

Dispatch on Switzerland's International Cooperation 2017–2020

Key points in brief



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

A WORLD WITHOUT POVERTY AND IN PEACE, FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Switzerland's commitment

Based on article 54 of the Swiss Federal Constitution, Switzerland's international cooperation efforts aim to reduce poverty and global risks, alleviate suffering, and promote peace and respect for human rights. Through its international cooperation activities, Switzerland works to encourage global sustainable development in a way that respects the environment through the sustainable management of natural resources.

The **"Dispatch on Switzerland's International Cooperation, 2017–2020"**, is a report to the Swiss Parliament outlining the strategic priorities proposed by the Federal Council in this area. It includes **framework credits** for each of the five policy instruments used by Switzerland to implement its international cooperation strategy.

These are implemented by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), the Human Security Division (HSD) of the FDFA's Directorate of Political Affairs, and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER).

Framework credits:

- » Humanitarian aid (SDC)
- » Technical cooperation and financial aid for developing countries (SDC)
- » Economic and trade policy measures for development cooperation (SECO)
- » Transition aid and cooperation with Eastern Europe (SDC and SECO)
- » And, for the first time in a dispatch on international cooperation, measures for the promotion of peace and human security (HSD)

SOLIDARITY

Switzerland is committed to each and every person living free of poverty, in dignity and in security.

ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY

Switzerland is committed to doing its share to meet the challenges our world faces.

IN THE INTERESTS OF SWITZERLAND

Switzerland's own prosperity and security depend to a large degree on the international environment in which it operates.

A WORLD WITHOUT POVERTY AND IN PEACE, FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The background of the entire page is a faded, light green image of a schoolyard. In the foreground, a young boy is riding a bicycle towards the left. Behind him, another child is sitting on the ground, possibly playing. In the background, there are other children and a building, suggesting a school environment.

57 million children of primary-school age are not enrolled in any school. Of that number, more than half live in sub-Saharan Africa.

Between now and 2020, **600 million new jobs** need to be created for young people who will reach working age in developing countries during that time.

Every two minutes, somewhere in the world, a woman dies from complications of pregnancy or childbirth.

To live in dignity, to benefit from opportunities, to make one's voice heard – these are things that people long for everywhere in the world. Targeting the different forms of poverty, discrimination, exclusion and vulnerability in Switzerland's partner countries is crucial to creating more hopeful prospects for the future and reducing inequality.

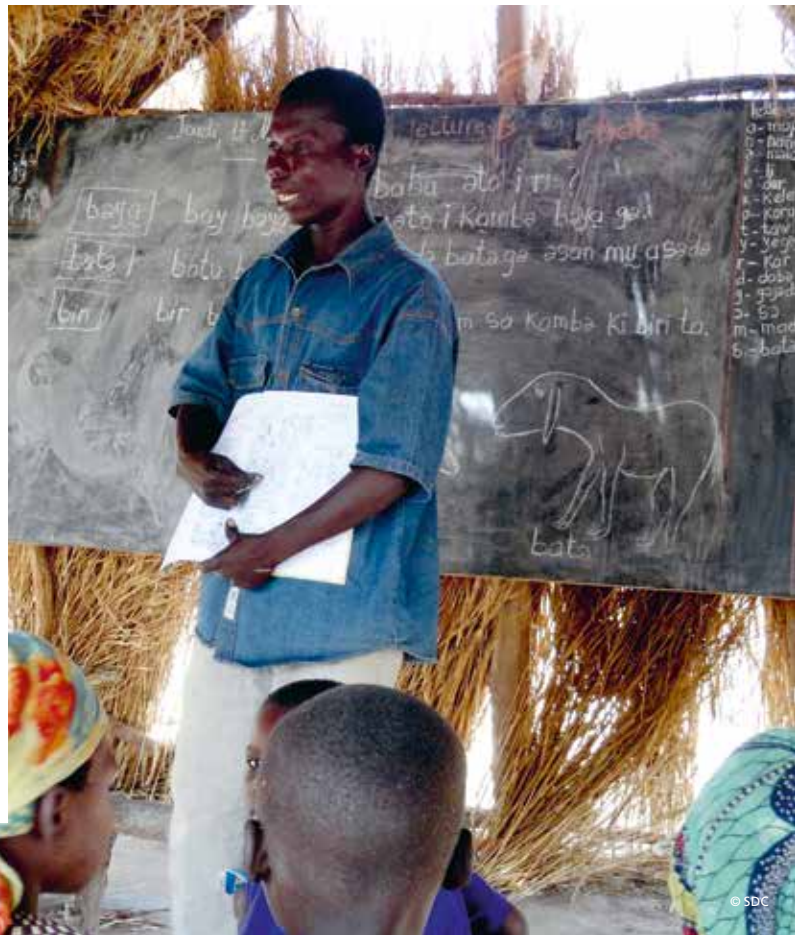
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: A COMMITMENT TO HELPING INDIVIDUALS AND STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS

Both SDC and the Global Partnership for Education support the educational system in **Chad** so that the poor can gain the knowledge and skills needed to learn a vocational trade and improve their lives in a sustainable way. In 2015, the SDC's efforts helped 70 000 children (43% of them girls) and 11 000 adults (75% of them women) access quality education.

A reform of the tax system in **Ghana**, with support from SECO, has made it possible to introduce online income tax declarations and to improve the services provided by the tax administration. Taxpayers in Ghana are today better informed with regard both to their own rights and duties and to the services provided by the tax administration. The number of taxpayers contributing to the financing of public expenses has seen an increase of 10% between 2010 and 2014.

For that reason, the **Dispatch 2017–2020** will focus on:

- » Increased funding for **basic education and vocational training**.
- » Strengthening **gender equality** and the **rights of women and girls**.
- » **Economic growth for the benefit of all** and, in particular, increasing the quantity and quality of jobs available and improving the underlying conditions for economic activity.



