports participatory processes at the municipal level to get citizens involved in identifying investment priorities and communal development plans. It strengthens the capacity of municipalities to manage their finances and in some cases contributes to funds that partially finance investments prioritised by local people.

- In this way, **in Vietnam** 1.3 million people, in particular people from ethnic minorities, have been given a say in local community development plans. As a result new roads

between villages, irrigation canals, nurseries and primary schools have been built and 174 000 families now have better access to drinking water.

Greater participation by the general population in political decision-making processes has led to significant advances in decentralising investment decisions and mobilising fiscal resources at the municipal level. Local budgets increasingly reflect the needs of the poorest and most disadvantaged groups. By developing the capacity of municipal governments in particular, the SDC encourages processes to decentralise skills and resources.

- **In Bolivia**, thanks in part to an SDC project to improve public services, the use of funds by municipalities has risen from 50 to 80% since 2012. In addition, in 2015 civil society organisations supported by the SDC and publicity campaigns in the local media helped to secure use of the funds in 34 initiatives that started with local people. An estimated 290 000 people, mostly in rural communities, today enjoy decentralised services in 73 of the 338 municipalities supported by the SDC.

The political and legal reforms supported by Switzerland have led to better representation of minorities and the development of higher legal standards.

Major political and legal reforms can be implemented through – sometimes lengthy – political dialogue with government partners, and through support for non-governmental associations and organisations from civil society. With better management of service delivery systems, nearly eight million people from poor and disadvantaged sections of society have been able to better fulfil their economic and social rights through improved access to basic resources and utilities. By backing the demands of civil society and recognising these demands as factors for development, the SDC contributes to reforms in key sectors of the economy.

- This is the case **in Mongolia**, for example, where poor communities have long made a living from artisanal mining, despite the dangers involved and the fact that the practice used to be illegal. The SDC's support and its dialogue with the government have meant that this practice is now officially recognised. A legal framework governing artisanal and small-scale mining has been established, which reduces barriers to trade in mineral assets and guarantees formalised access to mine sites. The miners also gained access to healthcare and social security.

The SDC also supports access to justice for the most vulnerable groups by financing support structures for victims of violence, for example, and solidarity groups working to help victims re-integrate.

- **In the African Great Lakes region** Switzerland supports seven social organisations that manage maisons d'écoute, centres that provide refuge, care and counselling for victims, primarily of sexual violence. The SDC covers the cost of these support and legal services. To date, these efforts have allowed more than 19 000 victims of sexual violence, 87% of whom are women, to receive psychosocial support and legal advice.

Thanks to Switzerland's contribution, over 1.5 million people are now guaranteed direct and sustainable access to drinking water and sanitary installations.

To ensure sustainable use of the facilities, the SDC joined with the local authorities to provide targeted support to local water management committees. In some cases it also directly finances the construction of infrastructure, which ensures access to facilities and improves living conditions.

- For example, **in Laos**, 32 000 residents, half of whom are women, of 42 districts in the country's 10 poorest provinces, currently benefit from an improved supply of drinking water and appropriate hygiene measures, which contributes to improving their health conditions.

In 15 of the SDC's partner countries, close to 5 million people have benefited from advancements in public health.

This progress has been achieved through patient and effective political dialogue and Switzerland's influence on improving public health systems. In some cases, where a health centre is not in a position to provide healthcare, the SDC also finances the centre's renovation.

- **In the Great Lakes region**, for example, to ensure equal access to essential healthcare, the SDC is helping to set up and run cooperative healthcare schemes. At the same time, it encourages decentralised management of health centres by funding training programmes, renovation and building works and basic equipment. People in rural communities now visit the health centres on average at least once a year, a rate which had never been observed before 2013 and which indicates a significant improvement in the quality of services.

An independent analysis of the effectiveness of Swiss cooperation on health issues has revealed how well Switzerland is performing in this field: of the 57 projects realised between 2000 and 2013 and analysed in 2014, 61% are considered as highly effective and having achieved their objectives, while 28% only partly achieved their goals or are in the process of achieving them.

More than 10 million small-scale farmers and members of their families have improved their food security.

In the agriculture and rural development sector, technological progress has allowed improved cultivation and land reform practices to be developed in 21 SDC partner countries and regions.

Better utilisation of value chains, coupled with the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises, has helped improve the situation of small-holders and artisans on the labour market, resulting in a 10% to 15% rise in income for around 80 million people in the SDC partner countries and regions.

- For example **in Chad** the building of 90 weirs (micro dams) has raised the groundwater level from 3 to 7 meters and extended the period for growing vegetables and watering livestock. Around 45 000 people have benefited, resulting in an increase in the number of producers and doubling incomes.

Despite these achievements, efforts are still needed in sub-Saharan Africa which continues to suffer from poor agricultural productivity, the main source of economic income for the continent.

In the area of basic education, the budgets of all of the SDC partner countries have increased.

Entire education systems benefit from this progress. Through technical and financial contributions the SDC is supporting the development of educational alternatives to improve the education available in its partner countries. To this end it builds infrastructure where necessary and trains teachers and staff to manage schools. Meanwhile, political dialogue is encouraging reforms in the education system to better link basic education with vocational training, in particular in West Africa.

- Switzerland's support to improve the education system **in Burkina Faso** has allowed 2 760 000 children, 48% of them girls, to start school or continue their education. Switzerland's portfolio has had a direct impact on the basic education of 31 000 children who have benefited from school supplies, school meals, trained teachers and adequately equipped classrooms.

More than 300,000, mainly young, people have received vocational training in 20 of Switzerland's priority countries since 2012.

Each year, thousands of young people seek to enter the labour market without qualifications or training. To help these young people find decent employment, the SDC promotes access to vocational training that focuses on the needs of the

private sector. To do this, it helps to improve the quality of education and contributes to the effective running of training centres by promoting links with the local business environment, improving curriculums and training instructors.

- **In Nepal**, a fund set up in partnership with the Nepalese government reimburses training expenses as soon as the apprentice finds a job that pays at least minimum wage. For example in 2014 over 8000 young people completed a vocational training course. Some 95% of these have already found paid employment at minimum wage.

Improved access to financial services and promotion of the private sector have vastly increased income and opportunities in the labour market.

The main reasons why some people are unable to escape poverty are linked to barriers that make it difficult for them to access certain markets. The SDC consequently seeks to ensure access to these markets for all economic actors by developing technical, but also political solutions.

- This is its focus **in Bangladesh**, where the SDC is supporting the Katalyst project which seeks to raise the incomes of poor rural communities. Thanks to the SDC's development programme on agriculture and the rural economy, almost 900 000 small farmers and entrepreneurs in Bangladesh have seen their incomes increase USD 81 per year on average since 2013. This increase, which is equivalent to 41% of the agricultural income, was achieved through improved access to information about prices and technology and better access to means of production such as better quality seed. Meanwhile, political dialogue has enabled legislative changes relating to the way markets work and which favour disadvantaged rural populations.

HEIGHTENED COOPERATION IN FRAGILE SITUATIONS

Switzerland's continuing engagement in 12 African, Asian and Latin American partner countries and regions considered "fragile" has helped them transition to a longer-term development perspective, while at the same time improving the living conditions of the population.

