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**DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE**

Cancels & replaces the same document of 12 March 2025

Peer Review

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SWITZERLAND

The Cancel/Replace changes the classification.

This self-assessment is submitted by the Swiss authorities to the Development Assistance Committee in view of the Peer Review of Switzerland scheduled for 12 March 2025.

This document has been prepared by Switzerland, which is solely responsible for its content.

Following the submission of the self-assessment and after consultation with partners, the review team decided to focus the Peer Review of Switzerland on four areas: (1) A fit-for-purpose strategy and development co-operation system; (2) Setting and using results for development impact; (3) Facing an unstable world; (4) Partnering effectively with the private sector. The review team will visit South Africa and Zimbabwe as part of this Peer Review.

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Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
State Secretariat FDFA, Peace and Human Rights Division PHRD

Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

Peer Review

Self-Assessment of Switzerland

21 August 2024

(updated on 16 September 2024)

Table of Content

- Section A** 2
- Recent Developments in the Context of Switzerland’s International Cooperation..... 2
- Section B** 7
- Good practices, challenges and opportunities..... 7
- B.1 - Good and Innovative Practices** 8
- B.1.1 Strengthening complementarity between the instruments 8
- B.1.2 Partnering with the Private Sector 12
- B.1.3 Increased geographic and thematic focus 15
- B.2 - Challenges and Opportunities** 19
- B.2.1 Results-based management and learning 19
- B.2.2 Policy Coherence 23
- B.2.3 Locally-led development and the use of country systems 26
- Section C** 29
- Complementary Information and Previous Peer Review Recommendations 29
- Section D** 42
- Contact Information 42
- Annexes** 43
- Annex 1: Policy, Strategy, Reports and Documents** 43
- Annex 2: Organizational charts and Information on Human Resources** 45
- Annex 3: List of Abbreviations** 53
- Annex 4: Adherence to the OECD-DAC Recommendations** 55
- 4.1: Implementation of the Recommendation of the Council for Development Co-operation Actors on Managing the Risk of Corruption (2016) 55
- 4.2: Implementation of the DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual, Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance (2019) 59
- 4.3: Implementation of the Recommendation of the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus (2019) 62
- 4.4: Implementation of the Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (2019) 66
- 4.5: Implementation of the DAC Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance (2021) 70
- 4.6: Implementation of the DAC Recommendation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance (2024) 74
- 4.7: Update on the 'Recommendation on Environmental Assessment of Development Assistance Projects and Programmes (2020)' & the 'Declaration on new approach to align development co-operation with Paris Agreement' (2021)..... 76

Section A

Recent Developments in the Context of Switzerland's International Cooperation

An uncertain international context

The world today is experiencing **multiple crises** that are mutually reinforcing. Climate change and biodiversity loss, wars and conflicts, and the ongoing pandemic have created a perfect storm that is exacerbating poverty and inequality, contributing to hunger and food insecurity, and undermining inclusive governance in many contexts. These challenges are not new, but their complexity has led to a situation where the global Human Development Index (HDI) has declined for the first time in modern history. At the same time, there is evidence that inequality and polarization have increased, and the world is facing a new era of growing uncertainty. Moreover, geopolitical conflicts and tensions are fuelling a wave of economic fragmentation and protectionism around the world. These external factors have implications for Switzerland foreign and economic policy, as well as its international cooperation (IC) and the way it works with its partners to address global challenges. **Flexible approaches** will become even more important in an evolving global context.

International cooperation in a challenging domestic political and financial setting

The Swiss political landscape has **not changed fundamentally** since the last Peer Review in 2019. However, after the 2023 federal elections, the composition of Parliament shifted slightly to centre-right parties which are traditionally more critical of IC. The Swiss People's Party made the most gains, while environment-friendly factions were among the forces that lost the most. The election results suggest that voters were more concerned about rising immigration and security than environmental issues. While public support for Switzerland's IC remains high, members of Parliament have hard choices to make as far as budget allocation is concerned. At the same time, sustainable development and humanitarian issues have gained momentum in recent years, both in public debate and within the federal administration, as the effects of climate change become more apparent. The crisis are very visible and have become closer to Switzerland.

Three **topics dominated Swiss foreign politics** in the recent years:

- First, the new contractual basis for relations between **Switzerland and the European Union**. The negotiations, which resumed in 2024, cover a wide range of topics. One agenda item related to IC actors is the possible institutionalization of cohesion funds for new EU member states¹.
- Second, Switzerland's contribution to **supporting Ukraine** in its various dimensions (humanitarian aid, reconstruction and the path to peace negotiations, admission of refugees, and adoption of EU-sanctions). In mid-2024, the Federal Council decided to support the reconstruction of Ukraine with CHF 5 billion until 2036. A first tranche of around CHF 1.5 billion earmarked for Ukraine is to be drawn from the international cooperation budget 2025–28, of which the Federal Council plans to make CHF 500 Mio. available over the next four years to better involve the private sector in the Ukraine reconstruction efforts. A new organizational structure will be set-up to effectively manage the implementation of the international cooperation activities in Ukraine. Also, in line with its long-standing diplomatic tradition, Switzerland organized the Ukraine Recovery Conference in July 2022 and hosted a High-Level conference on Peace in Ukraine in June 2024.
- Third, for the first time-ever, Switzerland has a seat in the **UN Security Council (UNSC)** in 2023–24. In the run-up to its election as a non-permanent member – as well as after the start of the war of aggression against Ukraine – there were heated domestic

¹ In 2019, Swiss Parliament approved a second Swiss contribution of CHF 1.3 billion to selected EU member states that will be disbursed over a ten-year period. It is divided between the framework credits 'cohesion' and 'migration'. The former is implemented by SDC and SECO and is aimed at helping to reduce economic inequalities and social disparities in and between EU member states. The Swiss contribution to selected EU member states is separated from Switzerland's IC budget, as it is based on different strategic frameworks.

debates about the interpretation of Swiss neutrality. During its UNSC membership, Switzerland has focused on sustaining peace, the protection of civilians, climate change and institutional reform. Its statements are informed by its experiences from international cooperation on the ground.

In the context of a popular initiative (2020) for increased corporate social responsibility, an intensive debate centred on whether Swiss NGOs should be allowed to use public funds for lobbying activities in Switzerland. Other much-discussed topics related to IC included debates whether to strengthen the engagement with the private sector as an IC-implementation modality, how to improve the measurement of the effectiveness of Switzerland's IC, and whether to continue to fund the UNRWA in the context of the escalation of the conflict in the Near East.

After **extraordinary public expenditures**, e.g. to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, large financial commitments such as the support for Ukraine are the subject of **intense political negotiations**. Switzerland's response to overlapping crises is also reflected in the most recent **ODA figures**. While the quota including asylum costs increased steadily from 0,49% in 2020 to reach its **highest value ever in 2023** (0,6%), attributed to the extraordinarily high expenditure for the admission of Ukrainian refugees. ODA excluding asylum costs remained stable between values of 0,45% in 2020 and 0,43% in 2023.

There are growing calls from other federal offices for IC to contribute to the financing of global public goods (e.g. climate, biodiversity or pandemic prevention). This would mean shifting resources away from IC's core mandate which is poverty reduction and sustainable development. Those debates are taking place in the context of the so-called 'debt brake'², which is constitutionally mandated to avert (chronic) structural imbalances in federal government finances and thereby prevent the federal debt from increasing. In times of scarce federal resources, low-commitment expenditures are particularly vulnerable to cuts and thus compete for political favour. Recent debates have shown, that it is more challenging to find majorities to defend the budget for IC than for defence, agriculture, or research. Accordingly, the **financial pressure on IC** is likely to continue to increase, leading to possible budget cuts.

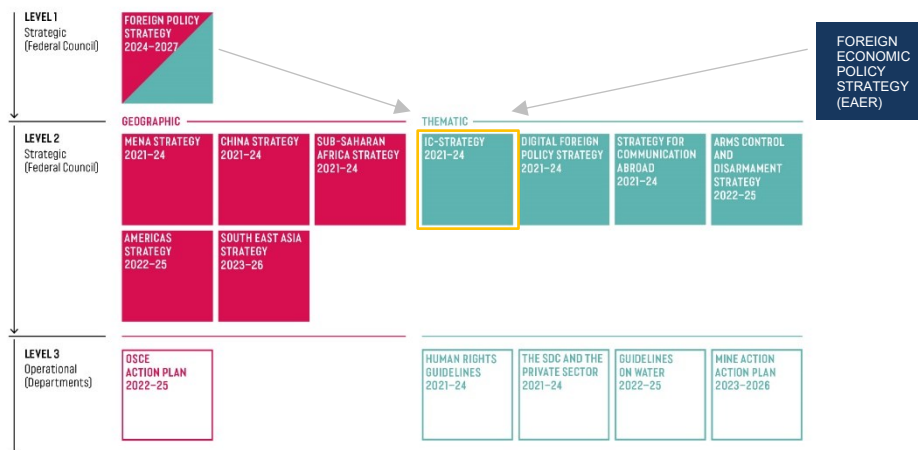
Updated strategic framework towards more coherence

'Cascading Foreign Policy Strategy'

In 2020, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) introduced the concept of a 'cascading foreign policy strategy' (see figure 1). Its aim is to **increase coherence between different strategic frameworks** and to make conflicts of interest visible. At the first level, the **Foreign Policy Strategy** provides the main strategic guidelines, which are concretized at the second level in five geographic and four thematic strategies, including the IC Strategy. At the third level, guidelines and action plans operationalise them for concrete implementation.

The **Foreign Economic Policy Strategy** of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER) which is at the same level as the Foreign Policy Strategy defines the strategic priorities for Switzerland's Foreign Economic Policy. The IC Strategy is the sectoral thematic concretization of those two strategies. The IC Strategy is the only FDFA strategy that must be approved by the Federal Council but also by Parliament, as it provided the framework for the corresponding budgets.

² The 'debt break' is an instrument of Swiss fiscal policy that was introduced in 2003 as a result of popular vote. By keeping a balance between total expenditures and revenues, it inhibits the growth of public debt over time.



[Figure 1: The IC Strategy (in orange) as part of the FDFA's 'cascading Foreign Policy Strategy' and the EAER's Foreign Economic Policy Strategy]

Ongoing IC Strategy 2021–24

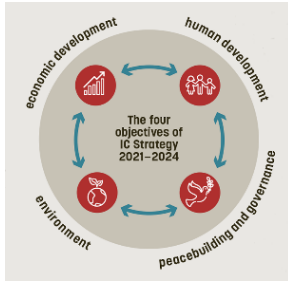
The IC Strategy 2021–24 was approved by Parliament in the fall of 2020 and has a **budget of CHF 11.25 billion**, divided into five commitment credits.³ To provide a larger audience with a coherent overview of Switzerland's IC, a more concise text form (four times shorter than in previous periods) was developed.

For the first time, its adoption was preceded by a voluntary public consultation to encourage constructive debate and ensure broad domestic support from political parties, civil society or associations. In terms of content, the IC Strategy 2021–24 introduced some innovations:

- It formulated four **common objectives** (comp. figure 2) for the three implementing agencies, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD), as well as four **thematic priorities**:
 - Contributing to sustainable economic growth, market development and the creation of *decent jobs* (economic development)
 - Addressing *climate change* and its impacts and managing natural resources sustainably (environment)
 - Saving lives, ensuring quality basic services, especially in relation to education and healthcare, and reducing the causes of forced displacement and irregular *migration* (human development)
 - Promoting peace, the *rule of law* and gender equality (peacebuilding and governance)
- It set **explicit criteria for the strategic approach of its engagement** (comp. figure 3) in whose intersection the best results can be achieved. Those are:
 - Needs of the population
 - Long term Swiss interests
 - Added value of Switzerland's IC
- In line with a DAC recommendation in 2019, Switzerland defined a narrowed geographic focus for its bilateral development cooperation. The **four priority regions** (comp. figure 4) are:
 - Sub-Saharan Africa
 - North Africa and the Middle East
 - Eastern Europe
 - Asia

This decision was accompanied by a responsible exit from Latin America and the Caribbean and from Mongolia (comp. section B.1.3).

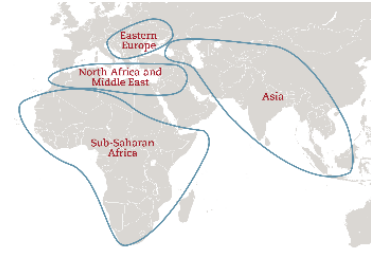
³ Those are: 'Humanitarian aid' (19,1%, SDC), 'Development cooperation' (59%, SDC; including multilateral financial assistance, jointly implemented with SECO), 'Economic development cooperation' (10,5%, SECO), 'Development cooperation with the countries of Eastern Europe' (9,1%, SDC/SECO), 'Measures to promote peace and human security' (2,3%, PHRD)



[Figure 2: Four objectives of Switzerland's IC]



[Figure 3: Criteria for the strategic approach of Switzerland's IC]



[Figure 4: Priority regions for the SDC's bilateral development cooperation]

The **implementation of the IC Strategy 2021–24** was characterised by high volatility and **multiple crises and conflicts** that required quick responses: the COVID-19 pandemic, the war of aggression against Ukraine (a priority country of SDC, SECO and PHRD), the escalation of the conflict in the Near East and Sudan, as well as political turmoil in several contexts of engagement (Afghanistan, Haiti, Sahel region) required a flexible adaptation of many projects and programmes. Managing those crises relied on parliamentary support for the approval of a record number of **supplementary credits** from January 2020 to June 2024.⁴

Upcoming IC Strategy 2025–28: continuity and support for Ukraine

The upcoming IC Strategy 2025–28 is expected to be submitted to Parliament in the **second half of 2024**. It proposes to keep the four objectives, its criteria and the geographic focus. In a volatile world, having a consistent strategy is crucial as it is the compass that guides Switzerland's IC activities. While the war in Ukraine and its consequences feature prominently in the Strategy 2025–28, Switzerland's humanitarian tradition requires that IC maintain its commitment in the rest of the world.

As the Eastern Europe Cooperation Act expires at the end of 2024, the next dispatch will be divided into **four commitment credits**. However, SDC's and SECO's support for Eastern Europe will continue and will be integrated into the existing credits. The allocation of **CHF 1.5 billion** of the IC-budget for humanitarian aid and reconstruction of **Ukraine**, is the subject of intense political debate. As in the IC Strategy 2021–24, **CHF 1.6 billion** will be allocated to the implementation **climate change** mitigation and adaptation measures. In view of the massive increase in global humanitarian needs, the commitment credit for humanitarian aid has been increased from 20% to 25% of the IC budget.

Institutional developments: adapted modalities for flexible reactions

SDC carried out a major **reorganisation called 'Fit for Purpose'** (F4P) that was based on the principles of **efficiency, budget neutrality and coherence** and was implemented by September 2022. As a reaction to the growing number of protracted crisis and fragile contexts in its priority regions, this process had, inter alia, the aim to simplify our structures, to strengthen the nexus between humanitarian aid and development cooperation and created the Peace, Governance and Equality (PGE) section (comp. Section B.1.1). To this end, it has brought the instruments closer together and created geographical units in charge of both humanitarian⁵ and development budgets. The reorganization also pooled its thematic expertise in a new division of seven thematic sections including five global programmes. In order to advance localised and efficient decision making, some human resources and competences were shifted from headquarters to the external network⁶, processes got streamlined and bureaucracy reduced. Following the formal completion of F4P in September 2022, the new structure has been slightly adjusted in August 2024, where proven necessary. Importantly, all units are newly united under the same roof.

⁴ Those supplementary credits were granted to contribute to Switzerland's international pandemic response, humanitarian support for Afghanistan, IC's support to Ukraine and its neighbouring countries, the stabilization of the ICRC and the humanitarian aid in the Middle East.

⁵ The Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA), responsible for Switzerland's rapid response, remains located in its own division, which manages all functions required for emergency aid, which are humanitarian operations, material and personnel.

⁶ Switzerland's external network covers a broad area of tasks across the entire spectrum of diplomacy, international cooperation, and beyond. In most cases, the activities of international cooperation are integrated into a Swiss representation. In case that there is no Swiss representation in a country where IC is active, so called 'cooperation offices' are responsible for the implementation of an IC country programme (comp. map p. 48-49 in Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2024–27).

SECO established additional **thematic networks** such as the private sector engagement network that comprise staff from HQ and the external network.

The **PHRD** developed a 'mediation strategy' and because structure follows strategy merged the section 'Mediation and Themes', with its Task Force for Atrocity Prevention and several separate themes like 'religion and conflict' into one full section. All activities are now oriented towards mediation activities and trying to push for or obtain track 1 processes. For example, the themes of religion and conflict as well as dealing with the past are now only treated in link to mediation activities and not separately anymore. To remain a relevant player in the rapidly changing field of dialogue promotion and mediation, PHRD created a new tool named '**Rapid Action Team**'. When mediation opportunities in armed conflicts arise, a small group of concerned desks (depending on the thematic inter- or intra-departmental) gets together beyond administrative borders. It opens the possibility for a quicker and more agile reaction. Until now, the instrument has been deployed six times. PHRD also strengthened its instruments for the **monitoring** of peace processes and diplomatic initiatives.

Furthermore, all three entities are increasingly coordinating their positions in interdepartmental thematic working groups (for example in migration, climate, health, Agenda 2030 etc.) to assure a 'Whole-of-Government Approach' for policy coherence (comp. Section B.2.2).

Section B

Good practices, challenges and opportunities

Section B of this self-assessment presents six chapters with good and innovative practices as well as challenges and opportunities. The topics have been chosen based on several recommendations of the two previous Peer Reviews (B.1.2 / B.1.3 / B.2.1 / B.2.2 / B.2.3) or developments which have strongly influenced the institutional setup of Switzerland's IC (B.1.1). The chapters elaborate on both elements of success and of further challenges for the future.

The process of preparation and consultation of this report, involving different ministries (FDFA and EAER) and agencies (SDC, SECO, PHRD), was an insightful opportunity to assess key elements of Switzerland's IC. This comes at a time when the parliamentary debate on the next IC Strategy 2025–28, in which key aspects of future cooperation are being set for the coming four years, is about to start.