A WORLD WITHOUT POVERTY AND IN PEACE, FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



In 2014, there were **40 armed conflicts** around the world, the highest number in 15 years.

Today, there are some **60 million displaced persons** seeking refuge and security.

In the future, the **majority** of the extremely poor will be living in **fragile contexts**.

The world today is more divided than ever, plagued by the violence and insecurity that are the products of conflict and violent extremism. Switzerland's neutrality, its humanitarian tradition and its know-how place it in a unique position to offer protection and assistance to people affected by conflicts, to contribute to the search for political solutions to conflicts, and to promote respect for human rights, the foundation on which peace rests.

With that in mind, the **Dispatch 2017–2020** sets out the following priorities:

- » Increased **emergency aid** in order to better help and protect people affected by crises and disasters, particularly the millions of refugees and internally displaced persons in the **Middle East**.
- » Strengthening Switzerland's efforts to promote **the resolution of violent conflicts** by peaceful means.
- » Maintaining Switzerland's presence in **fragile contexts**, with a special emphasis on **sub-Saharan Africa**.

THE MIDDLE EAST: PROVIDING SCHOOLS AND SEEKING AN END TO THE CONFLICT

The Human Security Division is supporting efforts to achieve a political solution between the parties to the Syrian conflict. For this, it is working both at the international level, providing mediation expertise to support the UN-led peace process, and at the local level. In Jordan and Lebanon, the countries hosting the largest number of Syrian and Iraqi refugees, SDC is renovating schools. By upgrading school infrastructures, sanitary facilities, and classroom equipment, Switzerland is making it possible for both refugee and local children to receive an education. A total of 84 schools have been renovated, providing classrooms for some 57 000 children.



A WORLD WITHOUT POVERTY AND IN PEACE, FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Climate change threatens to push **100 million people** into extreme poverty between now and 2030.

A rise of **2–3° C** in the global average temperature will put an additional **150 million people** at risk of contracting malaria.

Switzerland's international cooperation has a new frame of reference: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the United Nations in September 2015. The Agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), covering the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development. It promotes development in a way that addresses current needs while taking into account the needs of future generations.

Implementation of the Agenda requires innovative approaches such as those included in the **Dispatch 2017–2020**:

- » **Switzerland plays a pioneering role in assuming an active commitment in areas of global scope** – from food security, climate change and environment, water, migration, health and international finance and trade. That commitment will be maintained, in particular, through the work of global programmes.
- » Switzerland will be strengthening **partnerships with the private sector** and will increase efforts to achieve greater diversity in sources of funding for sustainable development.
- » Switzerland is actively engaged in efforts to prevent the effects of **climate change and environmental damage** from affecting the poorest and most vulnerable populations, in particular, through the sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Working together in a complementary way

Switzerland has adopted seven common, **strategic objectives** by which to guide its activities:

1. Contribute to the development of an international framework for responding to global challenges
2. Prevent and manage the consequences of crisis and disaster, and of fragility; promote conflict transformation
3. Support sustainable access to resources and services for all
4. Promote sustainable economic growth
5. Strengthen the rule of law and democratic participation; support institutions serving society and the economy
6. Ensure the respect for human rights and fundamental liberties, and support efforts to advance their cause
7. Strengthen gender equality and the rights of women and girls

Switzerland has at its disposal a wide range of policy instruments that can be combined with, complement, and mutually reinforce one another. This makes it possible for Switzerland to respond actively to current challenges.

MIGRATION: AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION

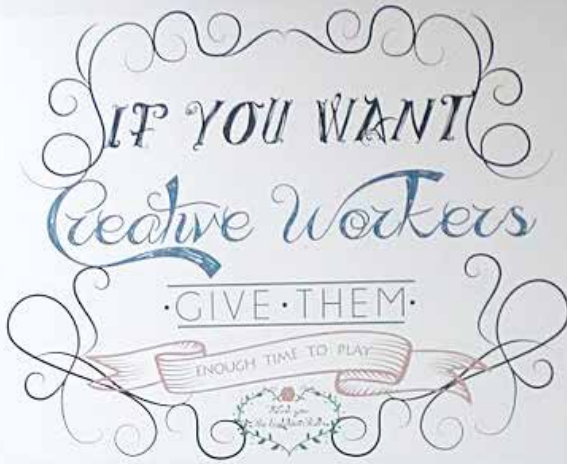
The SDC, SECO, DSH, and the State Secretariat for Migration work in close coordination to support the countries of North Africa, the Horn of Africa, and the Balkans in the area of migration. These regions are both places of transit and origin of migrants. The objective of the foreign policy on migration is to contribute to the creation of framework conditions that enable migration to happen in a safe

and regular manner. This should lead to a reduction in irregular migration and allow migrants to make use of their rights and fulfill their obligations. Besides programmes that assist migrants in returning to their home countries, Switzerland also addresses the root causes of irregular migration. In particular through its long-term efforts towards the peaceful resolution of conflicts, supporting democratic transi-

tion processes, improving living conditions in the home countries, and promoting job creation.

TUNISIA: JOBS AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING - OPENING PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

In **Tunisia**, the SDC and SECO are multiplying their efforts to create jobs and thus to provide



Tunisians with an alternative to migration. Since 2011, more than 12000 new jobs have been created with the help of microcredit facilities and improvements in vocational training programmes available to young people. As a means of improving the security of Tunisians in their own country, the DSH assists the Tunisian authorities with the development of measures for the prevention of extremism, in conformity

with human rights standards. The State Secretariat for Migration has made it possible for 1000 asylum seekers whose applications were denied in Switzerland to return to their home country and start a professional activity, within the framework of a migration partnership agreement concluded with the Tunisian authorities.