To achieve lasting results, ideally, the SDC must strengthen national systems of service delivery. This is particularly difficult in fragile contexts, where results are generally more visible at the local level. Nevertheless, evidence suggests that, in the long term, intervention can have an impact on strengthening the partner states' capacity to carry out the functions required to reduce poverty, promote development and protect the population while respecting human rights.

Results in helping to improve living conditions, reduce sources of conflict and increase crisis resilience in fragile contexts

Improving social, cultural and political rights plays an important role in crisis and conflict reduction. Extending the protection afforded to victims, putting human rights recommendations into practice, introducing policies that favour social integration of different cultural groups are further measures that strengthen the role of civil society in conflicts.

Conflict management and crisis resilience

Thanks to its expertise and firm commitment to human rights, Switzerland is able to position itself as a credible actor in dealing with conflict sources and in peacebuilding. It makes a pertinent contribution to reducing the root causes of conflicts and increasing crisis resilience in targeted fragile contexts.

- **In the African Great Lakes region**, the SDC assists municipal land registry authorities through a programme to safeguard land tenure in northern Burundi. Local people now find it easier to obtain land tenure. Where necessary, village groups are invited to participate directly in the settlement of conflicts over land. To date, more than half of some 850 conflicts over land have been successfully resolved by setting up reconciliation committees and employing mediation, and the land in question returned to its original owners. In Burundi, the ownership rights to more than 23 000 family smallholdings have been legally recognised.
- **In Pakistan**, in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which borders on Afghanistan, SDC support in the form of political dialogue has strengthened the principles of the rule of law and given the community access to justice. Several conflicts have been settled peacefully, benefiting more than 30 000 inhabitants, half of whom were women, in 7 of the province's 25 districts.
- **In Afghanistan**, SDC support for the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and civil society has helped strengthen human rights, in particular those of women – as evidenced by the perception of more than 1 000 Afghan women who claim they now feel more sheltered from conflict in 29 provinces throughout the country. Finally, thanks to SDC support, which has also helped make the justice system more effective, more than 300 adults, including 60 women and over 100 minors, who had been held in custody without trial or wrongfully detained have now been set free.



AN INCREASED COOPERATION IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS

Independent evaluation of the performance of the SDC's instruments in fragile and conflict-ridden contexts, which was mandated in 2012, has confirmed that it is well placed to heighten its intervention in fragile states.

From this point of view, the SDC's expertise and its relationships based on respect and mutual trust that it has forged over many years with its partner countries are major assets. On the basis of the recommendations set out in the evaluation and with a view to obtaining more meaningful results, the SDC senior management has taken appropriate measures to ensure that the cooperation strategy for each partner country or region is based on a thorough analysis of the context, puts forward specific change scenarios and takes better account of conflict-sensitive projects' and programmes' management.

The SDC has also stepped up its cooperation within the Federal Administration to make sure cooperation strategies are jointly developed in order to advance the achievement of common goals and results. While each of Switzerland's various cooperation instruments (SDC, HSD, SECO) has proven effective in its own right, combining and coordinating their efforts has led to even more notable results in addressing the causes of fragility and conflicts.

- **In Haiti**, the SDC is assisting the government in tackling the issue of slow-moving judicial procedures and prolonged preventive detention. Imprisonment conditions have already improved considerably for the more than 9000 detainees who received legal assistance.

The SDC also frequently supports the holding of national elections at a decentralised level in order to guarantee the democratic process and mitigate the risks of conflict.

- For example, the elections observed by the SDC **in South Africa and Mozambique** were conducted correctly and passed off peacefully. One of the SDC's civil society partner organisations has been able to take legal action over certain corrupt practices among

political parties. These lawsuits have prompted the government to adopt stricter anti-corruption measures.

The SDC also acts at the multilateral level, where it co-chairs the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF), a forum which aims to contribute to international discussions aimed at maximising development outcomes in fragile situations. INCAF was established in 2009 as a subsidiary body of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). The 2015 report emphasises the link between peace and development. In achieving the sustainable development goals, progress in reducing fragility will play a critical role in the fight against poverty.

COMMITMENT TO TACKLING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Global challenges related to sustainability and the scarcity of resources on our planet are increasing and having a major impact on poverty around the world. Among them are challenges related to access to water, raw materials and energy; climate change; food security; migration and global health problems.

Classic models focusing on capacity building in the partner countries are no longer sufficient in finding lasting solutions to these global challenges. In a bid to address this situation, the SDC set up five global programmes in 2008 covering food security, climate change, water, migration and development, and health.

This new vehicle for cooperation has:

- i. allowed effective approaches to be widely propagated. Initially, these are tested through innovative projects supported at the local, national or regional level in partnership with the private sector and the Swiss centres of excellence;
- ii. strengthened the impact of the programmes;
- iii. fuelled the multilateral debate in an attempt to positively influence the drafting of international policies and standards.

With its global programmes, the SDC aims to improve the situation of the poor. These programmes are implemented in locations where their potential leverage effect is greatest. This includes not just the poorest regions or countries but also emerging economies such as India or Brazil, which have a decisive influence on global themes like climate change or food security on the international stage.

An independent institutional evaluation of the five SDC global programmes compiled in 2015 concluded that “the global programmes make a difference for the SDC and for Swiss foreign policy in terms of influencing policy through strategic multilateral engagements and efforts to coordinate with other members of the Federal Administration.”

Thanks to these innovative pilot projects, Switzerland is making a growing contribution to achieving objectives in the international processes

involved in drawing up rules and policies that respond to global challenges.

Results in creating favourable conditions for resolving global issues

Switzerland is actively committed to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Switzerland contributed to the Sixth Replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund, which now has resources of USD 1 billion at its disposal. Switzerland also played an active role in setting up the new Green Climate Fund (GCF) by taking a seat on the Board and contributing USD 100 million. The GCF was created specifically to support developing countries in adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change, while taking particular account of the needs of the most exposed and vulnerable societies. The GCF also serves to mobilise private-sector resources.

- In India, the government has just adopted a new code for energy efficiency in residential buildings. These guidelines are the result of close cooperation between the Indian and Swiss governments and are based on Swiss skills and expertise. Their application will allow important energy savings to be made in new buildings and should reduce the construction sector's greenhouse gas emissions.

Switzerland has exerted a decisive influence on water issues at the international level.

THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Addressing global challenges such as extreme poverty, climate change and healthcare crises requires global investment.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at the centre of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, approved by the members of the United Nations in September 2015. These are now used as a normative reference to help the international community to find common solutions. Acting on a mandate from the Federal Council, Switzerland made a successful contribution to different aspects of the agenda. It invested heavily in the key areas of water, gender equality, health, peace and the rule of law. Thanks to Switzerland, the SDGs also address consumption and production, migration and development and disaster risk reduction.

Switzerland also contributed along with six other countries to a regional initiative aimed at finding consensus on the difficult political issue of monitoring progress on the 2030 Agenda.

Switzerland played a significant role in the incorporation of a concrete and measurable goal on universal access to water and hygiene in the final report and proposal of the United Nations Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

In the area of standards, an important milestone was reached in July 2014 with the adoption of a standard, supported and developed by Switzerland, on the water footprint of businesses. This international standard sets out rules for assessing the water consumption of a product or service over its entire life cycle and establishes mechanisms for working closely with governments and large corporations to reduce the water footprint of production systems.