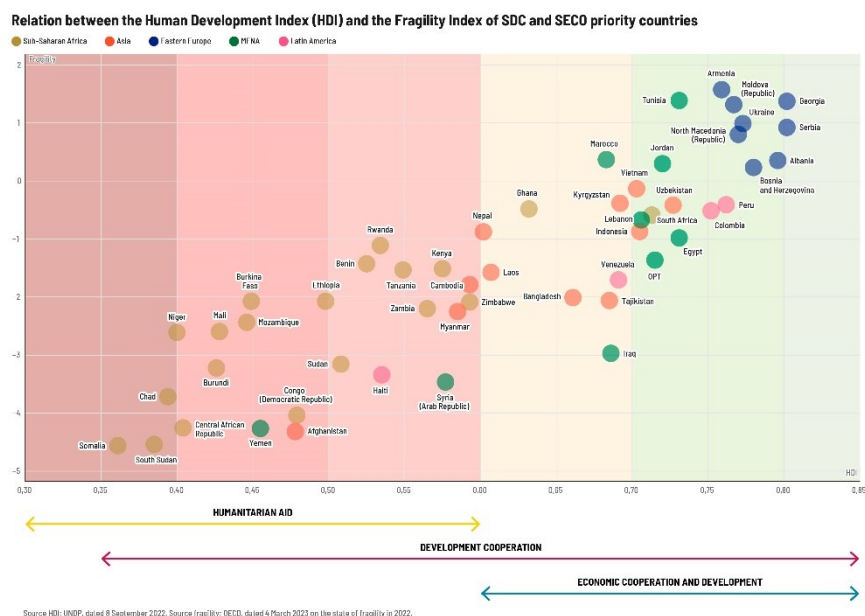
B.1 - Good and Innovative Practices

B.1.1 Strengthening complementarity between the instruments

- covering Pillars I.2 and I.3 (Partner Country Engagement: Achieving lasting sustainable development results / Fit for Fragility and humanitarian contexts)

i) Reason for selection

As a consequence of the **growing number of protracted crises**, the instruments of international cooperation are increasingly overlapping (compare figure 5). While the SDC's humanitarian aid and development cooperation is active in countries with a wide range of fragility and HDI, the economic development cooperation of SECO focuses – by nature of its instruments – on middle-income countries with robust economies that are also relevant to Switzerland's Foreign Economic Policy Strategy. The peacebuilding activities of the PHRD are focused on conflict-affected contexts and based on needs as well as political circumstances, regardless of the degree of fragility or Human Development Index. In almost half of the priority countries of Switzerland's IC, there is more than one of its actors present, as contexts are often addressed from different angles at the same time. In **fragile contexts**, a high degree of flexibility is needed to be able to react to deteriorating circumstances or make use of windows of opportunities.



[Figure 5: Use of IC instruments according to fragility and Human Development Index (FDFA)]

Until 2022, the **organisational set-up of the SDC was not sufficiently adapted** to these developments due to humanitarian aid and development cooperation being managed in parallel rather than complementary structures. Based on a participative process and drawing on elements of the DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus⁷ as well as an internal SDC Nexus Learning Journey (2021), the SDC made with its reorganisation F4P (compare Section A) an important step in strengthening the complementarity between humanitarian aid, development cooperation and peace. Two years after the institutionalization of this **nexus-structure**, it would be helpful to obtain an external view of the remaining challenges.

⁷ OECD DAC (2019), *DAC Recommendation on the OECD Legal Instruments Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*

ii) Analysis

Institutionalization of the nexus

The creation of **joint humanitarian-development/peace desks** was one of the main pillars of F4P. They are located inside three geographical divisions⁸. The division 'humanitarian aid and SHA' serves as competence centre for emergency aid, provides thematic support for protracted, longer-term humanitarian operations, and manages the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA), a pool of about 600 experts ready to fulfil short and longer-term missions. The SDC furthermore relies on a thematic cooperation division⁹ consisting of six sections¹⁰, a multilateral and Swiss NGO division, as well as a division for cross-cutting services. The new thematic section PGE plays an important role in strengthening the triple nexus and the **peace component** within SDC, as it advises the external network on these topics, actively engages in multilateral policy dialogue, and brings global discussions to a local level and vice-versa. It fortifies capacities for conflict analysis and conflict-sensitive programming and implementation among staff (training, knowledge management, advisory) and, on request, supports SDC programmes to in-build a peace lens. PGE is also active in policy dialogue in questions of conflict prevention and sustaining peace, as well as peace in the nexus, for example in INCAF or in UN bodies.

The new structure allows a better use of the instruments, as well as **more internal and external complementarity**. As more and more countries in which the SDC is active are considered as fragile or conflict-affected, an increasing number of programmes of conflict prevention and peace components are being implemented. The PHRD on the other side, focuses on agile political-diplomatic work and specifically on mediation and dialogue promotion. It deploys up to 20 human security advisors in order to support its activities in its focus countries. Switzerland shares its experience and knowledge regarding the nexus with multilateral organisations.¹¹

Remaining challenges

F4P is a big initial step towards a more efficient and effective implementation of the nexus approach but some challenges remain or have newly emerged due to the new structure:

- **Prioritizing longer-term humanitarian programmes over flexible emergency aid:** It has been apparent that F4P has led to a longer-term planning of humanitarian funds for protracted crises. As a consequence, flexibility in funding immediate emergency assistance of humanitarian organisations and the SHA has decreased. The effects of these changes need to be explored.
- **More complex coordination:** Topics related to the humanitarian sphere have always been distributed between different directorates and divisions of the FDFA. While humanitarian diplomacy is a thematic area within the PHRD, humanitarian aid as an instrument of international cooperation is part of the SDC. F4P has further split-up the latter, with longer-term humanitarian programmes now being accompanied by the geographic desks, partnerships with humanitarian organisations by the section Multi-H and emergency aid by the SHA. This has implications on the coordination of cross-cutting humanitarian issues, for example with regard to Switzerland's positions in the Security Council.

⁸ From the second half of 2024, those are: Africa, Middle East-Europe and Asia-Latin America.

⁹ The Thematic Cooperation Division is an operational division working in four functions: Strategic programmes and partnerships, policy dialogue, advisory to the external network, as well as knowledge management and learning. With its Thematic Cooperation, SDC addresses specific global challenges whose impact is felt beyond national borders and which require joint action. To influence the related international normative frameworks, SDC participates in intergovernmental processes, global and regional initiatives and contributes to innovative actions in selected countries.

¹⁰ As of the end of 2024/beginning of 2025, those will be: Economy/Education, Peace/Governance/Equality (PGE), Climate/DRR/Environment, Migration/Forced Displacement, Health/Nutrition, and Water.

¹¹ Every year, Switzerland sends some 200 civilian experts (in short- or long-term missions) to international organisations to promote peace and human rights. They work either at the headquarters of international organisations or at peace missions in regions affected by conflict. One type of secondment consists in the strategic posting of 'Nexus Advisors' within the multilateral system.

- **Increase understanding between different instruments and actors:** In general, the planning horizons (and therefore also some guidelines) of development cooperation and humanitarian aid are different, as their mandates are designed for different lengths of time and¹² are financed by different commitment credits. This constitutes an obstacle when designing nexus programmes which have both development and humanitarian characters, but can only be funded from one single credit.¹³ Raising awareness over different mandates and ways of working is key for taking best advantage of fruitful synergies between the instruments and actors, including external partnerships.
- **Coaching staffs ‘nexus literacy’:** The creation of joint humanitarian-development/peace desks meant that development/peace and humanitarian experts were assigned to the same units. This requires staff members to deepen their mutual understanding for the respective instruments and to adapt their mindset. SDC and the human resource directorate of the FDFA developed specific courses. Additionally, it was planned to put a mentoring programme for nexus competencies in place but interest on the part of mentors and mentees so far has been limited. A nexus training week, however, is being developed by the Thematic Cooperation Division and available in fall 2024 for all SDC staff, including from the external network.

Common conflict analysis and strengthened synergies between the actors

By reshaping its structure towards efficiently and effectively working in the nexus, the deployment of instruments within SDC has become more complementary and agile. A closer cooperation with SECO (comp. Section B.1.2.) and the PHRD in recent years has also made Switzerland's IC become **more synergetic** in general.¹⁴ The current IC Strategy period 2021–24 is the second in which all three instruments are united under one strategic framework.

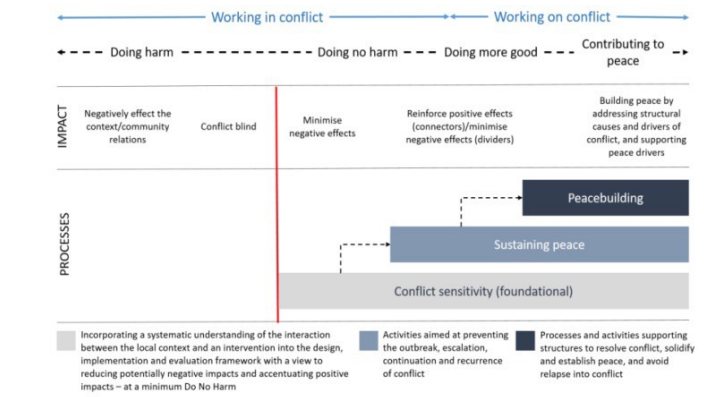
Fragility and conflict-affectedness across all priority regions of Switzerland's IC is rising. Underlying elements of social or political conflict affect how cooperation programmes can and should be designed. Contextual knowledge about its drivers is indispensable to assure the minimum standard of **conflict sensitive programming**. Going beyond that, SDC implements projects specifically work towards **trust building, social cohesion and more peaceful societies** by addressing underlying factors to prevent, reduce or transform conflicts.¹⁵ PHRD, on the other hand, is engaging in **dialogue promotion** and **mediation** aiming on the high-level political resolution of conflicts (comp. figure 6). In countries where multiple actors are present (e. g. Ukraine, Colombia, Myanmar), cooperation programmes are elaborated together, by each one bringing in its specific knowledge and lens. This ensures that synergies at the level of the programme's objectives can be actively created, with the aim of letting them trickle-down to the level of the different projects and activities. Also at a multilateral level, Switzerland supports countries that have experienced an armed conflict, for example through the UN Peacebuilding Fund where the country is one of the biggest voluntary donor and is actively contributing with a political and a development perspective to project selection and strategy development.

¹² Protracted crises, where Switzerland's humanitarian aid has been active with a presence on ground for years or even decades, are an exception. In the IC Strategy 2025–28, contexts outside of SDC's priority countries with a multi-year presence of humanitarian aid are now listed separately (comp. map 3 in Section B.1.3).

¹³ According to the majority principle, the instrument whose share of the project is larger project has to finance it at 100%.

¹⁴ Closer collaboration of IC with the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS) has also taken place since some relevant topics (such as humanitarian demining) are overlapping with security-relevant themes.

¹⁵ The PGE-section portrayed a sample of these projects in short videos (https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Nexus+Serie%3A+The+SDC%27s+contribution+to+peace).



[Figure 6: The Peace Spectrum (UNHCR)]

iii) Plans or options for future work to build on this strength

Switzerland's IC has made **considerable progress** in becoming more complementary and synergetic, both with regard to a **double nexus**, as well as a **triple nexus**. Anchoring those structures will require time and ongoing commitment. An even more targeted collaboration between the three instruments in specific **conflict-affected contexts** can be further increased to assure a **coherent WOGA implementation** of the common IC Strategy. In those cases, a shared understanding of the conflict and its triggers in increasingly fragile environments is crucial and can help breaking down institutional siloes.

One step in this direction is the **institutionalization of the steering committee** of the IC Strategy consisting of high-level representatives from SDC, SECO and PHRD. Previously this committee was only convened during the drafting period of the IC Strategy. Now that its members will meet periodically throughout the entire strategy period (including implementation), there is room to **discuss, process and communicate synergies and results** even more consciously. In addition, an internal document called VADEMECUM (developed in 2020) between SDC and SECO defines and clarifies roles and collaboration mechanisms between the two entities.

B.1.2 Partnering with the Private Sector

- covering Pillar II.5 (Inclusive Development Partnerships: Private Sector), Foundations B.1 (Institutional Arrangements: Leadership, responsibility, complementarity and accountability for whole-of-government development co-operation) and Foundation C.3 (Financing for Sustainable Development: Incentivizing additional development finance)

i) Reason for selection

Since the IC Strategy 2021–24, **private sector collaboration** has been a priority for and played an important role in Switzerland's international cooperation to reduce poverty and ensure sustainable development. Switzerland leverages the expertise, resources, and innovative capabilities of the private sector to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of its international development efforts. In addition, Switzerland also supports **private sector development** by working towards improving the business environment by creating a more efficient, stable, and predictable regulatory and economic framework, which reduces costs and risks for businesses.

Today, the importance of working with the private sector in development cooperation is widely recognized and accepted by Swiss development actors. However, this was not always the case, and the collaboration with the private sector was closely scrutinized by Parliament, NGOs, and civil society organizations during the public consultation of the IC Strategy 2021–24. The Strategy states that Switzerland 'intends to diversify and strengthen its collaboration with the private sector [...] and to explore the possibility of developing new financial instruments and other new forms of cooperation involving the private sector, including in more challenging contexts'. Since 2020 and the adoption of the IC Strategy 2021–24, Switzerland has made efforts to further engage with the private sector including the development of new financing instruments. This chapter describes how Switzerland works with the private sector and presents some of its financing instruments.

ii) Analysis

How We Work

Partnerships with the private sector are implemented through financial or investment instruments and through multi-stakeholder initiatives. **Financial or investment instruments** allow to mobilise private capital for development purposes and to shift investment towards companies that address social or environmental challenges. By promoting concepts such as **impact-linked finance**, which rewards companies for achieving social outcomes, Switzerland is helping to align the financial system with development objectives. Via such instruments, Switzerland can provide concessional blended finance or other de-risking solutions to mitigate financial risks in the case of market failures (e.g., SDG Impact Finance Initiative (SIFI), Swiss Investment Fund for Emerging Markets (SIFEM), Private Infrastructure Investment Group (PIDG)).

Switzerland also promotes **joint projects and multi-stakeholder initiatives** in areas where it has significant experience and market share and where relevant private sector actors are involved. Through such initiatives, companies can network with other actors, in particular with civil society and academia to develop innovative ideas to address development challenges. For instance, to strengthen frameworks for responsible business conduct and to promote more sustainable production practices (e.g. Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa, Swiss Better Gold). To ensure development impact, collaboration with the private sector is subject to strict principles such as additionally of financing, avoidance of market distortions, and compliance with social and/or environmental standards.

Financing Instruments

Switzerland's IC strategically engages the private sector through a number of initiatives aimed at leveraging resources and expertise for sustainable development. A couple of these initiatives are described below:

In 2021, SECO and SDC launched the **SIFI**, which is a partnership between the Swiss Government and the UBS Optimus Foundation. SIFI aims to mobilise private capital at scale in support of the SDGs and unlock up to CHF 1 billion in private capital by 2030. It does this through grants that support the design and development of innovative financial solutions, promote a supportive regulatory framework, and de-risk impact investments that help achieve the SDGs. Since its inception, SIFI has launched three calls for proposals and funded 14 projects across more than 20 countries. It has also expanded its membership with Luxembourg joining the initiative in 2023.

Another important private-sector instrument for Switzerland's IC is **SIFEM**. SIFEM provides long-term financing through local financial intermediaries to small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries. SIFEM emphasises sustainable development by promoting job creation, good governance, transparency, and compliance with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards. By partnering with fund managers and financial institutions with strong local expertise, SIFEM ensures effective investment strategies and risk management, thereby promoting sustainable development and economic growth in its target regions. SDC in collaboration with SECO are planning to develop a new financing window that will enable SIFEM to direct more investments to least developed countries and other high-risk contexts.

Switzerland's IC also leverages private finance through **multi-stakeholder approaches and platforms**. A good example is the Sustainable Landscape Program Indonesia (SLPI), which works with the private sector to promote sustainable economic growth and natural resource management across entire landscapes. Companies provide innovative solutions and financial resources through direct investments, loans, grants, and partnerships. Other examples are the Swiss Platforms for Sustainable Cocoa and Sustainable Coffee. These platforms aim to promote the sustainable production and supply of cocoa and coffee by addressing various social, environmental, and economic issues prevalent in the industry. The platforms work by bringing together members of the entire value chain to create a common framework for sustainable cocoa and coffee production. In 2023, Switzerland joined the Humanitarian and Resilience Investing Initiative, a World Economic Forum platform that promotes market-based solutions to challenges in fragile and humanitarian contexts.

Complementarity between SECO and SDC

Switzerland's IC Strategy 2021–24 and the upcoming Strategy 2025–28 highlight the complementarity between SECO and SDC in the area of private sector cooperation by defining their respective roles, priorities, and areas of focus within Switzerland's IC framework. Under this framework, private sector engagement is an intervention modality that is used by **SECO and SDC in different thematic areas and geographic locations**. SECO focuses primarily on economic development, trade promotion, and financial sector strengthening, with the aim of integrating partner countries into the global economy and enhancing their economic resilience. SDC, on the other hand, is striving to increase private investment in particular in those least developed and lower middle-income countries, including fragile contexts, where the SDG finance gap is biggest. Moreover, SDC focuses on those companies that have a particularly positive impact on social development, striving to improve living conditions and address the root causes of poverty.

In 2017, SDC established the Competence Center for Private Sector Engagement (CEP), which aims to **scale up and to mainstream PSE** across all sectors of development with a particular focus on impact-linked finance and support for social and impact enterprises. The CEP has become part of the newly created Section Economy and Education (E+E) during SDC's reorganisation and has been given additional resources.

iii) Plans or options for future work to build on this strength

Based on the recommendations of **two independent evaluations** of SECO's and SDC's engagement with the private sector¹⁶, current **approaches will be further sharpened**. SECO will continue to engage in innovative platforms that promote the collaboration with the private sector such as the recently established coffee platform. In terms of impact financing instruments, SECO seeks to consolidate the number of instruments it is working with, such as the SIFI initiative which offers a range of financing options across all SDGs and where SECO is working on expanding membership to other donors. SDC is committed to strategically strengthen PSE profiles at headquarters and to provide targeted training for staff of the external network that implement respective programmes. Building on its experience of recent years and on already established platforms and instruments, SDC puts a focus on the scaling-up of its PSE in low income countries, with the objective of channeling more private capital into their sustainable development and thus achieve greater social and economic impact. Apart from SIFI, this will include a closer collaboration with SIFEM to increase investments in least developed countries, an expansion of the investment credit as well as the promotion of impact-linked finance as an innovative financing tool to create more impact in sectors and geographies that do not yet receive a lot of private investment.

¹⁶ SECO (2022), Independent evaluation on the engagement of SECO's economic cooperation division with the private sector during 2013–2021; SDC (2023) Independent Evaluation of the SDC's Private Sector Engagement (2015–2021)

B.1.3 Increased geographic and thematic focus

- covering Pillar I.2 (Partner Country Engagement: Achieving lasting sustainable development results)

i) Reason for selection

Over the last 15 years, **SDC's bilateral cooperation** phased out of some countries in Latin America and South Asia¹⁷ where context had evolved and other instruments of international cooperation were thus seen to be more expedient. In the DAC Peer Review of 2019¹⁸, Switzerland was recommended to further concentrate its ODA on fewer priority countries. During the strategy period of 2021–24, SDC fulfilled for the first time ever an extensive **phasing-out process** of a whole region for its bilateral cooperation. Until the end of 2024, it will exit from its five priority countries in **Latin America and the Caribbean as well as Mongolia**. In addition, the cooperation programme for Southern Africa has reduced its geographic focus area from five to two countries, exiting from Malawi, Lesotho and Eswatini by 2024, while maintaining its presence in Zimbabwe and Zambia. The aim of this geographic concentration on the remaining **four priority regions**¹⁹ is to allow Switzerland to focus its ODA even more on especially poor, vulnerable and fragile contexts.

During the IC Strategy 2021–24, **SECO** maintained its **focus on 13 priority countries**. During the period 2025–28, SECO will phase out its activities in Colombia – since 2020 an OECD member – and instead add Morocco as a new priority country for its economic cooperation. The phase-out in Colombia is in line with a greater geographical concentration and at the same time enables the transition to other foreign trade policy instruments. Morocco on the other hand has become an important partner for Switzerland in North Africa as the country promotes peace and stability, as well as sustainable development in the region. Common challenges such as economic development, climate change, migration, and good governance are at the heart of the Swiss-Moroccan partnership. In terms of working areas, SECO will further **sharpen its thematic focus** as part of the IC Strategy 2025–28 by concentrating on three priority themes: private sector, public institutions, and infrastructure and urban development. This allows for more efficient planning and communication.