Maximising the effects of Swiss international cooperation

Strengthening partnerships and diversifying funding sources

Switzerland conducts its international cooperation activities by **networking with many partners**: the local populations and governments of recipient countries, multilateral organisations, Swiss, international and local NGOs, universities and research institutions, other donors, companies from the private sector based in Switzerland or abroad, diaspora communities, cantons and communes.

- » Switzerland's membership in key **multilateral organisations** adds a global dimension to its cooperation activities.
- » Partnerships with **NGOs** make it possible to benefit from their experience in their specific areas of focus.
- » Partnerships with the **private sector** offer various opportunities to mobilise additional sources of both expertise and funding, in particular, as a means of encouraging sustainable investments.

In the coming years, Switzerland's international cooperation will strengthen the **multiplier effect** of its budget. In addition to working together with its various partners, Switzerland has made it a priority to encourage efforts to increase the mobilisation of national resources – such as tax revenues – by partner countries.

SWISS CAPACITY BUILDING FACILITY: KNOWLEDGE SHARING

This non-profit association – whose members comprise the SDC and various private groups, including Swiss Re, Blue Orchard, and the Credit Suisse Foundation – provides technical assistance to financial institutions in developing countries, including insurance companies, micro-financing institutions, savings banks and commercial banks, so that they are better able to serve the poorest members of the population, many of them subsistence farmers. Judging by the progress that has been made so far, the target of 720 000 new clients should be reached by the end of 2017.



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SIFEM, THE DEVELOPMENT FINANCE INSTITUTION OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION FOR INVESTMENT IN EMERGING ECONOMIES

SIFEM (Swiss Investment Fund for Emerging Markets) allows 400 enterprises to gain access to equity capital and loans, thus facilitating the creation of urgently needed new jobs. Within the framework of public-private partnerships, SIFEM invests in key sectors of the local economy. In South Africa, SIFEM investments helped make it possible for a clam farming company to massively increase production and to double the size of

its staff, providing a total of 500 jobs. The primary beneficiaries are mainly unskilled labourers from the town of Hermanus, where unemployment and poverty are widespread. In addition, by operating an ISO-certified aquaculture facility, the company also makes an important contribution to the protection of biodiversity, helping to stem the threat to the stock of abalone clams through illegal overfishing.

Recognised Swiss expertise

Swiss international cooperation is renowned worldwide for its **experience** and **expertise**. Switzerland is considered to be a partner with established credibility in the countries it works with. With the **Dispatch 2017–2020**, Switzerland will focus its international cooperation activities on a range of themes and priority areas in which convincing results were achieved in the past, and where the skills in which Switzerland excels can most effectively be put to use. Switzerland's historic commitment to humanitarian values and its status as a neutral country lend added legitimacy to its expertise.

By mobilising Switzerland's expertise on three levels, the effect of its international cooperation is enhanced:

- » by implementing projects and programmes at the operational level;
- » by engaging in political dialogue with other governments on their reform programmes and policies;
- » by influencing international dialogue and policies through participation at the multilateral level within key international organisations.

MIGRATION

DEVELOPING URBAN
INFRASTRUCTURE AND
SUPPLIES HEALTH
WATER PROMOTING
SUSTAINABLE TRADE
ENSURING RESPECT
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ENERGY AND THE
ENVIRONMENT

LASTING PEACE, FRAGILE CONTEXTS

BASIC AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

SUPPORTING THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND ENTRE-
PRENEURSHIP WATER HEALTH CLIMATE CHANGE ENVIRONMENT

GENDER EQUALITY ENSURING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS FOOD SECURITY

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVE

LOPMENT PROTECTION OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION
CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

STRENGTHENING
ECONOMIC AND FINAN-
CIAL POLICIES WATER

G O V E R

NANCE, INS

TITUTIONS

DECENTRA

LISATION

Water: An example of Swiss cooperation in action

Because of its wide-ranging thematic expertise and its commitment to multilateral efforts in this area, Switzerland was instrumental in the elaboration of a goal on ensuring the availability and the sustainable management of water and sanitation for all as part of the **2030 Agenda**.

In Macedonia, **water supply and wastewater management** projects sponsored by SECO have made it possible to improve the lives of some 90640 people in the 15 municipalities of the Bregalnica region.

In Vietnam, the SDC, the Ministry of Agriculture and Nestlé have established a public-private partnership to **reduce the quantities of water used for irrigating coffee plantations**. The amount of water saved thus far is sufficient to cover the needs of some 2.5 million people and contributes to savings of 240 Swiss francs per year for each of the 50000 farmers participating in the project.



In Honduras, the SDC has contributed to the development of a **drinking water supply system as part of a national health plan** benefiting some 500000 people. An important element of the project is the close involvement of local civil society groups and the decentralised sharing of responsibility.

In north-west Kenya, the SDC's Humanitarian Aid has provided assistance for the **construction of water retention basins**, contributing to an improvement in the livelihoods of over 20000 local livestock producers by offering them increased opportunities for providing water to their animals. The constructions have made it possible to reduce frictions between the livestock producers and nomadic herders.

Through the global initiative '**Blue Peace**', the SDC and the HSD use water as an **instrument for promoting peace, by fostering cooperation on sustainable water management**. In the Middle East, an agreement was reached in 2014 between Iraq and Turkey concerning the Tigris river basin, making it possible for more than 30 million people to enjoy safe access to drinking water.

Results that speak for themselves: International Cooperation works

Switzerland seeks to achieve maximum effectiveness in its international cooperation, **drawing on lessons learned** from past successes as well as less successful experiences. The **concrete results achieved** serve as a guide for future activities while contributing at the same time to the well-being of millions of individuals around the globe and the creation of a safer and more prosperous world.