- In Vietnam, the world's largest producer of Robusta coffee, a partnership was established between the SDC, the Ministry of Agriculture and Nestlé, with the aim of reducing the amount of water used to irrigate the coffee plantations. A joint study has shown that the quantities of water used for irrigation have been cut by 60%. The project is currently being implemented by some 50 000 coffee producers. Lowering the consumption of water in production processes has generated significant financial savings (around CHF 240 a year for each producer). The water resources saved in this way are sufficient to meet the needs of 2.5 million people.
- In Latin America, the SDC's many years of experience in relation to water supplies and hygiene in rural areas enabled 732 000 people in Peru to be given better access to basic hygiene services and a further 297 000 to gain access to drinking water. Thanks to political dialogue and an exchange of expertise, this project, first launched in 2011, was

subsequently extended to other regions of Peru and replicated in Colombia in 2014. Similar projects provided 251 000 people in Haiti, 351 000 in Nicaragua and 500 000 in Honduras with access to drinking water.

Through its international engagement, Switzerland has made an important contribution to firmly establishing a high-level dialogue on migration and development within the United Nations.

Migration has risen in importance as a development factor, and the topic is regularly raised for discussion at the United Nations General Assembly.

Switzerland's operational efforts seek to improve the situation of millions of people who leave their homes in South and South-East Asia to go and work in the Middle East. In pursuing this goal, it emphasises 'upstream' intervention in the migrants' countries of origin, such as Nepal and Bangladesh, to assist future labour migrants in preparing for their departure.

- In Sri Lanka, the SDC provided support to advice centres in 10 of the country's 25 districts, which were tasked with informing potential migrants about the benefits and risks of migrating to find work, their rights and obligations, and working and living conditions in their destination country. Since 2013, 52 000 households have been able to make a decision regarding migration on the basis of reliable and precise information, thus permitting them to maximise the opportunities and migrate under the best possible conditions.



INCREASING RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

International cooperation has proved to be a pertinent and effective method of facing up to the challenges of global climate change.

An independent analysis of the effectiveness of the SDC and SECO in this area was conducted in 2014. It concluded that almost 40% of the projects analysed show „moderate to strong“ effectiveness, both in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The analysis also noted that the projects financed by Switzerland have helped alleviate poverty by strengthening the resilience to climate change of the most vulnerable. It further observed that, through the projects it supported, Switzerland successfully transferred climate change awareness and the relevant skills to its partner countries.

- Thanks to the support of the SDC and the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM), the partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina succeeded in mapping the Bosnian diaspora in Switzerland – estimated to number 60 000 – for the first time. This initiative enables support to be provided to those migrants wishing to return to their country and facilitates investment in the Bosnian economy, including the remittance of funds by the migrant community.

By engaging in political dialogue and drawing on its lengthy experience and expertise in rural development, Switzerland has helped shape the adoption and implementation of important international regulations on improving food security.

Switzerland played a key role in the adoption of the “Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems” by the Committee on World Food Security in October 2014. These provide a universal framework for investments along the value chain.

The SDC has championed the topic of agricultural governance at all levels. It has contributed to the implementation of policies and guidelines ensuring secure and equitable access to the Earth’s natural resources. It also firmly espoused the application of the “Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure”, officially endorsed by the United Nations Committee on World Food Security in 2012.

- The SDC runs cutting-edge regional projects in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam through which it encourages implementation of these guidelines to ensure that food producers are granted land tenure and improved access to natural resources, i.e. forests, agricultural land and water.
- Owing to huge demand and widespread support from the key actors (governments, smallholder farmers, NGOs), the advisory network for smallholders on plant protection, launched in 2011 with the help of the SDC, now operates in 31 countries on all continents. Today, 600 000 small-scale farmers benefit from the establishment of a global network of plant clinics that maintains close links with the research sector.

Switzerland has stepped up its commitment to improving health both as a global public good and in the reform processes of multilateral organisations.

Switzerland has played a pioneering role in improving access to medicines and combating tropical diseases such as malaria. It has contributed to the financing and launch of a series of research and development projects on effective and affordable drugs to treat diseases all too often neglected by the multinational pharmaceutical companies. With this goal in mind, the SDC has co-founded and participated in leading-edge private partnerships, such as the Innovative Vector Control Consortium (IVCC), which is dedicated to vector-borne neglected tropical diseases.

Switzerland actively supports the key institutions based in Geneva and is involved in the reform processes within the multilateral organisations. In particular, its contributions to UNAIDS and the WHO have risen substantially, and the reforms of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) were successfully concluded in 2013.

By adopting its new foreign policy on health in 2012, Switzerland has equipped itself with a progressive instrument for improving the coherence of its positions on the global stage. The policy serves to define and implement shared objectives for the federal authorities involved in this area. It enhances the country’s credibility as a global actor in the area of health and highlights the commitment of Swiss development cooperation to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WITH MULTILATERAL PARTNERS

To strengthen its influence and boost the achievement of its objectives at the international level, Switzerland primarily cooperates with thirteen multilateral development organisations and five multilateral humanitarian aid organisations. These organisations play an essential role in developing and implementing global policies that serve as guidelines for drawing up national legislation.

Multilateral cooperation is a key instrument in attaining the objectives set by the SDC. Thus, the portfolio of multilateral organisations which it supports has been constantly adapted over the years to bring it into line with the various global challenges and Switzerland's chosen development priorities.

To attain its goals, Switzerland allocates 40% of the funds available for international cooperation to multilateral organisations. Hence, in its 2013 peer review, the OECD found that Switzerland had adopted a clear strategic approach, which it applied consistently in allocating aid to multilateral organisations.

This approach has strengthened Switzerland's position and influence within its partner multilateral organisations. This improved standing is due to the country's active and systematic participation in multilateral processes, and the acknowledged quality of its contributions. However, the allocation of additional financial resources has also played a role. Switzerland is now one of the ten most important donors for ten of its priority organisations and one of the top fifteen contributing funders of the three others.

In addition, Switzerland has taken advantage of the presence in Geneva of key multilateral partners in the area of development. It has helped them to define their positions on development issues by playing an active role in various formal and informal forums offered by International Geneva, in particular on the key topics of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), global health and water. Switzerland's strong presence in Geneva also contributed a great deal to defending positions within these different bodies, ensuring that Switzerland presented a coherent voice in other multilateral political hubs such as

New York, and helping to firmly anchor Swiss priorities among the bodies located in International Geneva.

Results in helping improve the effectiveness of the multilateral system

Switzerland has been able to make intelligent use of its influence in achieving its two goals. On the one hand, the organisation of the United Nations development agencies has been strengthened along with how they function, and the reforms undertaken by the World Bank and the regional Development Banks have been consolidated. On the other hand, the strategic alignment and effectiveness of interventions by the priority multilateral organisations have been improved thanks to the support provided to these same organisations in defining and deploying new strategy- and programme-related planning, management and evaluation instruments.

Within the United Nations, Switzerland continued its support for the «One UN» approach.

This major, long-term reform aims to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations programmes by harmonising the agencies' internal processes and improving the coordination of their interventions on the ground. Switzerland has been a particularly strong advocate for the development and adoption of effective monitoring and evaluation systems in all the UN institutions, thus enabling projects and programmes to be better conducted.