SDC's reorganisation process 'Fit for Purpose' also **regrouped thematic expertise**²⁰ in one operational division to harness better on synergies. This clear outline should help to maintain thematic focus and counteract the tendency of continuously expanding breadth and depth of topics covered. In the IC Strategy 2021–24, the Federal Council furthermore introduced explicit three **criteria for strategic engagement** of SDC, SECO and PHRD: 1) needs of the population, 2) long term Swiss interests, 3) added value of Switzerland's international cooperation.

Geographic concentration was selected as main topic of this chapter because Switzerland estimates that its responsible phasing-out process classifies as a good practice and the insights could be useful to other peers.

ii) Analysis

Phasing-out bilateral development cooperation from Latin America, the Caribbean and Mongolia

The decision to strategically phase-out SDC's bilateral cooperation from Latin America and the Caribbean until the end of 2024 was taken by the Federal Council and later approved by Parliament in 2020. Specifically, this concerned the programmes in **Honduras, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Cuba, Haiti**, as well as the additional country programme of **Mongolia**. In line with the Foreign Policy Strategy 2024–27 and the Americas Strategy 2022–25, the humanitarian

¹⁷ Those are: Ecuador, Peru, Bhutan, India and Pakistan

¹⁸ OECD (2019), *Switzerland (2019) DAC Peer Review - Main Findings and Recommendations*

¹⁹ Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, North Africa and the Middle East, and Eastern Europe

²⁰ The global thematic programmes are: Economy and Education / Peace, Governance and Equality / Climate, Disaster Risk Reduction and Environment / Migration and Forced Displacement / Water / Health / Food Systems. In the new IC Strategy 2025–28, health and food systems are combined in a new section called 'health and nutrition'.

aid and the thematic cooperation of SDC remains present in Latin America and the Caribbean with offices in Lima and Bogotá.

Compared to more fragile contexts, the following circumstances spoke in favour of a responsible decision to phase-out of traditional bilateral cooperation: Since the turn of the millennium, partner countries in Latin America and the Caribbean – with the exception of Haiti, where humanitarian aid will stay engaged beyond 2024 – have succeeded in **reducing extreme poverty** and providing the population with more inclusive basic services.²¹ Mongolia increased its gross domestic product per capita more than eightfold between 2001 and 2021.²² The country also remains democratically stable and has the conditions in place to continue project development independently. Through its work, SDC contributed to these positive developments.

The decision to phase-out from these contexts nevertheless fuelled **concerns** (especially from Swiss NGOs) over potentially jeopardising progress made in the last six decades of SDC's presence on the continent. In order to sustainably secure advances made, SDC planned its exit over a period of four years, which allowed to do it based on a **responsible timetable**. This was appreciated by the governments of the partner countries, as well as partner organisations, permitting them to adapt to the new situation. SDC has endeavoured to find **tailored solutions** for its projects in order to ensure their continuity or their ordered closing. Roughly half of them will be continued by local organisations, around 20 percent were taken up by other bilateral donors or multilateral organisations and around 30 percent had reached their term and were closed. Another priority of the process was the management of human resources, especially regarding local staff.

Historic impact capitalisation

One priority in this extensive phasing-out process was the **institutional knowledge** management and the **impact capitalisation**²³ of 60 years of cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean. Over a period of 18 months, reflections on priorities, impact, learnings and recommendations were compiled and communication products²⁴ developed and presented. Numerous insights will be applicable elsewhere, either in other geographic contexts or to other foreign policy and foreign economic policy instruments that remain present in Latin America and the Caribbean. It has been shown that a long-term orientation of partnerships and programmes, the combination of local development programmes with national policy dialogue, a participative and trust-based approach and flexibility in planning were especially important for the engagement in Latin America and the Caribbean.

iii) Plans or options for future work to build on this strength

After the exit of SDC's bilateral cooperation by the end of 2024, Switzerland is open to **explore new ways of collaboration** with Latin American and Caribbean countries (and Mongolia). In line with their global mandate and according to the three above mentioned criteria, SDC's thematic cooperation (with a regional focus on climate change, and water) and humanitarian aid (regionally focusing on protection, disaster risk reduction and emergency aid) will stay present in a targeted manner. To take into account the dramatically worsened humanitarian situation in Haiti, SDC transformed its cooperation office in Port-au-Prince into a humanitarian office with a mid-term approach. It will as well maintain its humanitarian commitment in Colombia regarding the protection of vulnerable people affected by crises and conflict, including Venezuelan migrants, as a contribution to peace and stability in the country. On a demand-driven basis, with a smaller footprint and fully integrated in the network of representations, Switzerland's IC continues to mobilise Swiss expertise, promotes know-how transfer and engages in partnerships with Latin American and Caribbean countries at eye level.

²¹ In recent years, there have been setbacks in poverty reduction, particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

²² IMF (2023), *World Economic Outlook Database. April 2023 Edition*

²³ GFA Consulting Group GmbH (2023), *Historic Impact Capitalisation of SDC's bilateral cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean*

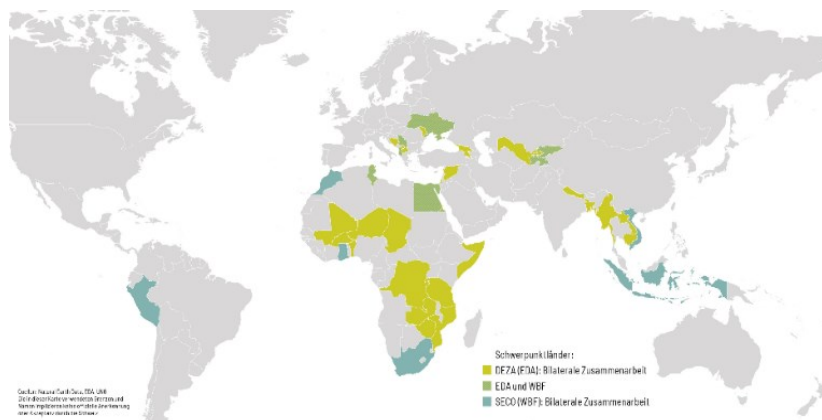
²⁴ SDC (2024), *60 years of successful cooperation*; SDC (2024), *Best Practices from Latin America and the Caribbean*

SECO will phase-out its activities in Colombia (by 2028) and will maintain its presence in Peru to support the country on its path to becoming an OECD member. The PHRD is expected to continue playing an active role in the peace processes in Colombia and keeps its universal mandate in protecting human rights.

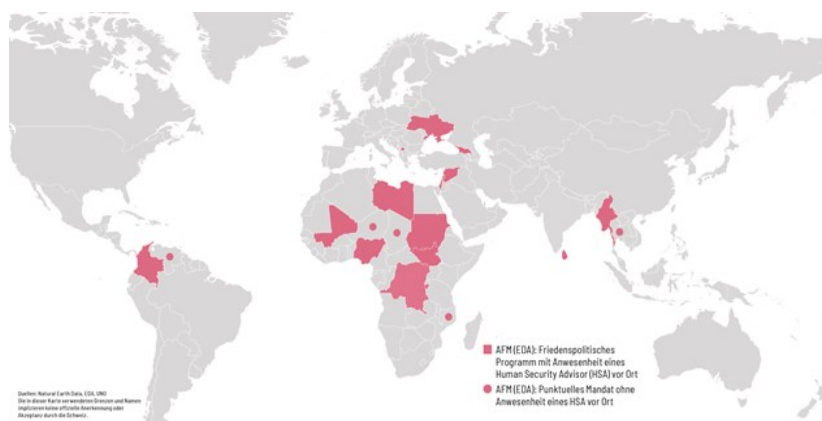
While some instruments and actors of Switzerland's IC thus remain present in Latin America and the Caribbean, **new ones (outside of IC) could also possibly get engaged**, depending on the respective context. Region of mostly democratic countries and key for global climate and biodiversity, with a potential for increased economic and trade relations, the continent will continue to be of relevance for Switzerland's bilateral relations.

The upcoming **IC Strategy 2025–28**, will **prioritize the following countries** (subject to approval of Parliament):

- **Bilateral development cooperation of SDC:** 34²⁵ (of which joint priority countries with SECO: 7) (map 1)
- **Bilateral economic development cooperation of SECO:** 13²⁶ (map 1)
- **Focus countries or regions of PHRD for peace policy:** maximum 20²⁷ (map 2)
- **Multi-year humanitarian programmes in protracted crises** (outside priority countries): 7 (map 3)



[Map 1: Priority countries for SDC and SECO bilateral development cooperation (FDFA)]

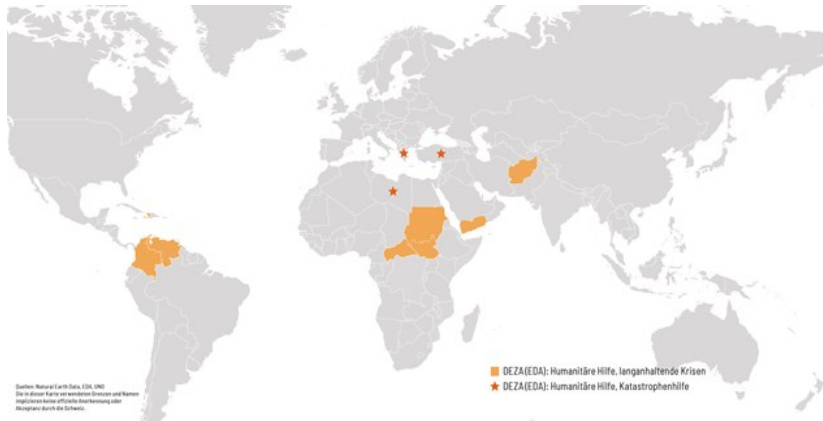


[Map 2: Countries in which the PHRD is active in the field of peace policy (as at 1 January 2024) (FDFA)]

²⁵ The number of priority countries for SDC's bilateral cooperation decreased from 35 to 34, as the program in Afghanistan was adapted to the context to be predominantly humanitarian in nature. It thus does not count as priority country any more.

²⁶ Colombia does not count as priority country anymore, as the phasing-out starts in 2025 and will be completed by 2028. Morocco was defined as a new priority country.

²⁷ The PHRD exited from Zimbabwe, Cameroon and South Sudan and engaged in peace policy in Sudan. At the same time, it has to remain flexible in order to react to upcoming needs in upcoming armed conflict as well as take up arising opportunities for mediation/facilitation and the support of dialogue beyond focus countries/regions.



[Map 3: Multi-year presence of humanitarian aid in contexts of protracted crises, outside priority countries (FDFA)]

B.2 - Challenges and Opportunities

B.2.1 Results-based management and learning

- covering Foundation D.4 (Management Systems: Results, evaluation, knowledge management and learning)

i) Reason for selection

In the last years, SDC, SECO and PHRD have made a big leap forward in terms of Results-based Management (RBM). Established **instruments and procedures** have been revised and analysed to determine whether there is room for more **streamlining** and thus reducing bureaucratic burden. **New digital tools** were introduced to enhance data driven-steering and accountability.

Despite the progress made, RBM and learning remains a major challenge. Scrutiny of its international cooperation by politics and the public has noticeably increased, among others due to sharpened competition for public resources. A renewed **domestic emphasis for accountability** can be observed. Rising expectations that projects should be rigorously based on **scientific evidence** (e. g. impact evaluations) is at odds with the limited available resources for project and programme evaluations. Transparent communication about what actually can or cannot be measured in complex settings (outputs, outcomes or impact) will be crucial for the understanding and support of international cooperation in Switzerland.

The topic was selected because Switzerland estimates that other peers might face similar challenges when it comes to meaningfully monitoring, evaluating and steering their portfolio, as well as reporting to Parliament and the public.

ii) Analysis

An institutional **evaluation of SDC's RBM-system** (2017)²⁸ has confirmed its successful conception and execution in line with the global development effectiveness agenda. The system was endorsed for its outcome orientation and promotion of flexibility and contextualization. Shortcomings were identified regarding the use of supplied results information for strategic learning and decision-making purposes as well as overemphasis of domestic accountability. Since then, important adaptations have been made to address some of the identified weaknesses and further build on its strengths.

More streamlined processes after SDC's F4P

One line of action of SDC's reorganisation process F4P in 2022 was the adaptation of its structure and processes with the aim of being a more **effective, agile and efficient** organisation. Changes in the RBM system led to more **decentralised** decision making.

Developments in SDC's RBM - example 1: Simplified project approval processes

As part of F4P, project approval processes in SDC have been redesigned with an emphasis on further decentralization and simplification of procedures and instruments. The levels of mandatory operational committees (Opcom) have been reduced from three to two²⁹ which gives organisational units in charge of project development more flexibility and responsibility. Requirements for the project identification process ('entry proposals') have been significantly reduced. First experiences show that those changes have reduced the bureaucratic burden but have also led to less uniform and therefore potentially more incoherent processes and a shift of administrative workload to the external network.

²⁸ SDC (2017), *Independent Evaluation of SDC's Results-Based Management System with a Focus on Poverty Reduction*.

²⁹ Newly designed projects generally have to pass through Opcom 1 (chaired by a head of IC in the external network or a head of section at head office) and Opcom 2 (rotationally chaired by a member of directorate at head office), while new project phases only have to be approved by Opcom 1.

Updated processes have **yet to be fully institutionalised** and integrated into work culture. After a bit less than two years since the formal completion of F4P, experiences show that some elements will have to be further refined or revised.

Successful rollout of standard indicators, results aggregation and digitalised monitoring

Beginning in 2016, **SDC** introduced a system of **standardised indicators**³⁰ in order to enable the aggregation of the highly context-dependent results. They allow results from various projects and programmes to be aggregated and linked to the objectives of the IC Strategy and the SDGs. These quantitative elements are supplemented by analysing qualitative findings from evaluations and are a tool for monitoring, as well as accountability.

In 2023, SDC **digitalised** this system in a solely for this purpose developed tool called 'Results Data Management' (RDM). It digitalises project logframes and results frameworks at programme level, giving increased visibility to **monitoring** data. It further enhances possibilities for data-driven **steering** and, in line with recommendations 6 and 7 from the 2019 OECD DAC peer review³¹, disaggregation of data by gender and LNOB-groups. In addition, it makes **accountability** more efficient and transparent. The development and roll-out of RDM has helped to create a network of champions of representations abroad and at head office. The network shows interest to contribute to RBM and digital transformation.

SECO piloted the use of standard indicators in the Swiss development cooperation during the development strategy 2013–16. Relevant **quantitative and qualitative indicators** were introduced in order to meaningfully report on the results of the economic development cooperation across SECO's 13 priority countries and global programmes. The two subsequent strategy periods were used to refine the indicators and reduce their number to improve portfolio overview and public communication about development results. In 2020, SECO took steps in its reporting framework to receive more disaggregated data: project implementers are required to provide information on type and scope of contribution to the reduction of gender inequality, disparities or poverty (SECO-WE Guidelines on Reporting with Standard Indicators). With the help of gender disaggregated indicators and more gender sensitive reporting, SECO aims at making the relevance of the gender dimension more comprehensive and visible.

Developments in SECO's RBM - example 2: using Lessons Learned

SECO performs on a biennial basis an overarching meta-analysis of all its external evaluations and internal reviews, based on OECD DAC as well as SECO-specific criteria. This public report guarantees transparency on results and challenges in project implementation and flags common lessons learned for project implementation, beyond single projects.

Developments in SECO's RBM – example 3: ISO-certification for quality management

SECO's economic development division was one of the first federal agencies to introduce an ISO-9001-certified quality management system, subject to an independent annual audit. The system enables SECO to fulfil its responsibilities towards partner organisations, the Swiss Parliament and the public. SECO's quality management system meets international standards and underpins its constant efforts to improve processes, internal services and projects. This increases both efficiency and effectiveness.

Also in 2016, **PHRD** started applying standard indicators across its diplomatic-political work in the field of peace building, human rights policy and humanitarian policy. Since then, the collection of **meaningful information** and data around the process involvement has been systematised and strengthened. Single projects support these processes (i.e. entry point creation or enable conflict partners to participate in a peace process). PHRD defines systematically its **sphere of interest** in a peace process or diplomatic initiative, assesses whether it has the necessary accesses or convening power to influence those and documents

³⁰ 'Aggregated Reference Indicators' (ARI) serve as communication tool about achieved outputs across different programmes and countries. 'Thematic Reference Indicators' (TRI) indicate outcomes to which SDC has contributed. Both are linked to the four objectives of the IC Strategy, as well as to the SDGs. In the case of SECO, 16 standard indicators are used to report about the results achieved in key priority areas of economic development cooperation (one of the four objectives of the IC strategy).

³¹ OECD (2019), *OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Switzerland 2019*, p. 16

changes occurred thanks to its interventions. The system in place allows for better steering as well communicating results.

In 2024, SDC and SECO jointly commissioned a review of Switzerland's experience in **Results-Based Financing (RBF)**.³² The review found that Switzerland is a frontrunner when it comes to applying RBF in its projects, with SDC and SECO having over 50 applications of RBF in their project portfolio.³³ Moreover, the review found that there are relatively few institutional and structural obstacles for the further rollout of RBF, as the contracting and finance-administrative systems allow for flexibility in defining terms and tying payments to results. However, RBF is mostly used in a decentralised manner championed by a few motivated colleagues across SECO and SDC. A more streamlined guidance could significantly increase the uptake of RBF at both agencies.

iii) Plans or options for future work to enable improvement

Planned lines of action for better measuring effectiveness

In 2023, the evaluation service of the Federal Assembly ('Parliamentary Control of the Administration') and a political supervisory commission of one of Switzerland's legislative branches (the 'Control Committee of the Council of States') reviewed the way of how the actors of official international cooperation externally evaluate projects.³⁴ Based on their findings and recommendations, a wider process on how to **meaningfully improve measurement of effectiveness** was triggered. In the beginning of 2024, the Federal Council identified 12 measures and mandated their implementation until 2026 to the FDFA (SDC / PHRD) and the EAER (SECO).³⁵ In the medium to longer term, they will focus on three lines of action, relevant to both evaluation and monitoring:

- **Quality: improving the data** basis through improving the quality of decentralised projects evaluation and strengthening evaluation activities
- **Digitalization: modernizing data processing through digital collection of** standardised indicators for monitoring and a digitalization of evaluation information to promote the use of evidence and learning
- **Communication: access to development results through** granting public access to digital platforms and communicating about successes and failures

Remaining challenges

Despite recent improvements, establishing **good practices** as well as a common understanding of new procedures and instruments will be a crucial next step. This has to be accompanied by a **renewed commitment** to uphold and increase RBM competencies, also to counter declining performance in MfSDR-indicators.³⁶ The pace of rotating staff and a 10% reduction of human resources at head office (in favour of an increase in the external network, partly dedicated to IC activities) have created challenges in terms of coherent project approval processes, evaluation, quality assurance and RBM in general. Regular feedback-loops will be necessary to observe how new instruments and processes are applied in practice, in order to take necessary adjustments.