BOLIVIA: WITHSTANDING THE PRESSURES OF CLIMATE CHANGE BY OPTING FOR BIODIVERSITY

In **Bolivia**, deforestation and climate change are threatening the survival of thousands of farmers in the Andean highlands. The SDC is working closely with local communities to help them adapt their farming techniques. The cultivation of traditional local knowledge and practices makes it possible to strengthen ecological resilience and the biodiversity of the local flora. In 2014, 20000 hectares of land were reforested and, since 2012, nearly 30000 families have been able to increase their income. SECO supports over 100 biodiversity programmes around the world, with the objective of creating economic opportunities through trade in the products of bio-diversity and promoting the sustainable use of resources.

MYANMAR: FROM RECONSTRUCTION TO A DEMOCRATIC AND PEACEFUL TRANSITION

The support provided by Switzerland in **Myanmar** – both for reconstruction following the cyclone Nargis in 2008, and for the democratic and peaceful transition process – is an example of the kinds of operations that are conducted in fragile contexts. In addition to the humanitarian aid which made possible the construction or renovation of 130 school complexes and health facilities, some development projects have also been carried out. In this way, with the help of SDC, some 2000 apprenticeships have been created, primarily in the hospitality sector but also in vocational occupations such as fashion design, electrician, beautician, etc. Simultaneously, experts from the DSH have, since 2011, been actively contributing to the peaceful settlement of conflicts, in particular, through negotiation of a cease-fire agreement and the drafting



of an electoral code of conduct to ensure that the November 2015 elections were conducted in a peaceful and transparent manner.

HORN OF AFRICA: HEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR REDUCING INFANT AND MATERNAL MORTALITY

The SDC has, since 2008, been actively working to improve public health services throughout the **Horn of Africa**. These efforts continue today within the framework of Switzerland's overall strategy for bringing greater stability to the region. In **Somalia**, Switzerland's original com-

mitment took the form of humanitarian aid, which allowed it to provide support to partner NGOs involved in the reconstruction and maintenance of hospitals. Since 2013, that commitment has been strengthened through the addition of long-term programmes designed to assist with implementation of a National Health and Nutrition Programme established by the public authorities. For example, the construction of new dispensaries has made it possible for approximately 16000 people, including some 9000 women, to receive free medical care. The mortality rates of both infants and mothers have been significantly reduced in these areas.



A photograph of a woman carrying a young child on her back, standing in front of a makeshift shelter made of wooden poles and fabric. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The woman is wearing a patterned dress and a dark headscarf. The child is wearing a light-colored jacket. The background shows the interior of the shelter with wooden poles and fabric walls.

**FRAMEWORK
CREDIT
HUMANITARIAN
AID AND SWISS
HUMANITARIAN
AID UNIT**

A humanitarian response in the face of growing need

Geopolitical tensions and armed conflict around the world have been clearly on the rise in recent years. Disregard for international humanitarian law is becoming more and more prevalent and access to help is being denied to civilian populations. It is they who suffer most, and who are most vulnerable to the threat of extreme violence and severe need. Armed conflicts, as well as the negative consequences of climate change, are forcing millions of people to flee their homes – giving rise to the record numbers of refugees and displaced persons we see today.

The SDC's Humanitarian Aid is helping to **save lives and alleviate suffering**. Together with the experts from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA), it implements programmes of its own and, at the same time, makes its know-how available to partner organisations. In addition, it assists partner organisations in the implementation of their own programmes, providing support in the form of funding, relief supplies and food aid.

The most important of those partner organisations are the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the humanitarian organisations of the UN, national and international non-governmental organisations, and Swiss relief organisations.

In this increasingly difficult environment, Humanitarian Aid focuses on two main priorities:

Emergency humanitarian assistance

For Switzerland, emergency assistance means, in the first place, providing help in the field. Roughly two thirds of the funding allocated for humanitarian aid is used in this way. The funds are used to give protection to the most affected civilian populations – primarily refugees and internally displaced persons – and help them to meet their most basic needs. This includes emergency shelter, drinking water, sanitation facilities, food, and medical relief supplies.

Help on the ground also means helping people to help themselves. Especially in situations of protracted armed conflict, it is crucial to begin at an early stage preparing people for a return to a more independent existence in the future. Here, Humanitarian Aid actively participates in rehabilitation, reconstruction and disaster prevention efforts. These activities, in addition to providing emergency assistance, remain an important element of the work of Humanitarian Aid.

EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR UKRAINE

The SDC's Humanitarian Aid provided the population in need in **eastern Ukraine**, on both sides of the 'line of contact', with a total of 1230 tonnes of relief supplies in 2015. Convoys deliv-

ered medical equipment and medicines, and, above all, chemical products for treatment of the drinking water in the region. This made it possible to supply some 3.2 million people with clean drinking water over a six-month period.

With the outbreak of the conflict in 2014, approximately 5 million people became dependent on emergency assistance.



Strengthening the legal framework and the operational systems for providing humanitarian aid

In order to provide help in the field, it is essential to ensure that **international humanitarian law** and international humanitarian standards and principles are **respected**. Where there is armed conflict, it is essential, if help is to reach the people who are in need, that the parties to the conflict allow international aid organisations access to the civilian popula-

tion. This, and the efficient coordination of financial resources, is what determines the success or failure of international humanitarian aid efforts.

It is largely thanks to its presence in the field, its experience, and its international reputation, that Humanitarian Aid, together with Switzerland's international cooperation partners, is able to successfully advocate for these concerns in bilateral and multi-lateral discussions.

HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE SYRIA CONFLICT

In 2015, the Syria conflict created 4 million refugees, caused the internal displacement of 6.5 million persons, and left a total of 18 million people in need. It is the most serious humanitarian disaster of our time, placing enormous demands on the international humanitarian aid community.

Between 2011 and 2015, a total of CHF 203 million was made available to the SDC's Humanitarian Aid for relief assistance to the affected populations in **Syria and the neighbouring countries**. An additional CHF 25 million was earmarked for assistance to people in need in Iraq.