Switzerland is directly represented on the governing bodies of most multilateral organisations.

Ensuring these organisations are well governed is an integral aspect of Switzerland's responsibilities. The fact that Switzerland was chosen to act as Vice-Chair of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board in 2015 is a clear expression of the trust it inspires among the member states.

The multilateral organisations make every effort to satisfy the ever-increasing requirements for good governance. All of Switzerland's priority multilateral organisations apply accepted international standards in auditing their accounts and financial statements, and are regularly subject to independent external audits. In another important aspect of good governance, the seven priority multilateral development organisations examined in 2014 were all classified as "good to very good" according to the Aid Transparency Index (ATI).

Systematic reviews of the performance and effectiveness of the priority multilateral organisations are a crucial element of Switzerland's partnerships.

The analysis conducted under the Annual Multilateral Performance Assessment (AMPA) concluded that the services delivered by the 18 priority multilateral organisations are good to very good overall. Nevertheless, it was found that four of them still needed to better document the development impact of their interventions on the ground.

Switzerland was therefore heavily involved in the discussions on the mechanisms for applying the new results framework in a number of institutions within the United Nations system. This represents an important step towards improving the quality of reports and enhancing accountability.

Finally, at the project level, Switzerland channelled its support into enhancing the assessment and self-assessment competences of several of its partners, in line with its multilateral strategy.

Switzerland has helped to firmly establish and strengthen these themes in various agencies within the United Nations system and among development banks.

The adoption by more than 60 organisations of the "UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women" can be considered as a landmark success for the multilateral system. All the more so, given that the African Development Bank approved its Gender Strategy 2014–2019 and appointed a Special Envoy on Gender.

To strengthen its partners' commitment in fragile states, Switzerland also firmly supported moves to improve the partnership between the World Bank and the United Nations.



PROMISING COOPERATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2013, the SDC took active steps to develop new forms of partnership with the private sector to enhance the impact of its projects.



The SDC worked resolutely towards establishing strategic alliances with the private sector in the interests of achieving the objectives set out in the Dispatch for 2013–2016 in the priority areas such as food security, health, migration, the promotion of employment and income opportunities, the management of water resources and climate change.

The SDC has many years of experience in private sector development in the countries in which it operates. Engaging in development-oriented private sector partnerships has assumed an even greater importance with the implementation of the Dispatch for 2013–2016.

The SDC's financial contribution to public-private partnerships for development (PPDPs) has more than doubled since the early 2000s and currently amounts to some CHF 30 million a year. At present, the SDC is involved in 30 partnerships whose modes of cooperation vary depending on the objectives pursued and organisations concerned.

The SDC is now in a position to start gauging the first concrete results from these efforts. An independent assessment of the PPDP portfolio carried out in 2013 concluded that almost two thirds of these partnerships already showed promise.

- **Swiss Capacity Building Facility.** This not-for-profit association, consisting of the SDC and various private companies including Swiss Re, Blue Orchard and the Credit Suisse Foundation, provides technical assistance to financial institutions in developing countries, such as insurance companies, microfinance institutions and savings and commercial banks, to help them scale up their outreach to poor people. Based on the progress achieved to date, its target of 720 000 new clients should be reached by the end of 2017.
- **RIICE.** Remote Sensing-Based Information and Insurance for Crops in Emerging Economies is a partnership co-funded by the SDC and several public and private-sector actors, including the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), Allianz Re and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). It makes use of innovative, satellite-based, remote-sensing technologies in order to reduce the vulnerability of rice producers in East and South Asian countries by providing governments with a risk management tool and by developing insurance products for small-scale rice farmers. It is well on the way to contributing to the food security of more than 2 million people.
- **SuizAgua** is a partnership that comprised the SDC and five Swiss companies with operations in Colombia – Clariant, Nestlé, Holcim, Alpina and Syngenta. It was subsequently enlarged to include around ten Colombian companies. The project's aim is to reduce the water footprint of these enterprises and their respective supply chains, while promoting an environmentally friendly business model.

POLICY COHERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT

According to the peer review of Switzerland's development cooperation conducted by the DAC and the OECD in 2013, Switzerland has increased its efforts to make national policies more development-friendly.

Switzerland has honed its strategy by defining seven priority areas in its Dispatch on International Cooperation for the period 2013–2016 to improve coordination within the administration: migration, agriculture, the environment, health, finances, security, education, research and culture. Among other areas that could have a significant impact in numerous developing countries, the Federal Council has chosen to prioritise issues relating to the trade in raw materials.

The SDC and SECO actively contributed to the work of the Federal Council in studying this particular sector and producing a report. Their concerns regarding the impact of the commodities sector in Switzerland and its partner countries were taken into account by the Federal Council, and special consideration is now being given to ways of making Swiss policies more conducive to development.

The Federal Council is also aware of the problem posed by the illicit financial flows that could pass through Switzerland and which constitute a major obstacle to economic growth and good governance in the developing countries concerned. It intends to create a wide range of instruments, specifically including measures to combat money laundering, tax evasion and fraud, and corruption.

For Switzerland, and most OECD countries, setting clear and measurable objectives in terms of development policy coherence represents a considerable challenge – as does monitoring progress in this area. The OECD recommends monitoring the impact of Swiss policies on developing countries more systematically and improving how the results achieved are communicated. Taking this advice on board, in 2013 the Federal Council began addressing different aspects of policy coherence for development in its foreign policy reports. The Federal Council intends to continue in this manner and account for the results in policy coherence for development on an annual basis.

At the international level, Switzerland was heavily involved in the process of preparing the new Sustainable Development Goals for the post-2015 agenda. It also recognised the issue of policy coherence for development as one of the principles that should underpin the post-2015 strategic framework for sustainable development and guide its implementation at both the national and international level. Within the OECD, Switzerland strengthened its commitment towards greater coherence on development policy.

To facilitate a more effective response to complex and fragile situations and crises in the priority regions and countries in which several federal offices intervene, Switzerland has strengthened the coordination and complementarity of its interventions by adopting shared cooperation strategies.

The Horn of Africa provides one example of this integrated approach. Switzerland's cooperation strategy in this region for 2013–2016 identifies four sectors of intervention: food security and rural development, health, governance and peacebuilding, migration and security. To ensure this strategy is implemented effectively and the goals are attained, Switzerland has adopted a whole-of-government approach which coordinates the SDC instruments and links them with diplomatic and policy measures and instruments relating to migration and security.