³² For more information on Switzerland's approach to RBF and the review: <https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/sdc/aktuell/newsuebersicht/2024/05/ergebnisbasierte-finanzierungsmodelle.html#:~:text=RBF%20conditions%20a%20portion%20of,to%20improve%20social%20outcomes%20significantly.>

³³ For example in the energy sector in Kenya, an ILF pilot programme (2019–22) incentivized two providers of electrical home appliances, clean cooking stoves and productive use energy appliances based on solar energy to scale up operations with a social impact and reach customers which otherwise would not have been served. The impact enterprises received premium payment for social outcomes measured with impact indicators, such as percentage of customers below poverty line or percentage of customers reporting first access to energy product or service. This pilot program had a strong learning component, including a dedicated [Lessons Learnt Report](#).

³⁴ Contrôle parlementaire de l'administration (2023), *Mesure de l'efficacité dans la coopération internationale Rapport du Contrôle parlementaire de l'administration à l'intention de la Commission de gestion du Conseil des États*; Commission de gestion du Conseil des États (2023), *Mesure de l'efficacité dans la coopération internationale Rapport de la Commission de gestion du Conseil des États*

³⁵ Conseil Fédéral (2024), *Mesure de l'efficacité dans la coopération internationale Rapport de la Commission de gestion du Conseil des États du 14 novembre 2023. Avis du Conseil fédéral*

³⁶ OECD DAC (2019), *Managing for Sustainable Development Results. OECD DAC Guiding Principles*

Despite the requirement to base its theories of change on scientific findings, in practice this is still not systematically enough demonstrated. **Evidence-based programming** needs to be strengthened in the future.

In order to be able to **strategically monitor** the new IC Strategy 2025–28, a suitable monitoring system is currently under development, defining among others, how to monitor Switzerland's engagement in locally led development. The fact that SDC, SECO and PHRD have different monitoring and evaluation systems to accompany the common framework of the current and the upcoming Strategy remains a challenge.

Digital transformation will be an important step towards a more data-driven IC. In case of SDC, the introduction of RDM was a success and certainly the most significant change in its RBM culture. The roll-out of RDM raised fruitful questions (for example regarding the disaggregation of data by LNOB, the integration of multilateral results into the system or the systematic use of qualitative results for analysis and steering) which are now being addressed. A common understanding on these and other points still needs to be developed, so that more coherent practices can emerge, ultimately leading to improved data quality.

The ongoing efforts toward broader digital transformation are confronted with a series of challenges: scarce funds for implementation, questions around data protection, on a larger scale the trend to fragmentation of data collection and the growing number of individual systems among different actors in international cooperation. Together with the principles for effective development cooperation, interoperable systems and open government data are some crucial concepts to be strengthened.

The actors of IC have to continuously engage in a transparent dialogue with different stakeholders over the **possibilities and limits of rigorously measuring effectiveness** for all of its implemented measures.

B.2.2 Policy Coherence

- Covering Pillar III.2 (Global and domestic efforts: Policy Coherence for sustainable development)

i) Reason for selection

Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) in international development cooperation is essential to **maximise impact and efficiency**, as well as to enhance **trustworthiness, accountability and transparency**. Achieving the SDGs will only be possible if policies in different areas work in harmony. Since the last Peer Review, Switzerland has made efforts to further promote PCSD across departments. It has also worked to increase coherence between different strategic frameworks, such as the Foreign Policy Strategy and the Foreign Economic Policy Strategy (see Section A). PCSD is and continues to be an important principle of Switzerland's IC and is positioned prominently in the current IC Strategy 2021–24. Switzerland regularly reviews its internal practices to increase and ensure PCSD and exchanges views related to the topic in various international forums. These include the Network of National Focal Points for Policy Coherence, where Switzerland is also a member of the Informal Advisory Group. This chapter provides information on the internal coordination mechanisms of the Swiss government and gives examples of how Switzerland tries to ensure policy coherence across its IC activities.

ii) Analysis

Whole-of-Government and Whole-of-Society Coordination

A common strategic framework with clear guidelines is key to ensuring policy coherence. The **2030 Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS)**³⁷ and its four-year action plans³⁸ (both adopted by the Swiss Federal Council) are important tools for integrating sustainable development into sectoral policies and contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The SDS guides the Federal Council's sustainability policy and establishes sustainable development as an important requirement for all federal policies. The current action plan for the years 2024 to 2027 includes a measure to conduct qualitative and quantitative analyses of positive and negative spillover effects of policies and regulations on other countries. As measuring such spillover effects (particularly on other countries) remains a challenge, Switzerland puts a particular focus on improving the availability and quality of data. In addition, sustainable development and policy coherence are included as important principles in sectoral policy documents (e.g., the IC Strategy, the Swiss Foreign Policy Strategy, and the Swiss Foreign Economic Policy Strategy).

Switzerland has put in place coordination and consultation mechanisms between and within different levels of government to support policy coherence. The Federal Council promotes policy coherence for sustainable development through a **two-stage consultation approach**. First, the office responsible for a policy organises a technical consultation to gather and consolidate comments from other offices. Then, political consultation among Federal Councillors before and during final decisions balances different perspectives and tries to take sustainable development concerns into account. Although a PCSD lens is not systematically applied, this system has proven to be effective at identifying and addressing potential policy inconsistencies at an early stage. Moreover, **Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIA)**³⁹ are conducted to analyse the expected economic, environmental, and social impacts of new regulations in Switzerland and in other countries.

In addition, Switzerland has established various types of **interdepartmental coordination mechanisms** to ensure that its foreign policy is coherent. Examples of such mechanisms include the Interdepartmental Committee on Development and Cooperation, the

³⁷ <https://www.eda.admin.ch/agenda2030/en/home/strategie/strategie-nachhaltige-entwicklung.html>

³⁸ <https://www.are.admin.ch/are/en/home/sustainable-development/strategy/sds.html>

³⁹ <https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/fr/home/wirtschaftslage---wirtschaftspolitik/wirtschaftspolitik/regulierung/regulierungsfolgenabschaetzung.html>

Interdepartmental Structure for International Cooperation on Migration⁴⁰, and the PLAFICO Coordination Platform.⁴¹ The 2030 Agenda Directors' Steering Committee⁴² is responsible for strategic steering and coordination of cross-sectoral tasks in relations with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDS (including its action plans). The aim of such whole-of-government coordination is to ensure that different departments dealing with different policy areas **do not operate in isolated silos**, but communicate regularly and at all levels, from technical specialists preparing policies to senior officials finalizing them, and to ministers making policy decisions. In this way, Switzerland ensures that new policies take into account the **positive and negative effects** that they may have on other policies and/or countries. Finally, Switzerland has also set up **roundtables with external partners** such as NGOs, academia and the private sector to ensure that Switzerland's development priorities are better understood in relation to the overall Swiss foreign policy and foreign economic policy priorities.

Policy Areas

Switzerland has been active in improving policy coherence, among others in the area of **sustainable trade**. Switzerland's **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** with **Indonesia**, negotiated within the framework of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), is an example of policy coherence in several respects, aligning trade, environmental and social policies in support of sustainable development. The sustainable development provisions in Switzerland's FTA with Indonesia aim to ensure that economic growth and trade liberalization do not come at the expense of environmental integrity and social well-being. The agreement's focus on sustainable development, labour rights, environmental protection, and corporate social responsibility ensures that trade and investment are mutually beneficial and support long-term sustainable growth. A notable aspect of the agreement is its focus on sustainable production and certification of palm oil, addressing concerns about deforestation and habitat loss. This comprehensive approach demonstrates how FTAs can be designed to align with broader policy objectives and promote coherent and sustainable development outcomes.

Switzerland also works to promote policy coherence in sectors that are characterized by informality and perceived lack of transparency, such as the **gold sector**. It does so through various initiatives, regulatory frameworks, and partnerships that balance economic interests with social and environmental sustainability. One of the initiatives is the Better Gold Initiative (BGI), which aims to create a more sustainable and transparent gold supply chain by promoting the responsible sourcing of gold (in line with the OECD's Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals). In particular, the Better Gold Initiative, is an example of how partnerships with the private sector can drive improvements in a sector that is often associated with negative social and environmental impacts.

In addition, Switzerland ensures policy coherence in the area of **responsible business conduct (RBC)** through legislation, international cooperation, national action plans, and multi-stakeholder initiatives. Switzerland has developed a National Action Plan (NAP) for Business and Human Rights, which outlines the government's commitment to implementing the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. At the same time, Switzerland participates in international initiatives and organisations that promote RBC, such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Global Compact. Moreover, Switzerland promotes sustainable and responsible business practices through multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa. The aim of these initiatives is to foster dialogue and collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, businesses, civil society organisations, and trade unions.

Finally, Switzerland ensures policy coherence between its foreign policy and development cooperation in the area of **carbon markets** through a combination of international agreements, domestic policies, and targeted initiatives that reconcile environmental, economic, and development objectives. By participating in international carbon markets, Switzerland contributes to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions and to achieving the global climate

⁴⁰ <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/ffdfa/foreign-policy/human-rights/migration/foreign-policy-migration.html>

⁴¹ <https://www.bafu.admin.ch/bafu/en/home/topics/international-affairs/topics-and-conventions/international-environmental-financing.html>

⁴² <https://www.eda.admin.ch/agenda2030/en/home/organisation/direktionskomitee-agenda-2030.html>

goals. Switzerland has signed bilateral agreements with several countries (e.g., Peru, Ghana, Senegal, Georgia, Vanuatu, Dominica, Thailand, Ukraine, Morocco, Malawi, Uruguay, Chile, and Tunisia) to implement Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. These agreements facilitate international carbon trading and ensure that emission reductions are transparent, verifiable, and contribute to sustainable development in the partner countries.

In addition to trade-related topics, Switzerland also promotes policy coherence in the financial sector, particularly, with regard to **illicit financial flows** (IFF): SECO and SDC support the implementation of the relevant recommendations of the Federal Council's report "Illicit financial flows from developing countries. Current and future fields of action and instruments in Switzerland's development policy" of 2018. Based on the international discussions on IFFs, as well as the ongoing programs, five fields of action have been identified for Switzerland's IC, grouped into two main policy areas: 1) Financial flows and trade relations: minimizing the risk of IFFs in the commodities value chain; improving access to financial services and remittances, combating tax avoidance and evasion and 2) Governance and the rule of law: combating transnational corruption and money laundering; restitution of illicitly acquired assets. Regarding the responsible return of illicit assets, in particular, Switzerland has been able to establish a number of good practices (for example regarding the end use, monitoring, civil society involvement, etc.) that have made it a pioneer in the field. It actively promotes these principles and good practices at global level to emphasize the importance of asset restitution for sustainable development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

iii) Plans or options for future work to enable improvement

Switzerland has made progress in recent years in terms of policy coherence, not least thanks to efforts at all levels of government and in all policy areas to achieve the SDGs. Taking a cross-sectoral approach remains an important objective to make the most of synergies and mitigate trade-offs. In order to further improve policy coherence, Switzerland aims to, for example, further strengthen its mechanisms to monitor progress towards the SDGs and regularly **evaluate the impact of new regulations** in Switzerland and in other countries. The existing digital platform entitled "SDGital2030"⁴³ provides an important first step in this direction. Improved **qualitative and quantitative data** would help to identify gaps and adjust strategies accordingly.

⁴³ <https://www.sdgital2030.ch/>. For SDG 17.14 'Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development': <https://www.sdgital2030.ch/targets/17.14#description>

B.2.3 Locally-led development and the use of country systems

- covering Pillar I.2 (Partner Country Engagement: Achieving lasting sustainable development results) and Pillar II.3 and II.4 (Inclusive Development Partnerships: Sub-national entities in provider countries / Civil society (incl. foundations))

i) Reason for selection

Based on its own federal political system, Switzerland has a long history of supporting local institutions and actors at the **municipal, regional, and national levels**. Unlike other countries, Switzerland's IC has no legal restrictions for engaging in long-term partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders from governments, civil society, the private sector and academia. Thereby, Switzerland can benefit from its extensive on-the-ground presence. However, progress in locally-led development (LLD) has always been **accompanied by challenges**, setbacks and different understandings of the concept. As a result of international commitments, organisational reasons and the debate on effective development cooperation, LLD has now become one of the **central lines of thought** for the future engagement of Switzerland's IC. Given the explicit commitment to LLD as proposed in the draft of the IC Strategy 2025–28 (and the resulting process of setting up a respective monitoring system), this is the right time to reflect on how to move from commitment to coherent mainstreamed implementation. In practice, SDC's funding to local organisations has decreased in recent years in favour of funding for multilateral organisations.

When working directly with partner governments at the national and sub-national levels, SECO uses the **country systems** of its partner countries to increase local ownership. SDC, on the other hand, often works at the sub-national level or in fragile contexts and therefore requires different LLD-modalities. This chapter aims to discuss the advantages and limitations of both LLD and the 'use of country systems' (UCS) in a nuanced way.

ii) Analysis

Switzerland's role in multilateral LLD-reflections

SDC is very active in the **international humanitarian and development policy dialogues on LLD**, for example in its previous role as Co-Chair of the localization workstream of the Grand Bargain (until 2022), of the OCHA's Country Based Pooled Funds Working Group (2022–23) or currently of the OECD-DAC Community of Practice on enabling civil society. In OCHA's Working Group, SDC successfully advocated for equitable overhead sharing with local actors, for systematically including them in national Advisory Boards of the funds (through an amendment of OCHA's guidelines) and their participation at international meetings of the Working Group for the first time. As a result, Switzerland co-initiated a funding facility to ensure that local actors have the funds and the knowledge to participate in those boards and the Working Group. In addition to Switzerland's active participation in steering committees, the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit has seconded in 2023 three LLD specialists to UN agencies to assist them operationalize LLD guidelines. While Switzerland contributes to the international debate and practice on LLD, there is still a long way to go to fully internalise the principles in its own policies, systems and institutional arrangements.

Efforts to strengthen LLD within SDC, SECO and PHRD

While working complementarily, the LLD-agenda has **different implications** for SDC, SECO and PHRD.

SDC has a long tradition of working with and through local partners, in particular in the development field. This has less been the case for humanitarian aid, which is reflected in the total percentage of funding going to local humanitarian actors. Its Fit4Purpose reorganisation offers an opportunity for SDC to move towards a common position on LLD across its development, humanitarian and peace programming. Therefore, members of different divisions have therefore engaged in an internal learning process to develop a coherent positioning across the different instruments of IC. SDC has also involved its Swiss NGO partners as well as local actors and multilateral organisations in this process. Those reflections are taking place in parallel to the DAC Peer Learning Process⁴⁴, with the aim of incorporating

⁴⁴ OECD (2024), *Peer learning on locally led development – DAC member deep dive – Switzerland*

its findings. This Deep Dive exercise (with the active participation of SECO and PHRD) triggered many interesting discussions at headquarters and in the external network.

In 2023, 19,4 % of bilateral funding and of total funding in SDC's development cooperation were directly benefitting local organisations.⁴⁵ In humanitarian aid, these percentages are still considerably lower (3,2 % and 3 % respectively) due, among others, to the nature of armed conflicts, shorter timeframes for emergency aid and pre-existing partnerships with greater financial absorption capacity. Until now, the number of contracts with local partners and the amount of direct funding to local actors were the only 'indicators' on LLD that could be effectively measured. In light of the increased focus on LLD, as proposed in the upcoming IC Strategy and the internal process mentioned above, an external mandate has been awarded to accompany SDC in developing a common definition of LLD and local actors, help it identify key measures it wants to implement to advance LLD as well as how to measure progress.

In Switzerland's view, the use of country systems is more than channelling funds through financial and procurement systems of partner countries. It also involves working with local institutions to improve their capacities. This helps to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the public administration, as well as to foster greater ownership of development programmes by the partner countries. As part of its commitment to development effectiveness and sustainability, **SECO** integrates country systems into its development cooperation programmes with middle-income countries. SECO remains committed to using the partner country's own institutions, procedures and processes for planning, implementing and monitoring development activities, taking into account fiduciary risks and accountability. SECO's approach to using country systems is aimed at promoting local ownership, enhancing institutional capacities, and ensuring that development interventions are sustainable and closely aligned with the priorities of partner countries. In this context, SECO developed an internal guidance paper on locally-led development to further promote a common approach to LLD in economic development cooperation.

When working in mediation and negotiation, **PHRD** is as a matter of fact depending on and working with local actors. Even projects that often serve as entry points for the resolution of longer-term problems mostly enable local actors to themselves play a role in conflict resolution.

Those internal processes can help **place LLD higher on the political agenda**, systematizing current bottom-up approaches, connecting and mounting them up to more fundamental system change.

Balancing different objectives

On the one hand, Switzerland's has significantly strengthened its commitment to LLD in recent years. On the other hand, there are also countervailing factors that challenge its effective implementation into practice. For example, SDC's desire to increase its presence in fragile and conflict-affected contexts creates obstacles for LLD. Engagement in **volatile environments** tends to favour funding through multilateral channels. They are seen as having the institutional capacity and structures to ensure continued implementation in rapidly changing situations. It is administratively easier, considered as less risky and quicker for donors to use multilateral channels to spend extensive funds. Smaller local organisations are seen (sometimes unjustly) as less able to comply with donor regulations and they have limited financial absorption capacity. Faced with similar challenges, different teams in different countries have also used existing SDC funding and risk assessment modalities differently. This also points to two findings of the OECD-DAC Deep Dive: First that SDC does not yet have a coherent joint understanding of LLD and second that further advancing LLD also implies a shift of mindsets.

Second, the barriers to bidding are high for small and medium-sized organisations are high, as some of which do not yet have sophisticated monitoring systems in place. This is often a prerequisite for successfully applying for larger amounts of funding. Resource-intensive **institutional capacity building** would be needed. In addition, the direct contracting of local partners is labour-intensive for an organisation like SDC and its intermediary partners, as they

⁴⁵ 'Local organisations' refers to all local contract partners from civil society, government, academia and the private sector in a partner country.

often have a lower absorption capacity than international partners and the number of contracts together with the administrative workload would increase rapidly.

The current strong demand for **'Swissness'** in Switzerland's IC can be in line with LLD when coherently emphasizing Swiss values such as the active democratic participation of the population, integration of minority groups and local self-determination. Ultimately, it is also more effective and sustainable when solutions are developed at local level by the people concerned who know the context and the challenges best. Swiss expertise will remain relevant to accompany this process, to provide specific know-how and to contribute to finding solutions to these challenges. Additional efforts are needed to assess and communicate the amount of skills, time and money required to strengthen local capacities, agency and leadership.

iii) Plans or options for future work to enable improvement

While Switzerland already plays a leading role in multilateral discussions on LLD, it could explore how to better involve local actors in the design of its bilateral programming. This would not only contribute to the goal of **alignment with local priorities**, but also to the more systematic use of **local capacities and knowledge**. Consistent guidelines and a specific policy to do this strategically have not yet been developed and adopted. Within the SDC the internal process mentioned above provides an opportunity to develop more concrete guidance. The will to reach a common understanding within SDC, SECO and PHRD and Swiss civil society is evident. The fact that LLD has been proposed as an **implementation modality to be strengthened** in the upcoming IC Strategy 2025–28 gives the topic the necessary attention. Insights of internal and external learning processes will hopefully stimulate the next phase of concretization.