The funds were used to support the humanitarian aid programmes of the ICRC and experts in the field working under the auspices of the UN or non-governmental organisations. An example is the emergency shelter programme of the UN High Commissioner for

Refugees (UNHCR) in Damascus, which is being directed by a civil engineer from the SHA.

In Lebanon, Humanitarian Aid is furnishing assistance for some 500 families who are providing shelter for Syrian refugees. Also in Lebanon, and in Jordan, schools have been renovated, making it possible for some 57 000 local children and Syrian refugee children to receive an education (see page 7).

Furthermore, Humanitarian Aid is also engaged in efforts to improve access to the civilian population and to coordinate international aid for Syria.



Thematic and geographic priorities for Switzerland's humanitarian aid efforts

For the period from 2017 to 2020, the SDC's Humanitarian Aid will be focusing on the following priorities, which are of key importance in meeting current humanitarian challenges:

- » **Protecting the civilian population**
- » **Reducing disaster risk**
- » **Water and sanitation**
- » **Gender-based violence**

In addition, it will be actively working in the areas of food aid and emergency medical assistance. Special attention will also be given, in particular, to assistance for refugees and internally displaced persons.

The geographic focus of Humanitarian Aid will be on the crisis points in the **Middle East** and in **sub-Saharan Africa**, where the population will most probably continue to be dependent on emergency assistance for years to come. At the same time, however, Humanitarian Aid must remain flexible in order to be able to respond as new crises, conflicts or disasters arise.

Whenever possible, Humanitarian Aid conducts its disaster prevention efforts and its renovation and reconstruction activities in such a way that a linkage with development cooperation programmes is possible. If such programmes are discontinued, this is done gradually, in close consultation with Switzerland's local representations and Swiss international cooperation partners. It goes without saying that, in such cases, the sustainability of the results achieved is also taken into consideration.

ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER IN SOUTH SUDAN

In **South Sudan**, the SDC's Humanitarian Aid Department is assisting local authorities with the construction of a system for supplying drinking water to over 100 000 people. Today, it is only slightly less than half of the population that has access to clean drinking water, in a country that continues to be classified as a fragile state.

Following the peace agreement of 2005 and the secession of South Sudan from the northern part of the country, roughly half a million people returned to South Sudan. This further exacerbated existing water shortages.





**FRAMEWORK
CREDIT
TECHNICAL
COOPERATION
AND FINANCIAL
AID FOR
DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES**

Reducing poverty and exposure to global risks

Development cooperation today faces a context that is constantly evolving, bringing both new opportunities and new challenges. Although the number of people in the world living in extreme poverty has been reduced by half over the past 15 years, low harvests, lack of education, disease and other factors continue to trap entire populations in a state of poverty – or vulnerability. Moreover, the effects of global risks such as climate change and food insecurity are felt above all by the world’s poorest and most vulnerable population groups.

RESPONSIBLE LAND MANAGEMENT IN THE MEKONG REGION

In Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam, there is an increasing tendency for the governments to award land concessions to investors for the development of industrial agriculture, mining, and hydroelectric power stations, rather than encouraging smallholder farming. This has resulted in increased poverty among rural populations, whose food security is now under threat. The SDC is working with the authorities and with citizen organisations in the Mekong region to develop policies that can guarantee the access of small producers to natural resources. Drawing on the experience gained in these efforts, the SDC is thus able to influence the drafting of international standards, such as the “Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land”.

The SDC works to help reduce poverty – in all its forms – and to lessen exposure to global risks. It seeks to improve the living conditions of the populations in developing countries while making certain that biodiversity and the sustainability of natural resources is maintained in accordance with the 2030 Agenda. Reducing poverty requires both local and global solutions. The SDC focuses its efforts on three main lines of action, which will remain unchanged for the period 2017–2020:

- » **bilateral cooperation** with countries located in priority regions
- » active commitment to finding a solution for global challenges and to defining global public policy by means of **five global programmes** (climate change and the environment, food security, water, health, migration and development)
- » membership in **multilateral organisations**, including the World Bank, regional development banks, UN agencies working in the field of development, and global funds and networks.



Thematic and geographic priorities

The SDC will be focused more strongly on the thematic areas where Switzerland is recognised internationally for its experience and expertise.

Between now and 2020:

- » The SDC will continue to pursue its commitment to the management of global risks: **climate change and the environment, water, food security, health, migration and development.**
- » The SDC will provide support for programmes to improve **prospects for the future**, in particular, through basic education and vocational training, job and income creation, and development of the local private sector.

LENDING A HAND FOR EMPLOYMENT

In **Bangladesh**, the SDC supports the “Katalyst” project that aims for higher yields and an increased income for poor men and women in rural areas through the adoption of innovative ideas. The project was singled out for the OECD’s 2014 innovation award, in recognition of the originality of the means by which it encourages participation in the local private sector.

It is part of SDC’s development programme in the area of agriculture and rural economy through which some 920 000 farmers and entrepreneurs experienced an average income increase of USD 81 per year since 2013 equivalent to about 41% of the average of farm-related income in Bangladesh.

» The SDC will reinforce its commitment to providing assistance in **fragile contexts**, particularly in Africa and the Middle East.

» The SDC will continue to stress the importance of **equality** between women and men, and on **good governance.**

The SDC is present on various continents. With its bilateral aid, it will be devoting 55% of its financial means to Africa and the Middle East, 30% to Asia and another 15% to Latin America and the Caribbean during the 2017–2020 period. The geographic focus of the SDC will be on 14 countries¹ and 7 regions², which have been assigned priority status based on various criteria, including levels of poverty and fragility, openness to dialogue, and the degree to which they are of interest to Switzerland’s development policy and foreign policy.