SDC PRIORITY COUNTRIES AND REGIONS (2012–2015)

PRIORITY COUNTRIES AND REGIONS SOUTH

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Great Lakes ¹	1
Southern Africa ²	2
Tanzania	3
Mozambique	4
Chad	5
Mali	6
Niger	7
Horn of Africa ³	8
Burkina Faso	9
Benin	10

NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Occupied Palestinian Territory	11
Northern Africa ⁴	12

LATEINAMERIKA

Central America ⁵	13
Bolivia	14
Cuba	15
Haiti	16

ASIA

Mekong ⁶	17
Nepal	18
Hindu Kush ⁷	19
Bangladesh	20
Mongolia	21

HUMANITARIAN AID FOCUS AREAS

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Horn of Africa ⁸	A
South Sudan	B
Sahel ⁹	C
Congo (D.R.)/Kivu	D
Liberia (Ebola)	E
Central African Republic	F

NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

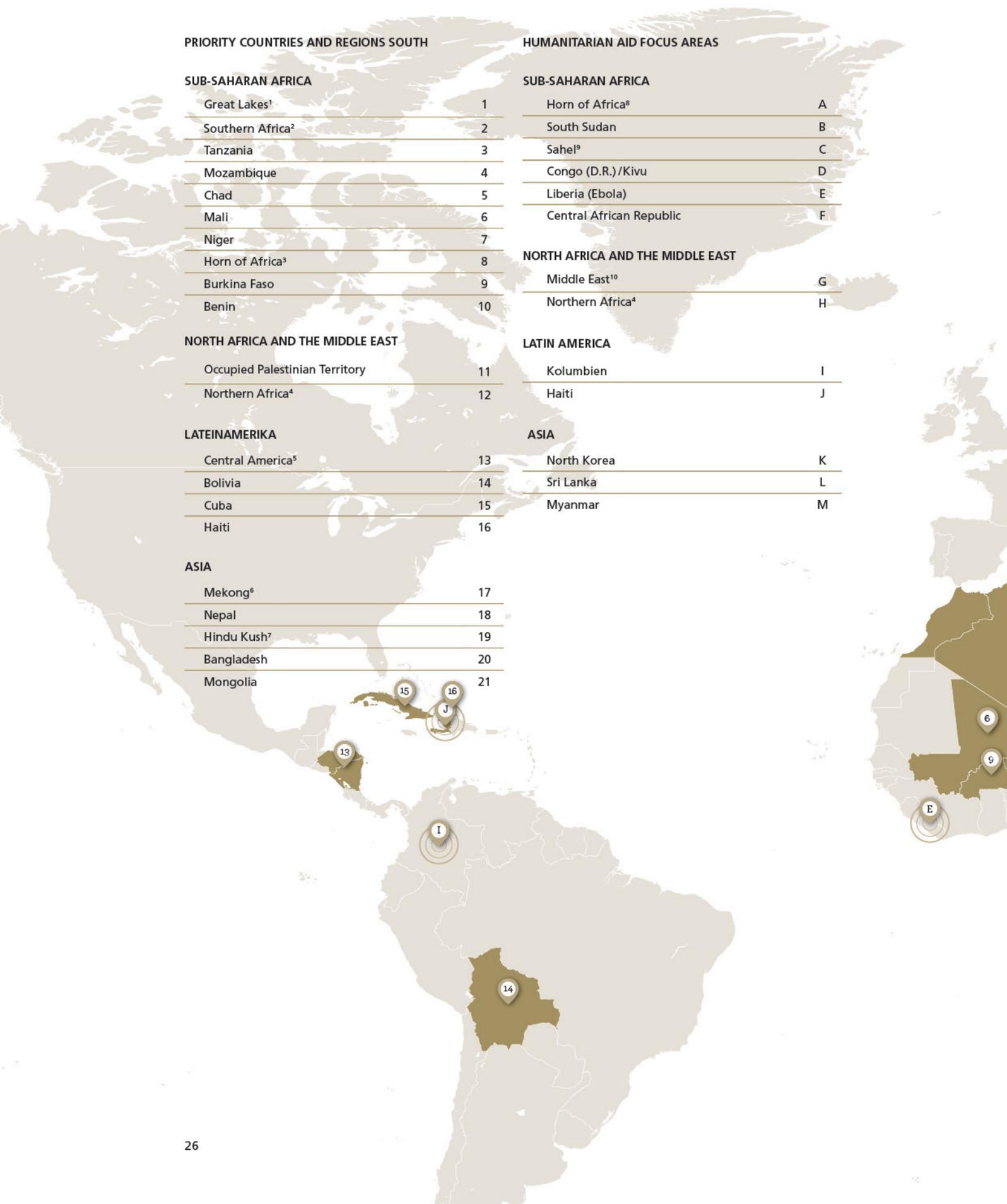
Middle East ¹⁰	G
Northern Africa ⁴	H

LATIN AMERICA

Kolumbien	I
Haiti	J

ASIA

North Korea	K
Sri Lanka	L
Myanmar	M

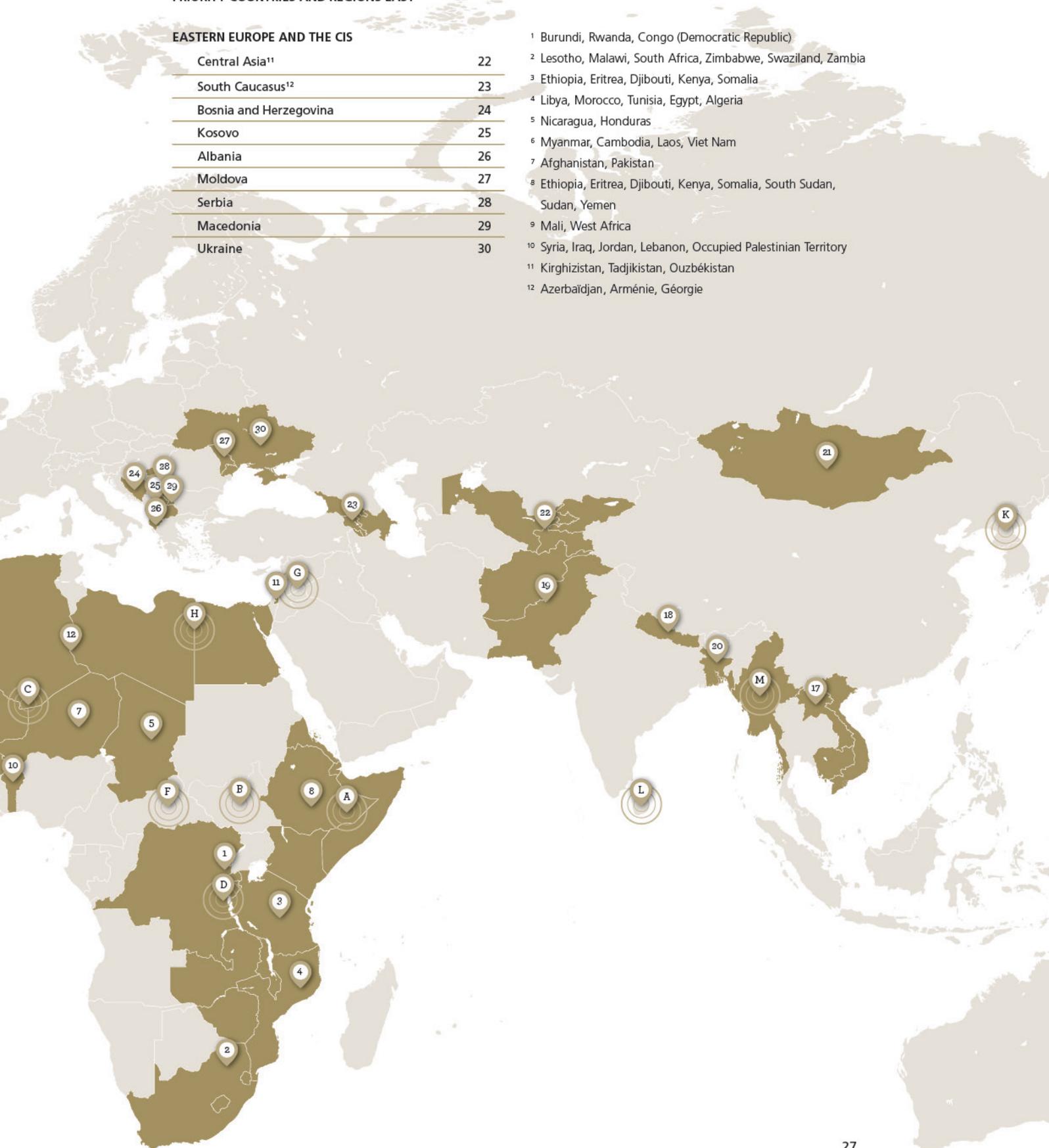


PRIORITY COUNTRIES AND REGIONS EAST

EASTERN EUROPE AND THE CIS

Central Asia ¹¹	22
South Caucasus ¹²	23
Bosnia and Herzegovina	24
Kosovo	25
Albania	26
Moldova	27
Serbia	28
Macedonia	29
Ukraine	30

- ¹ Burundi, Rwanda, Congo (Democratic Republic)
- ² Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Zambia
- ³ Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia
- ⁴ Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria
- ⁵ Nicaragua, Honduras
- ⁶ Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam
- ⁷ Afghanistan, Pakistan
- ⁸ Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Yemen
- ⁹ Mali, West Africa
- ¹⁰ Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Occupied Palestinian Territory
- ¹¹ Kirghizistan, Tadjikistan, Ouzbékistan
- ¹² Azerbaïdjan, Arménie, Géorgie



CLOSER PARTNERSHIP WITH SWISS NGOS

Partnerships with NGOs working directly in the field, in often fragile contexts, have made an important contribution to enhancing and strengthening their capacity and skills as well as allowing them to play a role in achieving the objectives set out in the Dispatch for 2013–2016.

The SDC provides financial, thematic and methodological support to 24 Swiss NGOs and 7 cantonal development cooperation federations. These partnerships complement the SDC's activities and relate to the fields of development cooperation, humanitarian aid and transition aid in the countries of Eastern Europe and the CIS.

Best practice examples are available, innovations are capitalised on and shared, and the focus on results is improved by developing steering instruments and generally professionalising the organisations.

- **Reducing poverty** is the primary focus of the interventions by Swiss NGOs that receive funding from the SDC and which are active in areas such as food security, access to land, creating employment and generating income, and improving basic services. In Laos, 167 000 individuals benefited throughout 2014 from the Health Equity Fund, which permitted the professionalisation of basic healthcare services. In South-Eastern Europe, 95% of Roma children enrolled in compulsory schooling successfully completed their education; the average school completion rate for children in this category is 45%.
- Numerous innovations have permitted **real change to be achieved in healthcare systems, the environment and protecting the rights of marginalised groups**. Improved waste management in 10 Bolivian villages between 2013 and 2014 created 440 jobs, generated USD 550 000 from the sale of recycled material and helped reduce CO₂ emissions by 13 000 tonnes. Moreover, USD 1 700 000 was invested by the local authorities in recycling.
- In terms of overall framework conditions, progress can be illustrated by **reference to the anti-sexual harassment act** passed in India in 2013 following an initiative by domestic workers and which affords protection to the most marginalised groups. In Haiti, international adoption law has become an integral part of the constitution.
- **Humanitarian action** has permitted a rapid response in crisis situations such as malnutrition and Ebola. It has also strengthened the capacity of the beneficiaries in disease prevention and climate change adaptation, and enhanced their ability to respond to the threats posed by natural hazards.
- **Strengthening civil society** has enabled major progress to be made, most notably in defending human rights and making female circumcision illegal in Guinea Bissau as well as ending harmful practices in certain regions of Mali. Strengthening media networks in Mali during the crisis helped to ensure impartial, neutral radio news in extremely fragile situations.