Section C

Complementary Information and Previous Peer Review Recommendations

| Recommendation | Implemented (Fully/ Partially/ Not) | Action taken – Update from the peer review 2019 (If no action, explain why) | Impact |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <p>1. To pursue its efforts towards coherent policies for sustainable development, Switzerland should further analyze the impact of its domestic policies on developing countries and identify possible inconsistencies. It should seek to disseminate and debate such analysis, both in the government and broader Swiss society.</p> | <p>Partially</p> | <p>Appointment of two Delegates of the Federal Council for the 2030 Agenda and establishment of the 2030 Agenda Steering Committee in 2019. The 2030 Agenda Steering Committee brings together senior management-level representatives of the most relevant government offices. Its primary objective is to coherently manage and coordinate efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.</p> <p>In 2021, the Federal Council adopted Switzerland's 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) which outlines the priorities it intends to set to implement the 2030 Agenda. It sets out guidelines for the Federal Council's sustainability policy, including for increasing policy coherence for sustainable development. The strategy is an overarching document, which is being implemented in all policy sectors. Additionally, the National Action Plan 2024–27 includes additional, interdepartmental measures to advance the implementation of transboundary goals within the priority fields. Information on the implementation of the Action Plan can be found in the interim report on the implementation of the SDS 2030 and the Country Report of Switzerland.</p> <p>All documents can be found on the Webpage '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'</p> <p>Coherence is one of the key principles of Switzerland's international cooperation. It aims to mitigate negative effects and accelerate sustainable transformations, ensuring that the combined positive impact of individual policies exceeds the sum of their effects. At SDC, the thematic divisions work on issues of sectoral policy coherence in their field (economy, migration, health, climate, etc.).</p> <p>For example, Switzerland ensures policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD) in specific thematic areas relevant for international cooperation, like for instance in:</p> <p><u>Migration</u>: SDC and SECO are very active in the Structure for International Cooperation on Migration (ICM). Regular meetings of the ICM at different levels take place (focus is however mainly on information sharing and coordination; less on coherence) and the different working groups function well (regular exchanges). There is a coordinated engagement in the context of the Global refugee Forum (GRF). The implementation of the</p> | <p>Better awareness of PCSD within the federal administration and improved coherence</p> |

IC Strategy 2021–24 and the elaboration of the IC Strategy 2025–28 were regularly discussed at the level of the ICM Plenum (State Secretariats level) to address potential differences and ensure political support. The review of the MoU of the ICM Structure is currently under way. The objective is to have a leaner structure starting in 2025. ICM structure goes beyond ODA and development cooperation.

Environment/climate: The [PLAFICO](#) coordination platform is in place since 2011 and was evaluated in 2014. PLAFICO has a focus on climate finance and has clear working modalities. Two responsible persons within each office (SDC, SECO, FOEN) are involved in the Platform. Colleagues from the Federal Finance Office and the SIF also participate in the sessions, experts and other representatives of offices may be invited depending on the topic under discussion. PLAFICO experts meet four times and the directors two times to discuss the themes defined at the beginning of the year. In recent years, this process has made it possible to define common Swiss positions (e.g., on fossil fuel investments by multilateral development banks, on the mobilisation of the private sector, on negotiating mandates at the COP, definition of Switzerland's contribution ('fair share') to the international climate finance target).

Human Rights: [FDFA's Human Rights Guidelines 2021–24](#) set out clear principles and concrete fields of action to strengthen Switzerland's coherence and effectiveness in promoting human rights abroad.

Commodity trading sector: responsibilities in terms of, among other things, human rights and environmental protection in commodity-exporting countries, in tackling corruption, and in connection with the phenomenon of the 'resource curse' in developing countries are taken into account. An interdepartmental platform on commodities that allows to discuss those issues between the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), the Federal Department of Finance (FDF) and the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER) was established.

SECO drafted a comprehensive orientation paper on PCSD that includes strategic recommendations as operational examples. The paper discusses four action areas:

- i) raising awareness for PCSD and putting it into practice;
- ii) analyzing SECO-WE's future positioning on biodiversity;
- iii) broadening the communication about SECO-WE's PCSD activities, and
- iv) engaging in policy debates within the OECD. The orientation paper also shows PMs how to manage conflicting objectives and enables them to draw conclusions for

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| | | <p>their own projects and programs. Topics include, among others, the commodities sector, illicit financial flows, climate, or migration.</p> <p><i>See also Section B2.2 for more information on PCSD, especially related to economy and trade</i></p> | |
| <p>2. To support transformative change in gender equality and governance, Switzerland should increase the number of programmes explicitly targeting structural changes in these areas.</p> | <p>Fully</p> | <p>Participation rights and gender equality in the IC Strategy 2025–28: Switzerland’s International Cooperation is committed to the political, economic and social participation of every individual, especially the most vulnerable. It encourages the participation of young people. Particular attention is paid to women’s equal participation in all spheres of political, economic and social life. The IC promotes the inclusion of women in peace talks. It places particular emphasis on the fight against gender-based violence, including through a psychosocial approach. The IC fights against discrimination and exclusionary factors and supports gender equality, in particular for access to resources, public services and decision-making processes. In reference to the OECD Peer review (2019) and Mid-term review (2022), it aims to increase the number of its programmes targeting structural change in this area.</p> <p>Measures taken regarding the number of projects with main focus on governance and transversal governance</p> <p>Main reasons for increase of marker ‘Principal’: In 2020, SDC has issued its updated overall Governance Guidance. This has helped a lot to prioritise, guide and clarify Governance issues in the whole organisation. Governance issues gaining in importance worldwide, including in authoritarian/fragile contexts. SDC made a dedicated learning journey, in 2022–23 on these contexts, providing advice based on capitalised experience (shared also within the OECD-DAC’s network GOVNET). Moreover, an increasing number of projects come on digitalization & governance, mainly focused on the digitalization of public services. SDC produced in 2021 a series of guiding documents on the subject. An important south-south study tour on decentralization with a main focus on digitalization of public services took place in 2023 between four Swiss representations and related governmental delegations (Cambodia, Laos, Tajikistan and Mongolia) in Mongolia on the initiative of the Swiss representation in Cambodia. This has not only spread the potential for replication/sharing of knowledge, but has directly informed programmes just starting in Cambodia and Laos, or in the making in Tajikistan. Finally, there is a slight increase in the number of parliamentary support projects, with a bigger involvement of the Swiss Parliamentary Services.</p> | <p>Monitoring data as per 31.12.2023: from 13.6% to 17% of SDC’s projects marked as ‘Principal Governance’ (target 2024: 20%), and from 53% to 71% of projects marked as ‘Significant Governance’ (target 2024: 75%).</p> |

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| | Partially | <p>Main reasons for increase of marker 'Significant': worldwide tendency of democracy backsliding and rise of authoritarian regimes: this leads the external network to work less directly on some governance issues (mainly those more directly related to the perception of democracy) towards more transversality (latest example beginning in 2024: new Cooperation Programme Tunisia). Transversal Governance (TG) is rising in interest: a bigger number of requests received, esp. for dedicated training (latest examples: training of Swiss Humanitarian Aid from the expert pool in 11.2023 and of Embassy in Myanmar in 05.2024). Efforts have been made in 2021 to summarise TG as well as the issue of Policy Dialogue with 2-pager notes. The guide how to integrate governance in the water sector has been completed in 2023 with a dedicated publication on applying political economy in the water sector. See those here. Moreover, other dedicated trainings regularly took place, esp. on the tool of Political Economy Analysis, authoritarian contexts and policy dialogue (links above). Digitalisation as an approach gains on interest, esp. its newest development with the use of artificial intelligence in development/governance. A dedicated workstream has been launched in 2024, another one on disinformation.</p> <p>Almost all of SECO's projects contribute to reinforcing governance in partner countries, since we work on the framework conditions (e.g., PFM, business-friendly environment).</p> <p>Measures taken regarding the number of projects with main focus on gender and transversal gender</p> <p>Advisory services: Gender action plans: Most country offices have developed and implement gender action plans, at country and/or regional level to foster the integration of the gender perspective in programming based on Gender policies, in the office and with partners. SDC's gender unit has facilitated peer exchange and access to respective examples. The aim is to enable more explicit and systematic monitoring and steering in geographic sections. Promotion of gender principal programmes: In 2020, the Gender Unit made a dedicated outreach to all geographic divisions to promote increasing investments for gender principal programmes. It led to improvements but they are uneven. An important, but not the only decisive explanation is the very low percentage in humanitarian aid. This was discussed in the Directorate, and joint dialogue with the management of country offices is planned. Further, the gender unit specifically approaches offices where it still sees a need for action. Supporting Strategic Partners that push for structural and transformative change: The gender unit supports several partner organisations that promote structural change in different gender-related fields. During 2024, it is repackaging the portfolio while considerably increasing the financial contribution. This is an important complementary</p> | <p>According to monitoring data improvements but they are uneven and in 2023, SDC's institutional target (8%) has not yet been achieved, stagnating around 4%.</p> |
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| | | <p>lever to its work for effectively reducing the gender gap – at country up to the global policy level. Institutional policy dialogue with various multilateral organisations that receive SDC core funding is also used as a means to advocate for, and leverage gender transformative work.</p> <p>Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH): During the past years, the FDFA has taken bold measures to address SEAH. It developed a comprehensive resource package for its staff and offers guidance and collaboration to a gradually increasing number of country offices. It has also engaged in dialogue with partner organisations. An innovative theatre training module has been developed, tested and rolled out within and beyond the FDFA, e.g., at different UN organisations in New York, Geneva, Rome etc. For the SDC, PSEAH is a compliance issue but just as important a component of safe programming, with the potential to address structural power and gender inequalities.</p> <p>Gender equality has been a cross-cutting theme in Switzerland’s Strategy on International Cooperation since 2013 and is defined as a cross-cutting theme in SECO’s storyline 2021–24. In 2020, SECO drafted a comprehensive orientation paper on gender equality, identifying existing constraints and opportunities at the strategic, institutional and operational level to promote gender equality in SECO activities and proposing a number of recommendations for improvement. SECO maintains gender equality as a cross-cutting theme in its new strategy (2021–24).</p> <p>SECO introduced a gender equality guidance and checklist that project managers have to fill in for each project. Since 2020, WE’s gender focal point checks the checklists (to be filled in early in the design of the project and finalized at the approval of the project by management) and engages in a dialogue with the project managers. The use of the gender marker according to the OECD guideline is also checked for each project. SECO has worked to better include the gender cross-cutting theme in its cooperation programmes for 2021–24, in close collaboration with the external network in its priority countries.</p> | |
| <p>3. In its upcoming strategy for CSOs, SDC should clarify the rationale behind its partnerships with local, Swiss and international CSOs, and adjust funding instruments to reflect its strategic objectives.</p> | <p>Fully</p> | <p>The answer to the Postulate (20.4389 Schneider-Schneiter) published on 02.12.2020, investigated the added value of mandates and contributions to Swiss NGOs, French and German.</p> <p>In 2021–22, a learning journey with Swiss NGO’s receiving programme contributions on CSO’s strengthening took place. In 2023, SDC’s Guidance for engagement with the Swiss NGO’s (2019) has been updated for the years 2024–28. All public documents can be found here.</p> | <p>Better consideration of CSO’s provides added value over other partners when it comes to implementing the</p> |

| | | <p>Partnerships and modalities with NGO's vary depending on the context. Civil society has become more important over the years, especially in view of the backward trend of democratization. The collaboration with Swiss NGO's pursues strategic goals such as PSEAH, LLD or nexus. Strategic cooperation is also based on the regular dialogue between the SDC Directorate and Swiss NGO's. Joint duty trips took place and strategic exchange with the external network is strengthened.</p> <p>Cooperation on core contributions (previously called program contributions) also enables rapid absorption of additional funds for the geographical departments (implementation of the Swiss Federal Audit Office recommendation).</p> <div data-bbox="846 539 1281 922" data-label="Figure"> <table border="1"> <caption>Engagements contractuels, crédits globaux et de transfert donnés pour les années 2017-2020</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Catégorie</th> <th>Montant (CHF Mio)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mandats*</td> <td>609</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contributions de programmes</td> <td>483</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contributions de base</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration avec des ONG suisses (contributions ciblées)</td> <td>118</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* Les fonds fiduciaires sont inclus dans les valeurs contractuelles des mandats.</p> </div> <p><u>Local partners</u> have been strengthened: A learning journey on LLD was organised, which resulted in a corresponding conference. LLD is now being systematised within the SDC with a view to implementing the IC Strategy 2025–28. Direct core funding from Swiss NGOs to local actors is also possible via core contributions. Switzerland has taken over the co-chair of the OECD DAC COP enabling civil society and actively supported three toolkits to strengthen civil society (funding civil society, shifting powers, strengthening civic space). Switzerland is assuming an active role in the ongoing discussions on the harmonization of due diligence processes among OECD DAC donors.</p> <p><i>See also Section B2.3 for more information on LLD</i></p> | Catégorie | Montant (CHF Mio) | Mandats* | 609 | Contributions de programmes | 483 | Contributions de base | 16 | Collaboration avec des ONG suisses (contributions ciblées) | 118 | <p>2030 Agenda and the Strategy on Switzerland's International Cooperation</p> |
|---|-------------------|---|--|-------------------|----------|-----|-----------------------------|-----|-----------------------|----|--|-----|--|
| Catégorie | Montant (CHF Mio) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mandats* | 609 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Contributions de programmes | 483 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Contributions de base | 16 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Collaboration avec des ONG suisses (contributions ciblées) | 118 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>4. The upcoming SDC strategy for engaging with the private sector should spell out its rationale for</p> | <p>Fully</p> | <p>Competences and resources to support private sector engagement (PSE) at SDC have been strengthened: the Competence Centre for Engagement with the Private Sector (CEP) has been integrated in the newly established Economy and Education (E+E) section in the</p> | <p>Sustained increase of SDC engagement with</p> | | | | | | | | | | |

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| <p>such partnerships, building on its own experience and learning from State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The strategy should clarify the complementarity and collaboration between SDC and SECO.</p> | | <p>Thematic Cooperation Division and a new staff profile has been hired, with a specific background to strengthen the management of financial-market oriented PSE's. In addition, the transformation of the profile of two FTE's of the Section Economy and Education towards PSE profiles is planned. Moreover, Regional Thematic Advisors with focus on PSE's have been deployed in key strategic locations for SDC's PSE work. The CEP continues to provide internal trainings PSE for SDC staff and developed a more modular approach to answer the operational units' needs. It also supports the new thematic regional advisors and the country offices in conducting regional and ad hoc workshops.</p> <p>A General Guidance on the Private Sector in the context of the International Cooperation Strategy 2021–24 was published in 2021, the CEP has developed as well a Handbook and the SECO an approach document. Thematically, particular attention is given to promote innovative financing tools such as impact-linked finance (ILF) and support Social and Impact Enterprises. The scaling up strategy is an integral part of the E+E section's programmatic framework 2025–28 which is currently being developed.</p> <p>Those documents, as well as an internal document called VADEMECUM between SDC and SECO have laid the foundation for a clarification of roles and collaboration mechanisms between the entities concerned.</p> <p>Finally, an independent external evaluation as well as an internal audit on SDC's PSE strategy and implementation were carried out in 2023. It highlighted the progress SDC has made and encouraged a continuation and sharpening of the current approaches. The E+E Section is closely monitoring the follow up to these processes and the main recommendations will be integrated in the new Programmatic Framework of the E+E section (2025–28).</p> <p>An independent evaluation on the engagement of SECO's economic cooperation division with the private sector during 2013–2021 was published in 2022.</p> <p><i>See also Section B1.2. for more information on the collaboration SECO/SDC on PSE</i></p> | <p>the private sector. Closer cooperation with SECO and discussion of complementarities between SECO and SDC notably in the context of the SDG Impact Finance Initiative.</p> |
| <p>5. Switzerland should use country systems more as appropriate and increase the share of ODA on budget.</p> | <p>Partially</p> | <p>SDC applies a differentiated approach towards budget support and has a broad understanding of the use of country systems (multiple levels of governance). In Switzerland's view, the use of country systems is more than channelling funds through the financial and procurement of partner countries. It also involves working with local institutions to improve their capacities. This helps to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the public administration, as well as to foster greater ownership of development programmes by the partner countries. As part of its commitment to aid</p> | <p>n/a</p> |

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| | | effectiveness and sustainability, SECO integrates country systems into its development cooperation programmes. SECO remains committed to using the partner country's own institutions, procedures and processes for planning, implementing and monitoring development activities, taking into account fiduciary risks and accountability. SECO's approach to using country systems is aimed at promoting local ownership, enhancing institutional capacities, and ensuring that development interventions are sustainable and closely aligned with the priorities of partner countries. | |
| 6. SDC should continue to streamline its processes to rebalance results-based management towards supporting decision making. | Partially | In the framework of F4P, SDC released Revised guidelines for Cooperation Programmes with clear distinction between the RBM purposes steering/decision making, accountability/communication and streamlining of processes. SDC introduced a digitalised system of results data management (RDM) and revised the guidelines for project identification (Entry proposals) and project approval (Credit Proposal) as well as the projects approval processes through the Operation Committee (OpCom) (including increased decentralization of financial competencies). <i>See also Section B2.1 for more information on RBM</i> | Decision making process is better informed and closer to operations |
| 7. Switzerland should further strengthen its efforts to collect disaggregated data to assess whether its programme effectively reaches the furthest behind. | Partially | At SDC quality of data has improved with the launch and institutionalization of the RDM software. Disaggregation of gender data is now systematically embedded in SDC's monitoring. The results marker assesses the integration of gender results in the annual reports (contribution to Goal 9 of the IC Strategy 2021–24). Distinction is done between PRINCIPLE / SIGNIFICANT according to DAC. Less progress has been made in the LNOB disaggregation. Like gender, LNOB is to be systematically integrated at both program and project level and is integrated into the RDM tool: at the moment, the groups listed in the LNOB Guidance can be checked. The challenge lies in the fact that the LNOB target groups vary greatly from programme to programme and from project to project. It is therefore difficult to draw conclusions across the SDC on a specific LNOB target group. Rather, the aggregated reporting can only speak of the 'number of women/men in an LNOB target group' that was reached. | |
| 8. The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) should assess the profiles and competencies it will need to deliver an effective aid program in the medium term according to its | Partially | <u>Reorganisation process at SDC:</u> The reorganisation process of SDC called 'Fit for Purpose' (F4P) was implemented in September 2022. The aim was to become more agile and flexible and adapt the structures to the requirements of modern, contemporary international cooperation. The decisions focused on the delegation of more responsibilities to the external network, the creation of a multilateral, a thematic and three geographical divisions, bringing together | |