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- 1 Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Tanzania, Chad, Bangladesh, Nepal, Mongolia, Myanmar, Bolivia, Haiti and Cuba.
 - 2 The regions of the Horn of Africa, Southern Africa, the Great Lakes, North Africa and the Middle East, the Mekong, the Hindu Kush and Central America.



Commitment at the multilateral level

The activities of multilateral organisations complement Switzerland's bilateral aid commitments by providing a framework for concerted action to solve common problems. The multilateral organisations possess the political legitimacy and operational capacities that enable them to undertake activities in all parts of the world. By supporting these multilateral activities, Switzerland demonstrates not only solidarity, but also a sense of responsibility.

The SDC and SECO choose the organisations they work with on the basis of the following four criteria:

1. The importance of the organisations in terms of Switzerland's development policies;
2. the past performance of the organisations;
3. the possibility of influencing the policies and strategies of the organisation, and
4. Switzerland's foreign policy interests.

Nearly 40% of the funds from this framework credit will be devoted to multilateral cooperation. By focusing its financial assistance on a limited number of organisations, Switzerland is able to monitor efficiently the ways in which the funding is used. It also enables the country to play an influential role within the governing bodies of those organisations and to maintain a productive dialogue with them.

Switzerland is an active member of development banks, UN development agencies, and other international funds and networks. They are 15 priority organisations which are either central to the functioning of the international system, have a regional mandate or have a thematic or normative focus.

JUSTICE AND SECURITY: A PROJECT CARRIED OUT IN 86 COUNTRIES

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is, together with the World Bank, Switzerland's main multilateral partner institution. By supporting the UNDP, the SDC contributes to improvements in the conditions of access to justice and security for the citizens of **86 countries**. In 2014, some 750000 people around the globe - 51% of them women - availed themselves of legal assistance services.





**FRAMEWORK
CREDIT
ECONOMIC AND
TRADE POLICY
MEASURES FOR
DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION**

Reducing poverty in middle income countries

Economic and trade measures for fighting poverty have taken on ever greater importance in recent years. While in the 1990s the majority of the world's poor lived in the lowest income countries, today seven out of ten people living in extreme poverty are found in middle income countries. Compounded with this is the growing income inequality in those countries. Global risks, such as climate change, economic and financial crises, or political instability, further aggravate the existing problems.

Switzerland's economic development cooperation efforts have been adapted to respond to this new context. Assistance is aimed at helping countries to create the structural conditions that will make it possible to fully exploit the potential of the private sector to help fight poverty. SECO can rely on more than 20 years of experience in this area of activity.

Because of the substantial financial requirements of the partner countries, public development funding is often used as a means of generating further funds, by increasing both private investments and tax revenues. Public funds thus have a multiplier effect.

BETTER MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS

In **Peru**, SECO is providing over USD 6 million in assistance to the public sector for improvements in financial management so that the country's citizens can receive high quality services at all levels. Both the finance ministry of Peru and the regional and local governments receive support for budget planning, tax collection, and expenditure control. A newly introduced multi-year budget has made it possible for Peru to increase planning certainty, which has helped to reduce bottlenecks in essential services such as education and health.



Sustainable and inclusive growth for all

SECO strives to encourage **sustainable and inclusive growth**. In keeping with the terms of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, the framework credit for 2017–2020 places particular emphasis on the social dimension of sustainability. The addition of the term ‘inclusive’ underscores the point that the fruits of economic growth should benefit people at all levels of society.

The economic and trade measures deployed by SECO in its development cooperation efforts are targeted towards achieving the following four objectives:

» **Effective institutions and services:** a clear legal framework and a functioning power supply system, for example, are prerequisites for the development of the small and medium enterprises (SME) sector.

» **More and better jobs:** through investment in private enterprise and the strengthening of international standards, SECO contributes to the creation of more jobs and decent working conditions.

» **Increased trade and greater competitiveness:** SECO works at the multilateral, regional and bilateral levels to enhance the economic strengths of its partner countries and expand their access to markets for their products.

» **Low-emission and climate-resilient economies:** in order to help reduce CO₂ emissions and to increase the climate resilience of national economies, SECO also supports measures in the areas of urban development, energy supply, and the promotion of a resource-efficient private sector.

ENTREPRENEURIAL PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING COMPETITIVENESS

Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) is a project that was launched by the International Labour Organization, and which, since 2009, has been supported by SECO in nine countries. It assists SMEs in developing and strengthening their competitiveness by means of training programmes and through programmes for raising awareness for responsible work practices. Between 2009 and 2012, over 250 local instructors were trained in the project's nine partner countries, making it possible for 250 SMEs - 81 of

them in Vietnam - to adapt their work practices. The majority of those companies were able to lower their production costs by entering into a social dialogue and reducing the number of work accidents.



Geographic priorities and partners

SECO will continue to focus its efforts on eight middle-income **priority countries**: Egypt, Tunisia, Ghana, South Africa, Indonesia, Vietnam, Colombia and Peru. Many of these partner countries play a key role in both regional and global economic contexts and can thus have a negative or a positive influence on entire regions.

In addition to the cooperation with its own partner countries, SECO is also active in the priority countries of other units of the Federal Administration such as the SDC. These **complementary measures**, as they are termed, take advantage of the specific expertise SECO has to offer in certain areas, such as the administration of public funds and the promotion of trade.

In addition, SECO and the SDC provide assistance to countries in **Eastern Europe** on their path to democracy and a social market economy (cf. framework credit for transition assistance in Eastern Europe).

SECO's main **partner organisations** include the World Bank and its institutions, regional development banks, and selected UN organisations. Within the framework of these bodies SECO also takes part in the international dialogue on development issues in the financial and economic sectors. The subjects discussed include effective and transparent tax administration, good governance in the commodities sector, the reduction of urban poverty and promotion of an economy with lower CO₂ emissions.