- **The work of the NGOs in informing the Swiss public** has raised awareness among the general population of many social, economic and cultural challenges involved in development issues. A large number of debates and presentations have been held in schools on the current global challenges such as food security, the agriculture of tomorrow, the management of humanitarian crises and migration problems, climate change and the development role of the private sector.

RESEARCH IN THE INTERESTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Alongside technological and social innovations, knowledge gained from research has become increasingly important in all areas of international cooperation as a driving force in combating poverty and transitioning to globally sustainable development.

Under the auspices of international cooperation in the period 2013–2016, the SDC's research portfolio was reformed following an independent evaluation of its research-related activities. In response to global risks, crises and insecurities, research has also been realigned to sharpen the focus on solving global problems in poor countries and regions of the world.

- **The «Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development»,** a ten-year research programme also known as the r4d programme, is a pioneering instrument for interdisciplinary and solution-oriented research, developed and launched by the SDC and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) in 2012. The r4d programme is noted for giving equal weight to both development relevance and scientific quality.

Communicating and applying research, and providing results-oriented reports are also considered important.

- **To date, 25 transnational research partnership projects** have been approved. Alongside Switzerland, 35 African, Asian and Latin American countries are involved. The focus is placed on five themes: causes of and solutions to social conflicts in contexts of weak public institutions or state fragility; employment in the context of sustainable development; innovation in agricultural and food systems for food security; sustainable management of ecosystems for the provision of ecosystem services; and provision systems and financing mechanisms in the public health sector.



A woman with blonde hair tied back is looking intently at a document she is holding. She is holding a young child with blonde hair who has a pacifier in their mouth. The child is wearing a bright orange jacket. The background is a dark green wall with a faint, dotted world map. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

CONTINUATION OF TRANSITION ASSISTANCE IN THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE AND THE CIS

By supporting the transition of the Western Balkans and the countries of the former Soviet Union towards democratic systems and market economy, Switzerland helps restore political stability and improve conditions for the people living there.

The countries involved in transition cooperation continue to have medium to large deficits in terms of democracy and the rule of law. When it comes to political and civil rights, democratic values have actually deteriorated there since 2012.

Although the Western Balkans are faring better than the CIS, no country in this region is classified as a consolidated democracy. The CIS is dominated by geopolitical tensions that jeopardise the political stability of whole regions as well as individual countries. The conflict in eastern Ukraine is threatening to go on indefinitely and the prospects of resolving the Transnistrian conflict have receded. In the South Caucasus, conflicts over disputed and rebel areas have intensified.

Switzerland has adapted its country programme in response to the Ukraine crisis. Various new elements have been added to the activities already in place in order to reduce the sources of conflict and give fresh impetus to the reconciliation and peace processes. Measures include promoting inclusive reform processes that involve every segment of the population, working in conflict areas and supporting local peacebuilding activities and platforms for dialogue.

Results in supporting the transition to democracy

The SDC has partnered with other cooperation agencies to support the governments of Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan in their efforts to decentralise.

To encourage and support the reform process, the SDC engages in political dialogue, helps build local authority capacity and pilots models for citizen participation in local decision-making processes.