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| <p>core competencies, it should adjust human resource policies accordingly, including for staff posted in fragile contexts.</p> | <p>both humanitarian and development cooperation expertise (nexus). In addition, a new division 'Foundation & Quality' and a new humanitarian competence center were established.</p> <p>In June 2024, the final F4P adjustments were announced for implementation as for 1st of August 2024, including slightly revises organisational chart.</p> <p><u>Fragile contexts:</u></p> <p>As part of the process of accompanying the implementation of the 2017-21 IC Strategy, SDC management introduced the term 'fit for fragility' (F4F) and approved a list of twelve measures and twenty specific action points to increase institutional capacity to work in fragile contexts. Most of these were completed by the end of 2020, there are however some points to be resolved, mainly in the field of human resources management.</p> <p>As a matter of fact, identifying trained, experienced and motivated staff for posting in the most fragile contexts remains a challenge for the SDC. Despite efforts in capacity-building and training, the annual rotation instrument does not always identify the management staff required for the most difficult positions.</p> <p>In order to adjust HR policies, a Working Group was formed in 2023 (participation of the Directorate for Resources (DR) and SDC) in order to propose HR solutions for fragile contexts. The Working Group discussed existing pilot solutions (i.e., job/post-sharing, tandem etc.) but no formal decisions were taken. At the moment, case by case creative solutions can be tested but there is no systematic implementation.</p> <p>The federal administration human resources rules and regulations are defined by the Federal Office of Personnel which is part of the Federal Department of Finances. The Human resources for the International Cooperation field are managed by the DR of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. This means that the SDC as an administrative unit depends on the decisions of the human resources unit of the entire department and cannot independently institutionalize pilot solutions. This is a challenge when dealing with fragile contexts. It seems also that the FDFA has limited room for manoeuvre on financial and career development incentives for specific cases like posting in fragile contexts.</p> <p><u>Regarding the recruitment of HR:</u></p> <p>There is the concours 1 'competition level 1' process for external candidates under 30 years old (this programme involves training at HQ and an internship of one year before final recruitment). It has been noted in recent years that there are more young people who leave the career at the end of the "competition level 1" process than before. For the younger generation the following factors seem to play an increasingly important role in deciding against a transferable career path: 1) The number of contexts in which it is possible to be</p> | |
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| | | <p>posted with a family is increasingly limited. 2) The career of the life partner of the employees is becoming more important. 3) The younger generation seems less inclined to work at 100%, which is mandatory abroad.</p> <p>Since 2022, the DR has opened the concours 2 / 'competition level 2' (gateway for people over 30 who have work experience). Those people are often more experienced also in fragile contexts. In 2023, 8 people were hired via the 'competition level 2' process.</p> <p>In addition, there is also a specific recruitment process concerning the Career 'Consular Affairs, Management and Finance'. Part of these employees will work directly with IC programmes and projects.</p> | |
| <p>9. Switzerland should review its continued use of in-kind humanitarian aid and assess whether this tool a) represents the most effective use of the humanitarian aid budget; b) supports Switzerland's move to fulfill its international commitments, including those contained in the Grand Bargain; c) respects the strong Swiss focus on humanitarian principles.</p> | Fully | <p>In 2022, Switzerland's humanitarian aid senior management adopted a new in which it also refers to the concept for in-kind humanitarian aid for 2020–24.</p> <p>Deliveries of relief items are one of the emergency aid instruments used by SDC. As experience has shown, the need for relief supplies is still relevant when it comes to quickly supporting the affected population in an acute crisis situation with the most important basic needs. The use of in-kind humanitarian aid is relatively small and always complementary to other implementation options, such as cash transfer or local procurement, whereby the factors of time (availability), quality and price must always be weighed against each other in addition to the local market situation.</p> <p>Applied where it makes sense from an operational perspective, this type of aid has positive side effects that have the potential to act as door openers: It gives Switzerland's humanitarian aid a visible profile and therefore enjoys great support in the Swiss Parliament. Furthermore, it strengthens the cooperation with the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS). In humanitarian emergencies (e.g. in the COVID-19 pandemic or in Ukraine), the DDPS can be authorised to contribute to SDC's in-kind humanitarian aid by providing relief material such as camp beds or medicine or by offering transport logistics for SHA staff.</p> | |
| <p>10. Switzerland should live up to its commitment to providing 0.5% of its GNI as ODA. It should progressively seek to increase ODA further, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda.</p> | Partially | <p>The Federal Administration has limited power over Switzerland's ODA rate. Every four years, the Swiss Parliament adopts an IC Strategy, including commitment credits that sets the financial envelop for international cooperation. In September 2020, the Swiss Parliament approved the IC Strategy 2021–24 with a stable financial envelop compared to 2017–20. The ODA/GNI average rate for 2021–24 was initially estimated at 0,46% (0,41% excluding in-donor refugee costs), same rates as for the period 2017–2020.</p> <p>The actual estimations for 2021–24 foresee an average of 0,53% for total ODA/GNI and confirm the rate of 0,41% excluding in-donor refugee costs. The very high in-donor refugee</p> | |

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| | | <p>costs in 2022–23 (and estimation 2024), mainly but not exclusively linked to the refugees from Ukraine, explain the difference between the initial estimations and the current ones. The stability of the projection of the coefficient excluding in-donor refugee costs, despite progression of the GNI, relates to the additional financial means allocated to Switzerland’s IC by Parliament for the response to various crises, notably the COVID-19 pandemic (from 2020 onwards), the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan (2021 onwards), the war in Ukraine (from 2022 onwards) or the crisis in the Middle East (from 2023 onwards). In 2023, the ODA/GNI coefficient was at 0,6% and at 0,43% excluding in-donor refugee costs. Reference to the 0.5% commitment was made in the introductory chapter of the IC Strategy 2021–24.</p> | |
| <p>11.The FDFA should develop, resource and implement communications and global awareness-raising strategies for its development programme. It should enable SDC to communicate proactively to strengthen political and public support.</p> | <p>Partially</p> | <p>The SDC communication strategy with annual planning of key topics is in place (<i>internal communication concept attached as separate document</i>). At SDC, the reorganisation of communication with a matrix structure has been done to strengthen external and internal communication.</p> <p>Increased coordination with the FDFA Communication Unit and much more direct cooperation according to the Communication Officers principle with Liaison Officer at KOMM-EDA. The SDC website will be relaunched to be more user-oriented (go-live in spring 2025). Since the last Peer Review, the presence on social media has been built from scratch in a comprehensive way. The IC Forum, which has been held annually as a hybrid event since 2022, brings together several thousand participants from governments, civil society, academia and the private sector to discuss global challenges, such as climate change (2022), education (2023) or peace (2024). Depending on the subject, SDC organises the IC Forum together with SECO and/or PHRD.</p> <p>The FDFA is in close and regular contact with SDC in order to reach the best results in each communication project. The FDFA Communication Unit went through a reorganisation process early 2020 to be more modern, flexible and proactive.</p> <p>In order to strengthen knowledge, awareness and commitment regarding international cooperation among its target groups, SECO revised its website carefully in 2020. All topic and country pages were completely redesigned.</p> <p>To promote public support, SECO expanded its storytelling application. 8 multimedia stories were published in 2021, explaining SECO’s strategy, aims and activities to a broader public. In March 2022, SECO published a further storytelling application, representing SECO’s commitment in promoting the reduction of greenhouse gases, the adaptation to climate change and the sustainable management of resources. SECO has significantly enlarged its image and video database. It now comprises several hundred emotionally strong impressions from projects and programs in priority countries in SECO</p> | <p>Increased social media presence for younger audiences i.e., Instagram +8k followers (SECO coop +1k); Twitter (X) +12k followers. LinkedIn with +50k followers</p> |

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| | | <p>partner countries. SECO has increased its commitment to social media, with already more than 22,000 users currently following the SECO LinkedIn channel. SECO also considers launching an Instagram channel.</p> <p>PHRD established its own communication strategy. Over the recent years progress have been made in the field of presence in the social media through increased social media presence for younger audiences is developing particularly well.</p> | |
| 12. Switzerland should establish safeguards to ensure the development program remains focused on long-term investments towards poverty reduction and sustainable development in partner countries. | Fully | <p>The Federal Constitution states that poverty reduction and sustainable development are the goals of international cooperation. The IC Strategy 2021–24 and the upcoming IC Strategy 2025–28 both reiterate this commitment. The four development objectives mention it in its human (objective 1), economic (objective 2) and ecological (objective 3) dimension. Projects related to climate change and migration need to have poverty reduction and/or sustainable development as their main objectives. With respect to climate change, it is explicitly mentioned in the IC Strategy 2021–24 and 2025–28 that IC contributes to international climate financing but within the limits of its mandate. Swiss international cooperation works on a short-, medium- and long-term level in the different specific areas.</p> <p>For example, humanitarian aid in disaster situations makes a direct contribution to combating hunger with food aid. In accordance with the principles of agroecology, IC also strengthens the medium and long-term resilience of farming families and vulnerable population groups. From production to consumption, it promotes access to sufficient, nutritious, healthy and affordable food. It also addresses the structural causes of malnutrition and supports the long-term transformation towards equitable, inclusive, shock-resilient and sustainable food systems, which benefits people and the environment. Tension regarding the allocation of IC funds for financing global public goods nevertheless exist.</p> <p><i>See section A on policy debates about IC compared to other federal budget items</i></p> | Increased focus on poverty reduction |
| 13. Switzerland should determine its comparative advantage in the next Dispatch to support further concentration of the programmes, | Fully | <p>The reduction in the number of priority countries from 52 to 41 (SDC/SECO) took place since 2019: SECO remains active in 13 priority countries. SDC's bilateral development cooperation reduced its presence from 46 to 35 priority countries.⁴⁶ SDC and SECO have 7 priority countries in common. The IC Strategies 2021–24 and 2025–28 set out three criteria for Switzerland's IC engagement: 1) the needs of the population in developing</p> | Increased geographic concentration of activities. |

⁴⁶ Exits from 2019 to 2024 of SDC's bilateral development cooperation from Honduras, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Cuba, Haiti, Mongolia, Malawi, Lesotho, Eswatini, Azerbaijan and Pakistan.

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| <p>thereby increasing its efficiency and impact.</p> | | <p>countries; 2) Switzerland's long-term interests; 3) the value added of Switzerland's IC compared to other countries. The value added of Switzerland is thus systematically assessed in the cooperation programmes.</p> <p>SECO has already a rather narrow focus as it is responsible for Switzerland's economic development cooperation. It has further strengthened its thematic priorities by focusing on its core competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote reliable economic framework conditions; • support innovative private sector initiatives <p>SECO drafted an orientation paper on the aspect of 'Swissness' in its programmes, including ways to better address and support Switzerland's comparative advantage.</p> | |
| <p>14. As Switzerland further develops its regional approach, it should spell out the rationale for engaging regionally and explain how it will operationalise such an approach so that it is more than a sum of country-level engagements.</p> | <p>Not (no relevance anymore)</p> | <p>As set out in the IC Strategy 2021–24, there are no regional programmes anymore, only priority countries for both SDC and SECO. Nevertheless (as mentioned in the IC Strategy 2025–28) in the context of a fragmented global policy, the dynamics of regional cooperation are strengthened. Swiss IC sometimes favours a regional and thematic programmatic approach. This is the case in some conflict-affected priority countries (e.g., Syria, Somalia), where the consequences of these crises affect neighbouring countries, but also when programmes deal with regional or cross-border challenges such as in the Mekong region, the South Caucasus or Central Asia. On these issues, IC is strengthening its collaboration with regional organisations (such as ASEAN) and is managing specific aspects of its programmes (especially related to DRR) from regional hubs in Lima and Bangkok in order to make effective use of the resources at its disposal and to be able to respond quickly.</p> | <p>n/a</p> |

Section D

Contact Information

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (part of FDFA)

Patricia Danzi

Director General

patricia.danzi@eda.admin.ch

Jean-Luc Bernasconi

Head Foundations and Quality Division

jean-luc.bernasconi@eda.admin.ch

Odile Robert

Head Section Analysis and Research

odile.robert@eda.admin.ch

Georgette Bruchez Brugger

Coordinator Peer Review, Section Analysis and Research

georgette.bruchez@eda.admin.ch

Pascale Kälin

Collaborator Peer Review, Section Analysis and Research

pascale.kaelin@eda.admin.ch

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (part of EAER)

Dominique Paravicini

Ambassador

Head of the Economic Cooperation and Development Division

dominique.paravicini@seco.admin.ch

Lukas Schneller

Head of the Policy and Services Unit

lukas.schneller@seco.admin.ch

Philipp Orga

Policy Advisor at the Policy and Services Unit

philipp.orga@seco.admin.ch

Peace and Human Rights Division (part of State Secretariat FDFA)

Tim Enderlin

Ambassador

Head of the Peace and Human Rights Division

tim.enderlin@eda.admin.ch

Stefanie Küng

Chief of Staff

Peace and Human Rights Division

stefanie.kueng@eda.admin.ch

Irene Leibundgut Schneeberger

Controlling

Peace and Human Rights Division

iren.leibundgut-schneeberger@eda.admin.ch

Annexes

Annex 1: Policy, Strategy, Reports and Documents

Foreign Policy and Foreign Economic Policy Strategies and Reports

- Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2024–27:
https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/eda/en/documents/publications/SchweizerischeAussenpolitik/aussenpolitische-strategie-2024-27_EN.pdf
- Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2020–23:
https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/eda/en/documents/publications/SchweizerischeAussenpolitik/Aussenpolitische-Strategie-2020-23_EN.pdf
- Switzerland's Foreign Policy Report 2023 (in French)⁴⁷:
<https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/fga/2024/413/fr>
- Switzerland's Foreign Economic Policy Strategy:
https://www.seco.admin.ch/dam/seco/en/dokumente/Aussenwirtschaft/Aussenwirtschaftsstrategie/bericht_aws.pdf.download.pdf/bericht_aws.pdf
- Foreign Economic Policy Report 2023⁴⁸:
https://www.seco.admin.ch/dam/seco/en/dokumente/Publikationen_Dienstleistungen/Publikationen_Formulare/Aussenwirtschaft/berichte_aussenwirtschaftspolitik/awb_2023.pdf.download.pdf/awb_2023_en.pdf

International Cooperation Strategies, Accountability and Annual Reports

- Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2025–28 (to be approved by Parliament; in French):
<https://www.news.admin.ch/news/message/attachments/88095.pdf>
- Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021–24:
https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/deza/en/documents/publikationen/Diverses/Broschuere_Strategie_IZA_Web_EN.pdf
- Accountability Report on Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021–24:
https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/deza/en/documents/publikationen/rechenschaftsberichte/20240522-rechenschaftsbericht-iza-2021-24_EN.pdf
- Accountability Report on Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2017–20:
<https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/fdfa/fdfa/publikationen/alle-publikationen.html/content/publikationen/en/deza/rechenschaftsberichte/Schlussbericht-Umsetzung-Botschaft-2017-2020>
- Annual Report on Switzerland's International Cooperation 2023⁴⁹:
<https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/results-impact/berichte/jahresberichte-iza.html>

⁴⁷ All annual Foreign Policy Reports since 2018 can be found here: <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/fdfa/foreign-policy/implementing-foreign-policy/aussenpolitische-berichte.html>

⁴⁸ All annual Foreign Economic Policy Reports since 2004 can be found here: https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/en/home/Publikationen_Dienstleistungen/Publikationen_und_Formulare/Aussenwirtschafts/Berichte_zur_Aussenwirtschaftspolitik.html

⁴⁹ All Annual Reports since 2000 can be found here: <https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/results-impact/berichte/jahresberichte-iza.html>

Documents related to country visits

Regional documents:

- FDFA's Sub-Saharan Africa Strategy 2021–2024:
https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/eda/en/documents/publications/SchweizerischeAussenpolitik/20210205-strategie-subsahara-afrika_EN.pdf

Zimbabwe:

- Swiss Cooperation Programme Zimbabwe and Zambia 2023–2026:
<https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/deza/en/documents/laender/swiss-cooperation-programme-zimbabwe-and-zambia-2023-2026.pdf>

South Africa:

- SECO Cooperation Programme South Africa 2021–2024:
https://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch/dam/secocoop/de/dokumente/dokumentation/laenderstrategien/Suedafrika_Koopprogr_Booklet.pdf.download.pdf/SECO%20Cooperation%20Programme%20South%20Africa%202021%20%E2%80%93%202024%20.pdf

Other requested documentation

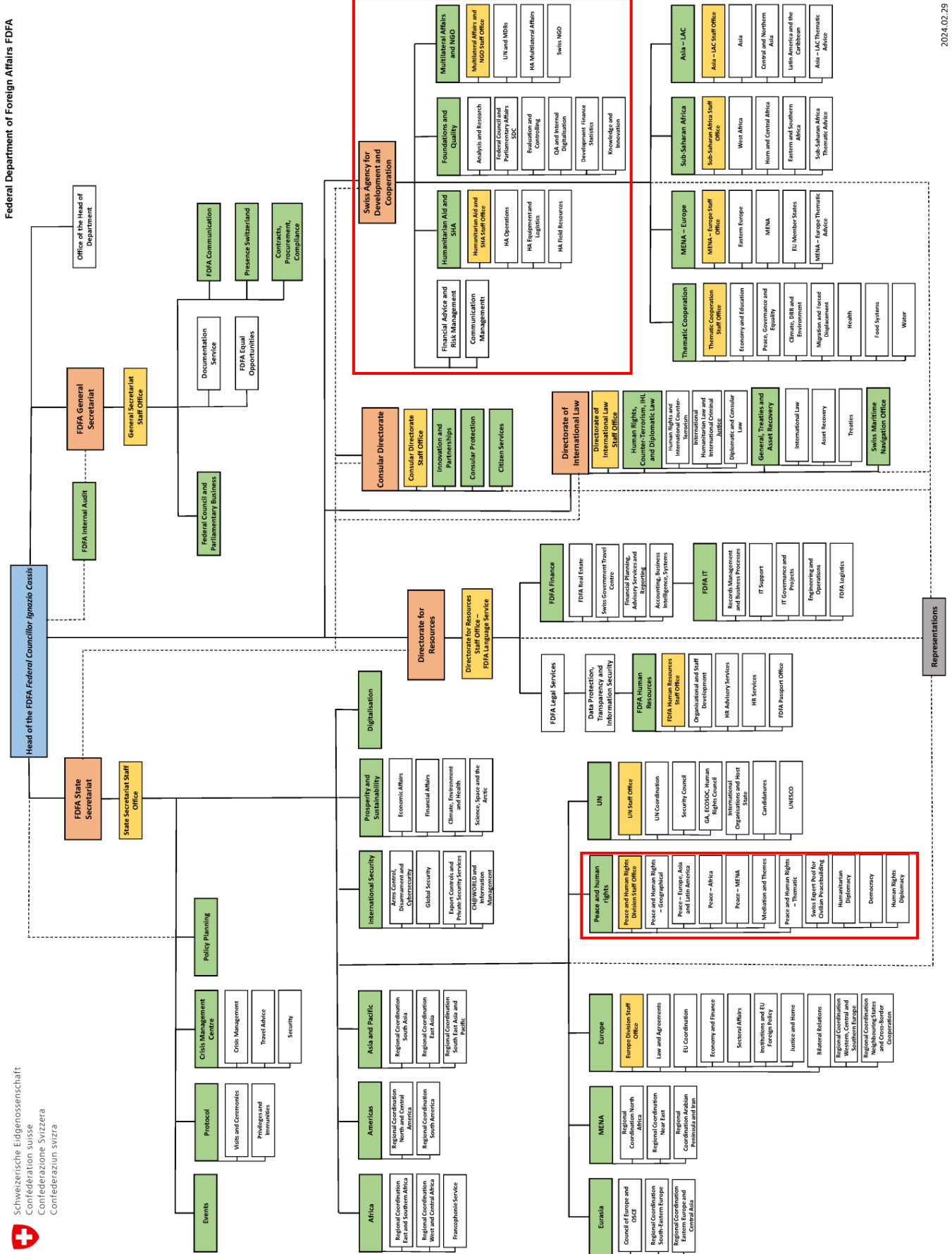
- SDC Guidance Cooperation Programme and Programmatic Framework (attached as separate document)
- SDC Guidance for Entry Proposals (attached as separate document)
- SDC Guidance for Operational Committees (attached as separate document)
- SDC Guidance on Results Indicators (attached as separate document)
- Information on SDC's Results Data Management (attached as separate document)