SECO's cooperation with the **private sector** continues to play a central role, and can contribute in various ways, both operational and financial, to the success of development projects. Close cooperation is also maintained with other partners, including members of the **civil society** and the **academic community**.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

SECO participates in the World Bank's 'Scaling Up Renewable Energy Program' (SREP). Since 2010, SECO has contributed about USD 25 million. The funding is used to support 27 developing countries in promoting the use of renewable energy. A

second goal the SREP has set for itself is to raise an additional USD 3.8 billion from development banks and the private sector for the financing of geothermal, solar and wind energy projects.



A woman wearing a headscarf and gloves is smiling while working in a greenhouse. She is holding a basket filled with cucumbers. The background shows the curved structure of the greenhouse and other plants.

**FRAMEWORK
CREDIT
TRANSITION
COOPERATION
IN EASTERN
EUROPE**

For more democracy and human rights, economic growth and social justice

As part of its transition assistance, Switzerland provides support for former communist countries in Eastern Europe on the path to democracy and a social market economy: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia, along with Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Because these countries are not members of the European Union, this transition assistance is different from Switzerland's enlargement contribution for the new EU member states.

Despite the progress that has been made in the countries of Eastern Europe, there still remains a backlog of reforms that need to be carried out in various areas (e.g. decentralisation, the rule of law and public service capabilities). In addition, new challenges have arisen, such as economic inequality (including gen-

der-based inequality), as well as domestic and international conflicts.

Switzerland's active commitment to assisting these countries is based on its tradition of solidarity with the poor and the excluded. At the same time, these efforts are also in Switzerland's own interest: transition assistance creates economic opportunities that can benefit Switzerland in various ways. The creation of new jobs locally helps to create alternatives to migration. In this way illegal migration, as well as the illicit drug trade and human trafficking, can be reduced. Similarly, transition assistance can contribute to the prevention and resolution of conflicts. In all cases, however, the desire for reform in these countries is a crucial prerequisite if Switzerland's assistance efforts are to be effective.

SIMPLIFIED ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES IN SERBIA

In the **Western Balkans**, the SDC has worked to improve the quality of local governance and to increase the accessibility of local government services, most notably through a simplification of administrative procedures. Some municipal governments have set up a 'one-stop shop' system for the delivery of personal documents and permits, and surveys show that the change is greatly appreciated by local citizens. The introduction of such a system in the south of Serbia, to which some

350 000 people have access, has made it possible to reduce the average waiting time for receiving a construction permit from 77 to 58 days.



Four thematic priorities

The SDC and SECO share joint responsibility for Switzerland's transition assistance in Eastern Europe. The portfolios handled by the two institutions complement each other and are assigned in accordance with their respective responsibilities and strengths in four main areas:

- » The SDC and SECO work at the local, regional and central government levels to help **reinforce democratic structures**, strengthen the rule of law, and improve the quality of public services.
- » Transition assistance seeks to **enhance the potential of the private sector** and, in particular, of small and medium-sized enterprises, by improving the overall conditions for doing business and facilitating market access, and through reforms in the vocational training system. Central importance is attached to improving employment prospects, particularly for the young.
- » The SDC and SECO work to encourage the sustainable operation of **public utilities for the supply of drinking water, sanitation services and electric power**, and to ensure that water is equitably distributed in the countries of Central Asia.

- » In the domain of **healthcare**, the SDC contributes to efforts to ensure that the population has equal access to improved health services. Priority is given to improving preventive healthcare (tobacco, alcohol, unhealthy nutrition), reduction of non-communicable diseases (e.g. diabetes and circulatory and respiratory diseases), and strengthening the healthcare systems.

The programmes also include cross-thematic measures relating to aspects of **conflict prevention, conflict transformation and human rights**, and **migration**. With regard to migration, the SDC and SECO also work in close coordination with the SEM, within the framework of the migration partnership agreements that have been concluded with Kosovo, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.



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PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY IN CENTRAL ASIA

In **Kyrgyzstan** and **Tajikistan**, SECO is working actively to create a business environment that promotes commercial activity by local entrepreneurs. To that end, it has assisted with the drafting of more effective laws and regulatory provisions, and has worked to increase the professional capabilities of public officials and the private sector. One example of a successful

project is the new system for reimbursement of TVA to private businesses. Computerisation has rendered it much simpler and far more reliable. As a result there has also been a decrease in the number of on-site inspections required. Overall, through SECO's efforts, the private sector has thus far been able to save some USD 15 million annually.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER IN KOSOVO

Between 1999 and 2014, the proportion of the population in **Kosovo** connected to the drinking water supply system rose from 44% to 76%. This was achieved through the joint efforts of the SDC and SECO in Kosovo for improvements in the management of the drinking water supply and of wastewater. Working in both the rural and urban areas of Kosovo, the SDC and SECO have achieved improvements in the performance of public water supply services through the financing of new infrastructures (pipelines, treat-

ment plants) and personnel training programmes. Simultaneously, Switzerland is engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the Kosovo government's Inter-Ministerial Water Council to ensure that the reforms introduced become permanent.



© Vedat Xhymshiri

A revolver is shown with its barrel knotted into a reef knot. The background is a brick wall, and the entire image has an orange tint. The text is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

**FRAMEWORK
CREDIT
MEASURES
TO PROMOTE
PEACE AND
HUMAN SECURITY**

An important contribution to the advancement of peace and human security

The promotion of peace and human security is a matter of high priority in Swiss foreign policy. Central to that objective is the protection of individuals and their inviolable human dignity. Every individual should be able to live without fear, without want, and in dignity. To achieve this, Switzerland stands up to the challenges posed today by war, violence, human rights abuses, forcible expulsions and human trafficking.