- For example, the political dialogue pursued by Switzerland **in Kyrgyzstan** has resulted in decentralisation reform being placed back on the government agenda and tax-raising powers being delegated to the local authorities.
- **In the Western Balkans**, the SDC has chosen to support municipal associations that represent a major driving force in the decentralisation process, enabling them to better represent their members' interests vis-à-vis the government and successfully negotiate the transfer of additional financial resources.
- **In Kosovo and Serbia**, the municipal associations managed to avoid a 20% cut in funding that their respective finance ministers wanted to impose.

In the Western Balkans, the SDC has helped strengthen local governance and improve service provision in the municipalities.

To simplify procedures, certain units of local self-government have put in place a "one-stop shop" system for the processing of personal documents, permits and licences. A survey has shown this service to be very much appreciated by the local population.

- The introduction of this kind of system **in Serbia**, to which 350 000 people have access, has cut the average waiting time for a construction permit from 77 to 58 days.
- In the municipalities **of northern Albania**, 100 000 citizens who had only recently begun benefiting from a regular waste management service expressed their satisfaction with the system by accepting a 32% rise for 2014 on the previous year's waste collection and disposal charges.

A great many efforts have been made to encourage citizen participation in the political decision-making process at the decentralised level.

Local consultation mechanisms have been established in several countries with SDC support. The goal is to engage local people in municipal life and to get local authorities to assume their responsibilities. One of the SDC's approaches is to support the creation of forums to serve as a development platform to get people involved in decision making processes. This allows people to demand the inclusion of their needs and expectations in plans for local development.

- It is for example the case **in Macedonia**, where municipal forums were created in almost three quarters of the 80 local governments, in which citizens can voice their opinions on key investments and the communal budget. This participatory method has been institutionalised, and the improvement in democratic practices translates into higher participation by citizens in local authority decisions.

Thanks to health sector reforms, millions of people now enjoy better access to healthcare.

In Central Asia, the Western Balkans, Ukraine and Moldova, SDC support for health sector reform has strengthened the effectiveness of healthcare systems and shifted the focus of priorities from specialised medicine towards primary care.

Reforming and strengthening healthcare systems is a daunting task. The SDC focuses its efforts mainly on developing capacities and strengthening institutions. The support it offers includes training healthcare workers and health service managers, and also helps improve infrastructure by providing equipment and funding renovations.

- It is for example the case **in Moldova and Ukraine**, where the SDC has made a decisive contribution to improving the perinatal care given to mothers and children, and is achieving remarkable results in reducing the average maternal and infant mortality rates. As a result, the Millennium Development Goal on reducing infant mortality rates has been reached in both countries ahead of 2015.

Health promotion and prevention programmes are proving to have a very positive effect on public health. The SDC's determined involvement in the political dialogue to improve the framework conditions played a role in this important result alongside the technical aid provided to the relevant government departments. At the same time, it advocates for increasing the involvement of local people. It encourages the empowerment of communities, for example by establishing committees to jointly manage health services.

- For example, **in Kyrgyzstan**, the Community Action for Health programme, which receives SDC support, has been fully integrated into the health system, increasing healthcare cover from 77% in 2012 to 84% in every village in the country. Overall, more than 3 million people are covered.

More than 1500 000 people have seen substantial improvements in their water supply and in waste water treatment.

The reforms of water management systems undertaken with SDC and SECO support include improving the overall framework conditions; fiscal, legal and regulatory policies; and building the capacity of public services to manage water facilities and infrastructures.

- It is the case **in Ukraine, Moldova and Central Asia**, where the SDC interventions have given 250 000 people access to drinking water for the first time in their lives. Thus, in the Ferghana Valley, **Uzbekistan and Tajikistan** developed a model to manage drinking water and rural sanitation has been developed with Switzerland's support. The project is unique in that the collected fees cover all operating and maintenance costs.



IN THE WESTERN BALKANS, ALMOST 16 000 YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE BEEN INTEGRATED IN WHAT IS STILL A TIGHT LABOUR MARKET.

Vocational education and training (VET) aims to provide people with the qualifications they need to take part in the working world, thus opening up new prospects and access to appropriately paid jobs.

The SDC's strategy of bringing the VET system more into line with the needs of potential employers and improving job placement and advice services has borne fruit. These measures were conceived and implemented in close collaboration with the authorities in charge of training, public and private employment agencies, and the companies themselves. The main stakeholders now work together without SDC support, increasing the likelihood that the systematic changes set in motion by the SDC will prove sustainable.

In Uzbekistan, Switzerland joined forces with the private sector to assist with the development of a special curriculum in water management training. 900 people now graduate from this new course each year.

To round out its support for public-sector VET reforms, the SDC also worked with the private sector to promote job creation. Private-sector employment promotion activities in the rural areas of the South Caucasus and the Western Balkans have created more than 6000 new jobs since 2010 and boosted the income of more than 40,000 rural households, at growth rates that far outstrip the sector average.

In Serbia, SDC support for a private-sector development project in the timber industry has enabled 1700 new positions to be created since 2010, representing an increase of 10% in this branch. In the south-west of the country, 100 new jobs have been created thanks to more efficient cooperation between the tourism agencies and private-sector stakeholders. The significant increase in the number of tourists visiting the region as a result of this cooperation has had a positive knock-on effect on other sectors, such as food production and processing.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

According to an independent evaluation conducted in 2014 of the SDC's governance activities, the SDC has made a successful contribution to strengthening public governance systems and increasing citizen participation in several priority countries.

The promotion of good governance, a cross-cutting theme in the Dispatch for 2013–2016, is an important component of SDC interventions targeted at decentralisation, local governance and democracy, for example, as well as those concerned with policy development and institution building. It is also a key factor in promoting principles such as efficiency, non-discrimination, participation, accountability and transparency.

The SDC devotes a substantial proportion (i.e. between 30% and 40%) of its annual bilateral spending to governance. It promotes governance not only as a cross-cutting issue and essential component of all its projects and programmes, as with gender equality, but also through projects and programmes specifically dedicated to advancing the management of public affairs.

An independent evaluation conducted in 2014 of the SDC's governance activities clearly demonstrated its very good performance in this field. According to the evaluation team, the SDC has made a successful contribution to strengthening public governance systems and increasing citizen participation in several priority countries – in sectors such as water, health, agriculture and climate change, in which governance is a cross-cutting theme.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina for example, where the cooperation strategy states that governance is a cross-cutting theme, the interventions receiving SDC support have had very positive effects on water management at the local government and municipal levels. SDC support has enabled the municipalities to develop integrated local development plans covering water, sanitation and waste management. It has also helped to establish platforms for cooperation between local authorities in water catchment management, waste management and flood control, and to raise important funding on this basis for the realisation of their plans. These results have also

influenced the preparation at federal level of legislation on local development planning and management and a concept for local development funds.

Case studies conducted in Bolivia and Mozambique as part of the independent evaluation present similar results. By working with authorities, civil society and international actors at different levels, the SDC has built local capacities and helped achieve important policy changes, in the latter case particularly through strategic political dialogue.

Based on the findings of the independent evaluation of the SDC's governance activities, the SDC's senior management took a number of measures to increase the effectiveness of its interventions at the transversal level. These actions are chiefly intended to support staff in designing and managing interventions, particularly in updating the strategic framework and chain of expected results, as well as the definition of objectives, indicators and monitoring systems in order to improve the impact measurement of governance activities.

In addition, the SDC has demonstrated its commitment to promoting good governance by proposing a strategic objective to be included in the next Dispatch for the period 2017–2020.

GENDER EQUALITY

In its 2013 peer review of Switzerland's international cooperation, the OECD found that "the SDC has made clear progress in integrating gender equality into its programming".

The SDC has long been committed to promoting equal rights and conditions for women and men, and gender equality remains one of its key concerns, both within its own organisation and in the priority regions and countries.

The independent evaluation of the SDC's governance activities notes that the "SDC continues to correctly be seen as a leader in this field (gender equality)". The three programmes examined by the assessment team in Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mozambique are considered as models of best practice in terms of design quality and implementation.

Other examples of the successful mainstreaming of gender equality, including in countries considered fragile, are worthy of mention:

- i. At the project level: health in Burundi, where women make up more than half the beneficiaries of the SDC-supported project to improve primary healthcare; access to justice in northern Pakistan, where 50% of those to benefit were women; and the representation of women in local authorities in the countries of the Western Balkans;
- ii. At the political level: by resolutely pursuing political dialogue, the SDC has helped introduce apprenticeships to the vocational training system in the main priority countries in West Africa. In 2014, 30 000 apprentices took part in the programme; 30% of these were women, a steadily increasing number;
- iii. At the global level: in the negotiations on the post-2015 agenda, the SDC was instrumental in the adoption of gender equality as one of the future Sustainable Development Goals (No. 5).

In other cases, however, gender equality has not been sufficiently mainstreamed into either the design, implementation or monitoring of interventions. Consequently, these projects were only

able to achieve partial results. An internal analysis conducted in 2014 identified improvement potential, and a number of concrete steps have now been taken on this basis. The principles applied since 2015 refer in part to aspects of intervention design, planning and monitoring, with a particular emphasis on new cooperation strategies for each country or region, and in part to the training of cooperation partners.

It is particularly important for the SDC to prioritise a gender equality approach in the projects and programmes it supports, given that there are powerful conservative forces at work in many of the priority regions and countries. In order to embed this crucial dimension in all SDC programmes at every level, equality between women and men has been put forward as a strategic objective in the future Dispatch for 2017–2020.

LESSONS LEARNED

Based on its experience, Switzerland has developed working methods adapted to fragile situations. Putting these methods into practice is demanding and entails additional costs, but it also bears results.

Because these regions face huge challenges from poverty, the SDC has increasingly focused its efforts on fragile contexts, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, in line with the Dispatch for 2013–2016. Thanks to working methods adapted to fragile situations, the SDC targets the roots of conflicts – such as social and political exclusion and discrimination – and helps state institutions to emerge that serve society. The Swiss programme in the Greater Horn of Africa is a good example of this.

The SDC's experience shows how demanding it is to work in contexts deemed 'fragile' and affected by conflict. The safety of those involved depends on suitable instruments, skilled human resources and coordinated measures. These activities are complex and create additional costs when compared with the SDC's work in stable contexts – but they bring results. The creation of a programme like this in the Horn of Africa has made possible rapid and long-term improvements in the living conditions of people, like the nomadic groups in southern Somalia and northern Kenya, who need help.

Good governance and the improvement of existing systems based on the goals and needs defined by governments and local communities is one of the pillars of Switzerland's international cooperation.

The promotion of good governance is an essential component of all of the SDC's activities focusing on decentralisation, local governance and democracy. It currently represents 30–40% of the SDC's annual bilateral spending and mainly aims to strengthen public management systems, increase civic participation and improve social cohesion.

For the SDC, good governance, a state governed by the rule of law and strong state institutions are prerequisites for development and for the well-being of people in need. Extensive experience in this area has led the SDC to focus on improving existing systems based on the goals and needs defined by the governments and the people of the countries in question. A strategic objective focusing on strengthening governance included in the upcoming dispatch (2017–2020) will enable the SDC to continue its commitment in this key aspect of Switzerland's international cooperation efforts.

The shortcomings of state systems are just one aspect of fragility. Fragility also concerns the relationship and the dynamics of power between state and civil society.

International debate, in which the SDC is closely involved, now views fragility from a broader perspective than that of the 'state'. Like in unstable countries, in certain countries considered stable, pockets of fragility may necessitate tailor-made activities to reduce the causes of conflict and encourage respect for human rights. These may involve support for political processes to transform the dynamics of power and of conflicts.

In light of these considerations, the SDC is building on its experience in fragile contexts to put increasing emphasis on working in situations of conflict and fragility, enabling people to assert their rights and helping the state to better meet people's needs and gain legitimacy.

Now that conflicts and situations of fragility are being considered in more complex terms, relief and development must be viewed in close association – there must be an overlap between short and long-term action.

The relief-rehabilitation-development link in crisis situations remains a challenge. Instruments and working methods vary. Emergency relief and development cooperation alternate in cycles in

different geographical areas; certain parts of a country or region stay peaceful for a long time, while conflicts remain active elsewhere.

A linear continuum involving a succession of activities has long been the favoured approach. Emergency relief is mobilised to bring aid to those affected. Reconstruction and rehabilitation activities are then put in place until it becomes possible to resume development programmes. However, crises rarely develop in a linear way. Moreover, the increasing complexity of the way in which we view situations of fragility and conflict, where short-term and long-term needs exist side by side, means that organisations need to move away from the traditional relief-development dichotomy.

The “contiguum” approach was developed by the actors involved in international cooperation, including Switzerland. It better reflects the complex notion of situations involving an overlap of short and long-term action and different dynamics. This is also the case with the SDC’s work in Mali.

Before establishing an alliance, public stakeholders and private businesses must work to build relationships based on mutual trust.

For some years now, the SDC has been involving the private sector more in the achievement of its development objectives. It has acquired extensive experience in this area by pursuing different approaches and learning lessons that enable it to improve its practices. The private sector not only responds to actors’ requests, it also submits requests for partnerships that will have a widespread, sustainable development impact while also serving its own long-term commercial interests.

Swiss cooperation and the private sector have not yet exploited the full potential of private-public development partnerships. Rather than sharing the other party’s values and interests, it is a question of understanding and being able to accept them. Cooperation arrangements need to be found that make it possible to reconcile different corporate cultures. Each stakeholder’s roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined and each

partner must be willing to share the risks and rewards. These conditions must be satisfied to ensure fruitful collaboration.

The SDC’s activities focus on achieving results and maximising the effectiveness of its investments. However, given the complexity of the contexts in which it operates and the multiple actors involved, measuring these impacts presents a methodological challenge.

In preparing its projects, the SDC systematically sets out the goals it seeks to achieve, the evaluation criteria and the monitoring that needs to take place in order to check that the objectives are achieved. Nevertheless, in contexts that are increasingly complex it can be difficult to assert with any certitude that a change is directly linked to the support provided.

That said, the quality of the data collected on the effects and relevance of SDC activities continues to improve thanks to continuous development of results-based project management tools (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting).

Today, the SDC has the ability to analyse the effectiveness of its activities and highlight the results it has achieved along with improvements needed. However, the SDC still needs to assess the initial situation of its project beneficiaries more systematically in order to be able to evaluate the projects’ impacts as objectively as possible.

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During the development of the Sustainable Development Goals for the 2030 Agenda, Switzerland contributed a great deal to the creation of an intergovernmental framework to make it possible to evaluate progress.

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