Measures for the promotion of peace and human security fall under the responsibility of the Human Security Division (HSD) within the FDFA's Directorate of Political Affairs. The diplomatic and political efforts of the HSD, together with its operational activities, contribute significantly to the realisation of the strategic objectives of Switzerland's international cooperation policy.

Without peace and human rights there can be no sustainable development – they are interdependent. This simple truth has now also been incorporated into the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015. For the first time, the relationship between peace, security and development has been expressly recognised in a universal development agenda.

For Switzerland, this is not a new discovery. Nevertheless, the Federal Council has now decided to underscore the importance of this truth by including the measures for the promotion of freedom and human security in its Dispatch to Parliament on Switzerland's international cooperation.

SWISS KNOW-HOW AND EXPERIENCE ON BEHALF OF THE OSCE IN UKRAINE

Switzerland makes available to the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) a pool of expert advisers. In 2015, their number was 16, including the Principal Deputy Chief Monitor. He is responsible for various management tasks at the Mission's headquarters, and assists in the mediation of ceasefires and in negotiations for humanitarian corridors in **eastern Ukraine**.

The SMM in Ukraine gathers information and reports regularly on the security situation. Its man-

date includes maintaining a record of any violations of OSCE principles and obligations. In this way, it contributes to the de-escalation of tensions and the promotion of peace and security.



Thematic and geographic priorities

The rapid pace of political change in recent years – in Eastern Europe, in the Middle East, in Myanmar, and elsewhere – has made it clear that the HSD must have the capacity to respond quickly when crises arise. At the same time, it must also be capable of sustaining long-term commitments, in order to make peace sustainable and to accumulate the thematic and geographic knowledge it requires for its work. The framework credit for the HSD allows it to work in the four areas that belong to the domain of human security:

- » In implementing Switzerland's **peace policy**, the HSD pursues efforts to resolve conflicts by peaceful means, through dialogue between the parties.
- » The HSD works to refine **humanitarian policy** in ways that complement Switzerland's humanitarian aid efforts. The primary objective is to ensure better protection of civilian populations, particularly in armed conflicts.
- » Putting Switzerland's **human rights policy** into practice, the HSD seeks to advance the cause of human rights and actively works to ensure that they are truly respected on the ground. It is essential that all states fulfil their human rights obligations and commitments.
- » In keeping with Switzerland's **foreign policy on migration**, the HSD works to ensure the protection of displaced persons and migrants, who are particu-

larly vulnerable. It advocates on behalf of humane international migration policies and works to combat human trafficking.

Like the SDC, the HSD also assigns regional priority to sub-Saharan Africa, and to North Africa and the Middle East. A third priority area is the OSCE region. In addition, there are individual countries in Asia and Latin America where the HSD maintains its established and – in some places – very long-standing commitments, or pursues promising new opportunities for enhancing human security.

SWITZERLAND AS A MEDIATOR FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE AGREEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

In the **Philippines**, Switzerland provided assistance to enable the national government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to successfully implement the peace agreement they signed on 27 March 2014. At the request of both of the former parties to the conflict, Switzerland's special envoy for dealing with the past assumed the chair of the Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission.

As chairperson, it is her duty to act as a mediator between the parties so that the Commission can carry out its mandate. That mandate is to prepare a report on ways of dealing with the massive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that took place during the conflict, and to submit recommendations on how to proceed.



Sophisticated policy instruments and collaborative efforts with key actors

The HSD employs a wide range of policy instruments, depending on the individual situation at hand. These include mediation, facilitation, political dialogue, programmes for dealing with the past, as well as long-term programmes in specific countries or regions, regular bilateral meetings (e.g. human rights consultations) and diplomatic interventions, multilateral dialogues and processes (e.g. UN Human Rights Council) and diplomatic initiatives (e.g. the Nansen Initiative), as well as the seconding of experts from the Swiss Export Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSULTATIONS: SWITZERLAND-NIGERIA

Switzerland and **Nigeria** have been holding annual consultations on the subject of human rights since 2011. The discussions serve to permit an open discourse on the human rights situation in a confidential framework. The objective is to exchange information on concrete experiences and to work towards an improvement in the overall situation.

Issues relating to international human rights policy are also raised, and the possibilities for cooperation in this area are explored. During the consultations, concrete follow-up projects are also launched - for instance, a human rights training course for members of the Nigerian police force.

Switzerland's human security policy is most effective when it pursues its priorities on all available levels. An example of this is the protection of human rights defenders, on behalf of whom Switzerland is a strong advocate in international forums and in bilateral exchanges. At the same time, Switzerland itself also offers such protection in specific cases. Because peace and human security do not depend solely on governments, the HSD also works with all actors involved in a given context. This can include, among others, political organisations and personalities, members of the civil society, representatives of private industry and the academic community – and, if the situation demands, also non-governmental armed groups.



Five framework credits

In February 2011, Parliament decided to increase its official development assistance (ODA) to 0.5% of gross national income (GNI). This level was reached in 2015. Under the expenditure stabilisation programme decided by the Federal Council for the period from 2017 to 2019, Switzerland's ODA will be slightly lower according to current estimates, at around 0.48% of GNI. This remains short of the 0.7% target set by the UN and recognised by Switzerland.

The volume of commitments proposed by the Federal Council for the five framework credits over four years amounts to CHF 11,11 billion.

SWITZERLAND'S INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION 2017–2020

| Framework credits | Means In CHF millions |
|---|---|
| Humanitarian Aid (SDC) | 2060.00 |
| Technical cooperation and financial aid for developing countries (SDC) | 6635.00 bilateral 3870.00 multilateral 2765.00 |
| Economic and trade policy measures for development cooperation (SECO) | 1140.00 |
| Transition cooperation in Eastern Europe (SDC, SECO) | 1040.00 SDC 704.00 SECO 336.00 |
| Measures to promote peace and human security (HSD) | 230.00 |
| Total Dispatch 2017–2020 | 11105.00 |

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