Webpages

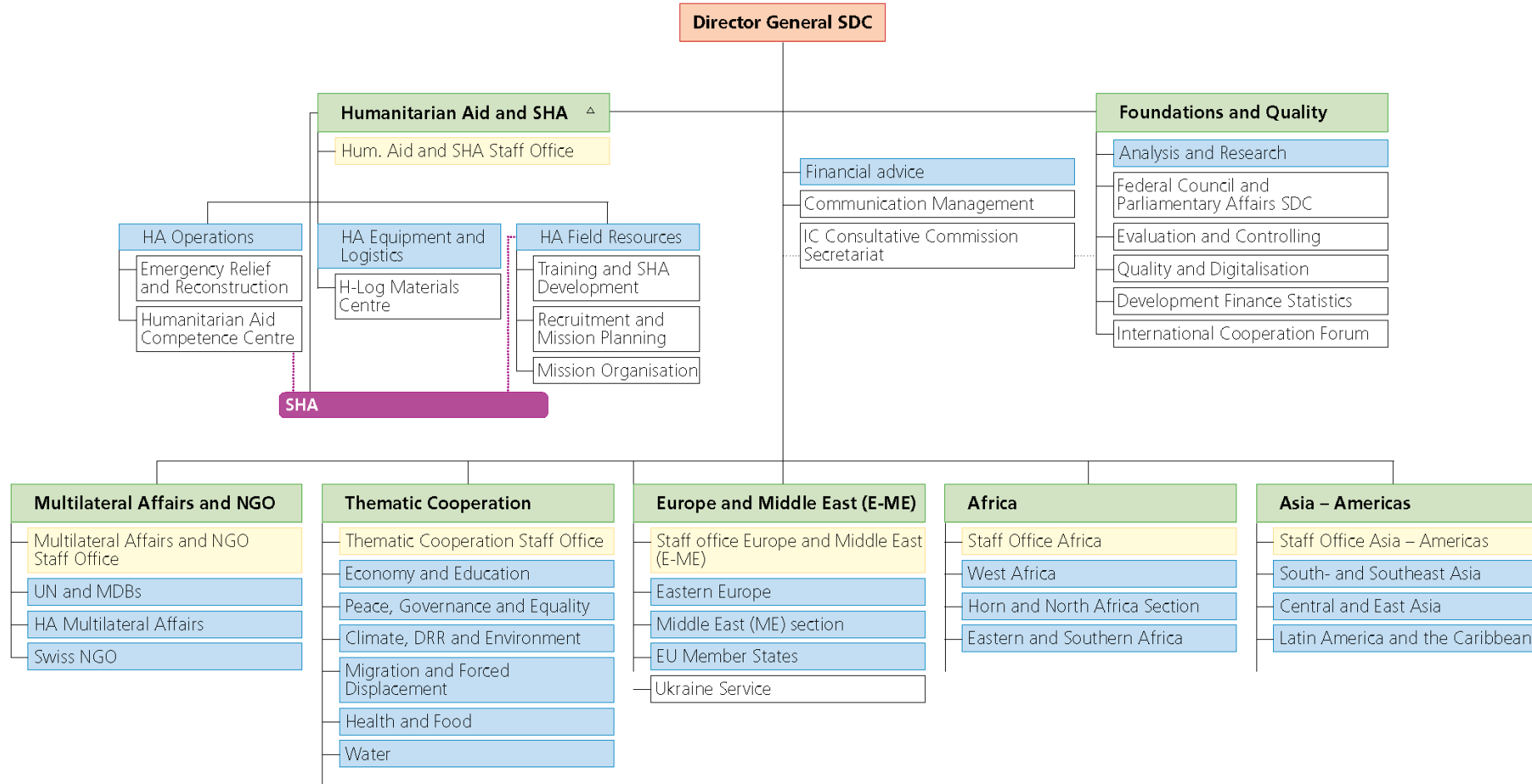
- SDC:
<https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home.html>
- SECO:
https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/en/home/Aussenwirtschaftspolitik_Wirtschaftliche_Zusammenarbeit/Wirtschaftliche_Zusammenarbeit_Entwicklung.html
- PHRD:
<https://www.fdfa.admin.ch/eda/en/fdfa/fdfa/organisation-fdfa/state-secretariat/hsd.html>

Annex 2: Organizational charts and Information on Human Resources

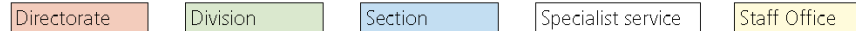
Organizational chart Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)



Organizational chart Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)



△ Deputy Director



(final version subject to approval by Directorate)

**Organizational Chart
Peace and Human Rights Division
(PHRD)**

**Peace and Human Rights
Division (PHRD)**
Head of Division: ambassador
2 assistants

**Peace and Human Rights –
Geographical**
Dep. Head of Division / member
of the management
1 assistant

**Peace and Human Rights –
Thematic**
Dep. Head of Division / member
of the management
1 assistant

**Peace - Europe, Asia and Latin
America**
Head of Section
7 collaborators
1 assistant
2 interns

**Special Envoy for Europe, Asia and
Latin America**

Peace - Africa
Head of Section
5 collaborators
1 assistant
1 intern

Special Ambassador Sahel

Special Ambassador Horn of Africa

Peace - MENA
Head of Section
5 collaborators
1 assistant
1 intern

Special Ambassador MENA
(double subordination PHRD/MENA
Division State Secretariat)

Special Envoy East-Mediation

Mediation and Themes
Head of Section
11 collaborators
1 assistant
2 interns

Staff
Head of Staff
5 collaborators
1 intern

Finances FDFA *
**Finances and
Administration PHRD**
Head of Section
6 collaborators

* No direct subordination to PHRD


**Expert Pool for Civilian
Peacebuilding**
Head
9 collaborators
1 assistant
1 intern

Humanitarian Diplomacy
Head of Section
8 collaborators
1 assistant
2 interns

Democracy
Head of Section
3 collaborators
1 assistant

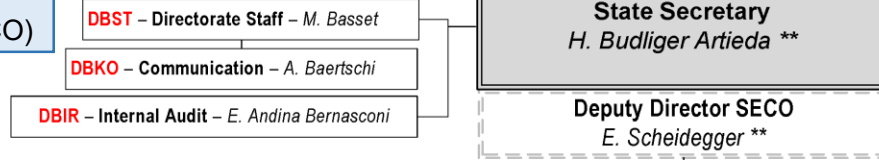
Human Rights Diplomacy
2 Co-Heads
12 collaborators
1 assistant
1 intern

Organizational Chart
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

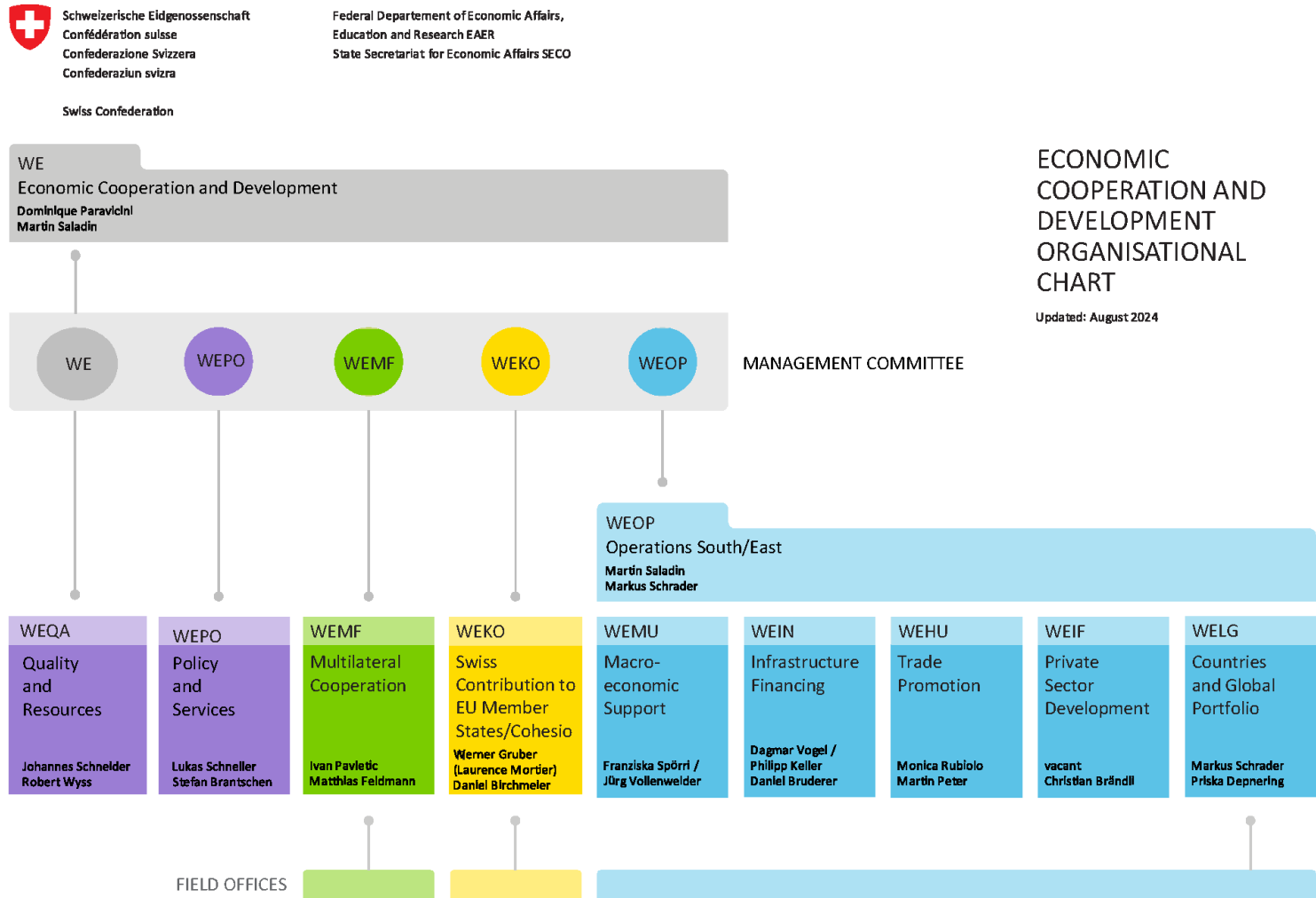


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| OA Organisation, Legal Affairs & Accreditation <i>T. Marthaler **</i> | | DP Economic Policy Directorate <i>E. Scheidegger **</i> | | DA Labour Directorate <i>B. Zürcher **</i> | | | DS Promotion Activities Directorate <i>E. Jakob **</i> | DW Foreign Economic Affairs Directorate <i>I. Germann **</i> | | | | | |
| OAGS Process Management <i>E. Domche Boxler</i> | | DPWW Growth and Competition Policy <i>R. Indergand</i> | | DAIN – International Labour Affairs – <i>V. Berset Bircher</i> | | | DSKU SME Policy <i>M. Godel °</i> | AF Special Foreign Economic Service <i>Th. Zimmermann *</i> | WH World Trade <i>M. Schlagenhof *</i> | WE Economic Cooperation and Development <i>D. Paravicini *</i> | | BW Bilateral Economic Relations <i>A. Rauber Saxer *</i> | ES Export Controls and Sanctions <i>S. Plüss *</i> |
| OARE Legal Affairs <i>J. Herren</i> | DPKJ Short Term Economic Analyses <i>F. Kemeny</i> | AB Working Conditions <i>P. Richoz *</i> <i>C. Müller Könz *</i> | TC Labour Market / Unemployment Insurance <i>O. Schärli *</i> | PA Free Movement of Persons and Labour Relations <i>V. Berger *</i> | ABRO Legal Affairs and Oversight <i>vacant</i> | TCQL Cross-unit Services <i>Ch. Müller</i> | | PAGA Collective Labour Agreements <i>S. Nening</i> | AFWR International Economic Law <i>R. Gschwend</i> | WHWT WTO <i>R. Gerspacher °</i> | WEOP Operations South / East <i>M. Saladin °</i> | | BW Staff tasks and projects <i>T. Moré</i> |
| OAPE Human Resources <i>P. Herzog</i> | DPAS Labour Market and Social Policy Analyses <i>S. Leist °</i> | ABWG Scientific basis <i>M. Arial</i> | TCFC Finance and Controlling <i>R. Zahnd</i> | PAAM Labour Market Supervision <i>D. Michel °</i> | ABFWA International Movement of Goods <i>G. Spaeti</i> | TCMI Market and Integration <i>D. Yerly °</i> | DSRE Regional Policy <i>S. Kollbrunner / D. Kramer</i> | AFNT Non-Tariff measures <i>Ch. Perritaz</i> | WHFH Free Trade Agreements / EFTA <i>K. Büchel</i> | | WEPO Policy and Services <i>L. Schneller</i> | BWMA Middle East and Africa <i>N. Meyer</i> | ESRG Export Controls of Armaments <i>A. Mittmann °</i> |
| OAIM IT and Information Management <i>J. Rätz</i> | | ABPS Product Safety <i>E. Zbinden Kaessner</i> | TCIT Information Technology <i>P. Zberg</i> | | PAAM Labour Market Supervision <i>D. Michel °</i> | AFWA International Movement of Goods <i>G. Spaeti</i> | | | | WEQA Quality and Resources <i>J. Schneider</i> | WEKO Swiss Contribution to EU Member States / Cohesion <i>L. Mortier</i> | | |
| OAFI Finances <i>C. Cancino-Infanti</i> | DPRP Regulatory Analysis and Policy <i>N. Wallart</i> | ABEA Federal Labour Inspectorate <i>Ch. Iseli</i> | TCJD Legal Service <i>D. Riva</i> | PAVV Placement and Hiring of Services <i>U. Greub</i> | AFDL Services <i>E. Hauert Wermuth</i> | DSRE Regional Policy <i>S. Kollbrunner / D. Kramer</i> | AFNT Non-Tariff measures <i>Ch. Perritaz</i> | WHFH Free Trade Agreements / EFTA <i>K. Büchel</i> | WHOE OECD und G20 <i>D. Jordan</i> | WEIN Infrastructure Financing <i>D. Vogel / Ph. Keller</i> | BWAO Asia / Oceania <i>N. Rast</i> | ESSA Sanctions <i>R. Strässle</i> | |
| OALG Logistics <i>M. Protopapa</i> | | ABCH Chemicals and Occupational Health <i>K. Schmid</i> | TCRD Audit Service <i>J.-Ch. Lanzeray °</i> | | | | | | | WEHU Trade Promotion <i>M. Rubiolo</i> | | | WEIF Private Sector Development <i>L. de Sá Kirchknopf</i> |
| OAAAS Δ Swiss Accreditation Service SAS <i>K. Flück</i> | DPPU Publications <i>P. Ilg</i> | ABCH Chemicals and Occupational Health <i>K. Schmid</i> | TCRD Audit Service <i>J.-Ch. Lanzeray °</i> | PAVV Placement and Hiring of Services <i>U. Greub</i> | AFDL Services <i>E. Hauert Wermuth</i> | DSRE Regional Policy <i>S. Kollbrunner / D. Kramer</i> | AFNT Non-Tariff measures <i>Ch. Perritaz</i> | WHFH Free Trade Agreements / EFTA <i>K. Büchel</i> | WHOE OECD und G20 <i>D. Jordan</i> | WEIN Infrastructure Financing <i>D. Vogel / Ph. Keller</i> | BWAO Asia / Oceania <i>N. Rast</i> | ESSA Sanctions <i>R. Strässle</i> | |
| | | | | | | | | | | WEHU Trade Promotion <i>M. Rubiolo</i> | | | WEIF Private Sector Development <i>L. de Sá Kirchknopf</i> |
| | | | | | | | | | | WEIN Infrastructure Financing <i>D. Vogel / Ph. Keller</i> | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | WEHU Trade Promotion <i>M. Rubiolo</i> | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | WEIF Private Sector Development <i>L. de Sá Kirchknopf</i> | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | WELG Countries and Global Portfolio <i>M. Schrader</i> | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | WELG Countries and Global Portfolio <i>M. Schrader</i> | | | |

** Board committee Member / * Board member / ° Deputy Head of Directorate/of Organisation
Δ Administratively, the Swiss Accreditation Service SAS is part of the SECO, but decides independently and autonomously all accreditation matters (see art. 14 of the Accreditation and Designation Ordinance [AkkBV, SR 946.512]).

ME - Permanent Mission of Switzerland to WTO and EFTA - *E. Bollinger **

Organizational Chart
Economic Cooperation and Development
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)



ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONAL CHART

Updated: August 2024

Information on human resources

Based on the budget of 2024, around **1 880 full time equivalents (FTE)** are attributed to the implementation of the IC Strategy 2025–28 at HQ and in the external network.

! The numbers of FTE are based on estimates and averages. They are not necessarily identical with actual staffing numbers.

1) FTE at headquarters

➤ **Around 475 FTE, distributed as followed between the units:**

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

- **Around 310 FTE structural staff** (excl. trainees)

| Gender of staff | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Male | 40% |
| - in highest salary categories | 69% |
| Female | 60% |
| - in highest salary categories | 31% |

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)

- **Around 90 FTE structural staff** (excl. trainees)

| Gender of staff | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|
| Male | 50% |
| Female | 50% |

Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD)

- **Around 75 FTE structural staff** (excl. personnel for peacebuilding and the strengthening of human rights with a contract from HQ and place of deployment abroad, excl. trainees)

| Gender of staff | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Male | 38% |
| - in highest salary categories | 34% |
| Female | 62% |
| - in highest salary categories | 66% |

| Language of staff | Percentage |
|-------------------|------------|
| German | 64% |
| French | 28% |
| Italian | 7% |
| No data | 1% |

2) FTE in the external network

In the external network, IC activities are in most cases integrated into a Swiss representation. There, Swiss structural (in the rotation system) and support staff of FDFA and SECO has often mixed catalogues of responsibilities that encompass diplomatic, international cooperation and consular/operational management/ financial tasks. Unlike at HQ, a post that contributes to the implementation of the IC Strategy can therefore not always be counted as an entire FTE benefitting IC tasks. For the external network, a disaggregation by gender and salary category (except for Swiss structural staff) is not available.

In the following charts, a distinction is made between Swiss structural staff, local employees and members of specialized pools or seconded personnel.

➤ **Around 1400 FTE, distributed as followed between Swiss structural staff, local staff and expert pools/secondments:**

2.1) Swiss structural staff

➤ **Around 200 FTE, distributed as followed between the implementing units:**

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

| Staff according to employment category and gender | FTE Gender in % |
|---|--------------------|
| Swiss structural staff for IC | 133 FTE |
| - Male | 49% |
| - Female | 51% |

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)

| Staff according to employment category and gender | FTE Gender in % |
|---|--------------------|
| Swiss structural staff for IC | 8 FTE* |
| - Male | 50% |
| - Female | 50% |

* 8 SECO priority countries

+ 12 additional SECO FTE which are also counted in the external network as IC posts in common countries (SDC/SECO) according to the catalogue of responsibilities. SECO personnel abroad have an FDFA contract.

Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD)

| Staff according to employment category and gender | FTE Gender in % |
|---|--------------------|
| Swiss structural staff (Human Security Advisors) | 20 FTE |
| - Male | - 35% |
| - Female | - 55% |
| - unknown (position under recruitment) | - 10% |

| Language of Human Security Advisors | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| German | 50% |
| French | 35% |
| Other | 5% |
| Unknow (position under recruitment) | 10% |

2.2) Local staff

➤ Around 1000 FTE

In this calculation, different local staff categories, such as National Program Officers, assistance and support staff, are included.

2.3) Expert pools and secondments

➤ Around 180 FTE

At the end of 2023, the **Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit** of SDC comprised around **115 FTE**. The Unit's members were deployed in direct actions, supported the external network or the HQ, were part of the rescue chain or seconded to partner organisations.

Between 2022 and 2024, around **5 experts per year** have further been seconded by SDC to multilateral organisations.

Every year, PHRD sends some **200 civilian experts** (equivalent to around **60 FTE**) for short- and long-term missions to international organisations to promote peace and human rights or as Election Observers.

Annex 3: List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|---|
| ARI | Aggregated Reference Indicators |
| CHF | Confoederatio Helvetica franc (Swiss franc) |
| CEP | Competence Centre for Engagement with the Private Sector |
| COP | Conference of the Parties |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| CSPM | Conflict-Sensitive Programme Management |
| DAC | OECD Development Assistance Committee |
| DDPS | Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport |
| DR | Directorate for Resources (of the FDFA) |
| DRR | Disaster Risk Reduction |
| EAER | Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research |
| E+E | Economy and Education (thematic section inside of SDC) |
| EFTA | European Free Trade Association |
| EU | European Union |
| FDFA | Federal Department of Foreign Affairs |
| FOEN | Federal Office for the Environment |
| FTA | Free Trade Agreement |
| FTE | Full time equivalent |
| F4P | Fit for Purpose |
| GNI | Gross national income |
| HRBA | Human Rights-Based Approach |
| HQ | Headquarters |
| IC | International cooperation |
| ICM | International Cooperation on Migration |
| IFF | Illicit financial flows |
| IFI | International Finance Institutions |
| LLD | Locally-led development |
| LNOB | Leave no one behind |
| MERV | Monitoring von entwicklungsrelevanten Veränderungen (monitoring of changes relevant to development) |
| MfSDR | Managing for Sustainable Development Results |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| ODA | Official Development Assistance |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| Opcom | Operational committees |
| PCSD | Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development |
| PGE | Peace, Governance and Equality (thematic section inside of SDC) |
| PHRD | Peace and Human Rights Division |
| PLAFICO | Coordination platform for climate and environmental financing |
| PRA | Partner Risk Assessment |
| PSE | Private Sector Engagement |
| PSEAH | Protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment |
| RBC | Responsible business conduct |
| RBF | Results-Based Financing |
| RBM | Results-based management |
| RDM | Results Data Management |
| RIA | Regulatory Impact Assessments |
| SDC | Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SDS | Sustainable Development Strategy |
| SE | Sexual exploitation |
| SEAH | Sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment |
| SECO | State Secretariat for Economic Affairs |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| SH | Sexual harassment |
| SHA | Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit |
| SIFEM | Swiss Investment Fund for Emerging Markets |
| SIFI | SDG Impact Finance Initiative |
| SomRep | Somalia Resilience Program |
| TG | Transversal Governance |
| TRI | Thematic Reference Indicators |
| UCS | Use of Country Systems |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP- UNDPPA | UN Development Programme - UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs |
| UNODC | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |
| UNRWA | United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East |
| UNSC | United Nations Security Council |
| USD | US-Dollar |
| VNR | Voluntary National Review |
| WE | Wirtschaftliche Entwicklung (Economic Cooperation and Development at SECO) |
| WOGA | Whole-of-Government Approach |
| WPS | Women, Peace and Security |

Annex 4: Adherence to the OECD-DAC Recommendations

4.1: Implementation of the Recommendation of the Council for Development Co-operation Actors on Managing the Risk of Corruption (2016)

The following annex is to be completed by the team of the DAC member undergoing peer review. It is intended to monitor the implementation of the [2016 Recommendation of the Council for Development Co-operation Actors on Managing the Risk of Corruption](#). Respondents are requested to address each of the ten provisions of the Recommendation, underlining the progress made in each and, where possible, the impact that the measures taken have had -or are anticipated to have- on fighting corruption. Finally, it would be extremely useful if respondents could signal any elements that they feel is currently missing from the scope of the Recommendation, or what additional guidance would be useful.

| Provision of the Recommendation | Progress made | Actual or expected impact |
|--|--|--|
| 1: Code of conduct | <p>There are 3 codes of conduct in the FDFA, of which SDC is an integral part of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Federal Administration Code of conduct (2012, update in October 2024) which applies to all federal administration employees based in Switzerland. It contains a provision on the duty to report to the relevant authorities (Whistleblowing platform of the Federal Administration and of the FDFA, managers, and authorities) unlawful acts and irregularities incl. corruption committed by other employees or partners. Other Irregularities can be announced to the same authorities but it is not compulsory. For other irregularities committed in relation to FDFA activities of its Headquarters, of the Swiss representations or of SDC's projects abroad, the FDFA has its own secured whistleblowing platform managed by the Compliance office (https://eda.integrityline.org). -Code of conduct of employees of the FDFA conducting activities abroad (2018, update 2023). It contains principles of behavior and guidelines for the ethical conduct of all employees of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) conducting activities abroad. It also applies to the personnel seconded to a third party. -Code of conduct for contractual partners of the FDFA (2018, update 2024). It contains provision on transparency, conflicts of interest, corruption, accepting gifts and other benefits. It is annexed to all contracts with partners. These cases must be reported on the whistleblowing platform of the FDFA, managed by the Compliance office. | Prevention of corruption and fostering zero-tolerance policy |
| 2: Ethics or anti-corruption assistance or advisory services | <p>The division Contracts, Procurement and Compliance of the FDFA is mandated with providing advisory services to employees on procurement, contracts, conflicts of interests, gifts and ancillary activities.</p> <p>In collaboration with line managers, its Compliance Office handles reports of irregularities submitted on the whistleblowing platform, including cases of corruption. It is independent and does not work at operational level. Confidentiality is ensured.</p> <p>Before a new assignment, heads of missions and ambassadors are systematically briefed on the risks associated with conflicts of interest and corruption in their posting.</p> | Prevention of corruption and fostering zero-tolerance policy |

| | | |
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| | <p>The intranet page of the Compliance office, accessible to all within the FDFA, contains information on corruption, gifts, conflicts of interest and the whistleblowing platform.</p> <p>SECO has a similar set-up as FDFA / SDC. Staff working abroad are covered by the FDFA code of conduct. During the last years the cooperation between the risk & compliance function at SECO and the FDFA Compliance Office has been strengthened.</p> | |
| 3: Training and awareness raising | <p>The division Contracts, Procurement, Compliance provides a wide range of trainings on these topics for FDFA's employees at Headquarters, representations abroad as well as, occasionally, in collaboration with SDC divisions, regarding SDC-specific activities.</p> <p>New staff members recruited through the diplomatic, consular and international cooperation selection processes receive a standard training on compliance issues.</p> <p>On sexual harassment and bullying, specifically, trainings are available upon request.</p> <p>The Compliance Office published Guidelines on Conflict of interests for employees. The intranet website of the Compliance office contains information on irregularities and how to report them, for all FDFA employees to consult them.</p> <p>The whistleblowing platform of the FDFA offers a public access and a secured box.</p> <p>SECO has a similar set-up as FDFA / SDC. The staff at headquarter and the staff in the cooperation offices are regularly trained by the risk and compliance officer in detecting irregularities and potential fraud and corruption cases.</p> | With these structures and measures, FDFA is fostering a culture of integrity in the FDFA, with a zero-tolerance policy. |
| 4: Auditing and internal investigation | <p>The Internal Audit division of the FDFA is an independent unit tasked with auditing the entire area of activity, the efficiency and effectiveness of internal controls and control systems of the FDFA. The audit's reports are confidential, contain recommendations and are sent to the relevant FDFA directorate for information. The Internal Audit follows the implementation of its recommendations.</p> <p>Upon request of the FDFA directorate, the Compliance Office can make an internal investigation if a situation has to be clarified. Its report is confidential and sent to the relevant directorate with recommendations. The Compliance Office can also commission a third-party audit or request that SDC's partners commission such an audit in case of suspicions. In such cases, the Compliance Office is consulted on the choice of the auditor, reviews the terms of reference as well as the audit report to ensure that the investigations meet the necessary professional standards.</p> <p>When unlawful acts and acts of corruption are suspected, internally, other divisions such as the Human Resource division may carry out informal investigations.</p> <p>SECO has a similar set-up as FDFA / SDC. The internal audit office of SECO (DBIR) is independent from the development cooperation division.</p> | |

| | | |
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| 5: Active and systematic assessment and management of corruption risks | <p>According to its Risks Management Strategy (2019, update 2021, 2024), the FDFA works with different risks' assessment tools, particularly its internal control system (ICS) for operational risks and its general risk management approach for political risks.</p> <p>In 2018, SDC adopted its SDC Guidelines for Risk Management, detailing the responsibility, processes and instruments for risk management within the organisation. Accordingly, SDC continued developing tools specific to international cooperation, such as its Anti-Corruption Guidelines (update 2021), systematic and periodic Partner Risk Assessment conducted as part of its Project Cycle Management, as well as contextual, programmatic and institutional assessments as part of its conflict-sensitive programme management toolbox. When it comes to engaging with the private sector, the PSE Private Sector Engagement Risk Management Process allows for risks to be identified early on and to be managed proactively. These tools are part of its internal quality assurance.</p> <p>ODA contracts concluded with partners are standardized and contain specific clauses pertaining to the risk of corruption; consequences must be assumed by the partners. In addition, partners have to sign the Code of conduct and to report irregularities to the line managers/budget holders. Partner Risks Assessment are systematically conducted.</p> <p>SECO has a similar set-up as FDFA / SDC. The risk guidelines of SECO are regularly updated, including in recent years a revision of the negative list or the formal exclusion of all debarred (WBG debarment list) entities from contracts to implement projects.</p> | |
| 6: Measures to prevent and detect corruption enshrined in ODA contracts | | |
| 7: Reporting & whistle-blowing mechanism | <p>The FDFA Compliance Office comprises 4 employees (1.7 FTE) and its whistleblowing platform is the single point of contact for reporting internal and external irregularities at the FDFA. It is possible to make a report anonymously and to communicate with the Compliance Office in a secure dialogue box. The reports are then managed with the budget-holders or/and line managers or with the human resources in case of internal irregularities. Most reports tackle irregularities abroad, in the external network. In the case of criminal offences or other serious allegations, the Compliance Office will cooperate with the criminal justice authorities and the Swiss Federal Audit Office.</p> <p>SECO has a similar set-up as FDFA / SDC. In late 2023 a MoU was signed between the FDFA and SECO, enabling the use of the FDFA whistleblowing platform also for potential irregularities in SECO projects. This comes in addition to the existing reporting mailbox and the whistleblowing platform of the Swiss Federal Audit Office (EFK).</p> | |
| 8: Sanctioning regime | <p>In the FDFA's contracts and grant decisions, a termination clause is included, which allows for the suspending of payments and the demanding of repayment of all, or part, of the funds provided. Loss of the FDFA's funds related to fraud/corruption committed at sub partners (partner of the contracted partner) is the risk of the contracted partner and as a rule, the FDFA does not cover such losses but requests that measures be taken by the partner. In case of fraud/corruption</p> | |

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| | <p>committed at the contracted partner, the FDFA will ask for financial compensation and an action plan to remedy the weaknesses identified (<i>a claim its own funds from the counterparty</i>). Moreover, the budget-holders and the Compliance office have regular meetings with multilateral partners in order to facilitate the exchange of information on allegations of fraud/corruption.</p> <p>SECO has a similar set-up as FDFA / SDC.</p> | |
| 9: Joint responses to corruption | <p>The Compliance Office is represented in several working groups on integrity, both at national and international level (FDFA Interdepartmental Group against corruption; OECD Working party on public integrity and anti-corruption; UNODC Working group on the prevention of the corruption). In addition, the Compliance Office is in frequent contact with the compliance units of contractual partners such as the UN and other governments on various issues, including corruption risks.</p> <p>SECO also takes part where relevant in national and international fora to promote joint responses to corruption and to enhance the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts.</p> | |
| 10: Take into consideration the risks posed by the environment of operation | <p>SDC is active in many contexts with high level of (endemic) corruption. Understanding the local context and power dynamics is key to manage corruption risks posed by the environment of operation. Thanks to SDC's field presence, its long-term approach, collaboration with local staff and partners as well as specific assessment tools (Political Economy Analysis, Conflict Sensitive Programme Management, Detailed Risk Assessment using the Copenhagen Circles in every Credit Proposal), risks of the local contexts are taken into account by default. The SDC Thematic Section on Peace, Governance and Equality has developed specific Anti-Corruption Guidance (2021) that provides overall orientation on SDC's approach to understand and address corruption in the environment of operation.</p> <p>SECO has a similar set-up as the SDC. Risks are taken into consideration on a compulsory level at project, country and institutional level.</p> | |

4.2: Implementation of the DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual, Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance (2019)

The following annex is to be completed by the team of the DAC member undergoing peer review. It is intended to monitor the implementation of the [2019 Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance](#). Respondents are requested to address each of the six provisions of the Recommendation, underlining the progress made in each and, where possible, the impact that the measures taken have had - or are anticipated to have - on ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH). Finally, it would be extremely helpful if respondents could signal any element(s) that they feel is currently missing from the scope of the Recommendation, or what additional guidance would be useful.

| Pillar of the Recommendation | Progress made | Actual or anticipated impact |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Develop policies and professional conduct standards and seek to foster organisational change and leadership on SEAH in the provision of international aid | <p>Switzerland regularly advocates for SEAH prevention and adequate response in senior-level discussions with its partners, in Board meetings of UN and IFIs and at the country level. Since 2023 PSEAH is also systematically included in the partner dialogue with multilateral organisations. This dialogue needs to be further deepened and systematized. The PSEAH Policy of the FDFA follows the zero tolerance for inaction approach. PSEAH is integral part of the due diligence of partner organisations and integrated in the respective Partner risk assessment. All agreements with UN-partners incorporate the agreed PSEAH language negotiated by the technical working group of donors.</p> <p>A new initiative has been signed by Switzerland for agreeing a similar language for agreements with IFI's. Selected progress in the past years include: Signing of DAC Recommendations on ending SEAH in 2019, importance and Efforts for PSEAH on occasion of 16 days of activism against violence against women 2020, launch of FDFA Whistleblowing Platform in 2021, launch of FDFA e-learning on sexual harassment at the workplace in 2021, promotion of Ideas Box for Sensitisation and Training on PSEAH for representations abroad and HQ in 2021, leadership dialogue with middle and higher management at SDC HQ on importance of PSEAH in 2022, leadership dialogue with SDC heads of missions on implementation of PSEAH at country level in 2022. In addition, in October 2023: Ambassador of the Permanent Swiss Mission to the UN organizes a 'PSEAH-Forumtheatre Event' as Gender Champion Event for country delegations and UN representatives in New York.</p> | <p>PSEAH engagement of country offices and substantial PSEAH dialogue with implementing partners at country level is an ongoing key objective. After 20 representations that were or became PSEAH-active till 2022, we registered 30 by the end of 2023. Switzerland is aiming at 40 representations by the end of 2024.</p> |
| 2. Develop or support survivor- and victim-centred responses and support mechanisms | <p>In 2013, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA has created an independent body (the Compliance Office) which can be contacted for any kind of irregularities, in particular SEAH incident by contracting partners. For sexual harassment (internal), there are several units which can assist and advise alleged victims (Compliance Office, human resources, Personnel and social counselling of the Federal Administration). In November 2021, a whistleblowing platform as single-entry point for any kind of irregularity including SEA and SH (both internal and external) has been launched by the FDFA. The Compliance Office is</p> | <p>SDC has formulated an internal How-to-Note for dealing with cases of SEAH in partner organisations as guidance for management and staff which includes clear guidance for the application of a survivor/victim centred approach.</p> |

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|---|--|--|
| | <p>responsible for managing the platform, which is available for both FDFA staff and third parties, such as implementing partners and aid beneficiaries, in Switzerland and abroad. For SH or SEA by contracting partners, the Compliance Office consults the experts of SDC's PSEAH focal point, or other experts if needed. No action/step is initiated without the prior approval of the alleged victim.</p> | |
| <p>3. Establish organisational reporting and response systems and procedures for the prevention of SEAH</p> | <p>In November 2021, a whistleblowing platform as single-entry point for any kind of irregularity including SEA and SH (both internal and external) has been launched by the FDFA. The Compliance Office is responsible for managing the platform, which is available for both FDFA staff and third parties, such as implementing partners and aid beneficiaries, in Switzerland and abroad. For SH or SEA by contracting partners, the Compliance Office consults the experts of SDC's PSEAH focal point, or other experts if needed. No action/step is initiated without the prior approval of the alleged victim. The SEAH incident reports come in the MFA to the central SEAH unit and are dealt with centrally. Cases are registered, follow-up is done and analyses on the anonymous data is also done and fed back into policy dialogues and advocacy efforts of on SEAH.</p> | <p>Whistleblowing platform is running and being used. The reported cases do influence dialogues around PSEAH with partner agencies.</p> |
| <p>4. Conduct training, raise awareness and communicate on SEAH prevention</p> | <p>Overview of available trainings and tools can be found in the FDFA PSEAH ideas box which is an internal instrument that provides FDFA staff with ideas for workshops and trainings and access to pre-designed workshop formats with support material and video- and e-learning tools (only accessible internally). At the level of FDFA: https://www.eda.admin.ch/respect/en/home.html</p> <p>We have set up the SDC PSEAH shareweb which is available for internal staff as well as the public, especially partner organisations where a collection of tools and training links for PSEAH can be found. Furthermore, we have developed a Forumtheatre on PSEAH for awareness raising that is also available as video tool and can be used by internal staff as well as by interested partner organisations.</p> <p>In the frame of SDC's institutional partnerships with Swiss NGOs, a joint platform has been established for sharing of training materials, reflection papers and tools of all participants in this partner network. - 2020-2022: SDC PSEAH Champion Office Approach, encouraging representations through individual support and coaching to become PSEAH-champions and produce good practice for other representations and SDC in general - 2022 and 2023: Annual objective for the implementation of the FDFA Action Plan for Equal Opportunities by the SDC Directorate is to reach the number of 20 (for 2022) and 30 (for 2023) PSEAH-active representations that systematically implement PSEAH with their partner organisations</p> | <p>After 20 Swiss representations that were or became PSEAH-active till 2022, we registered 30 by the end of 2023. Switzerland is aiming at 40 representations by the end of 2024.</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>5. Ensure international coordination for SEAH prevention and response</p> | <p>Switzerland actively participates in donor coordination groups such as technical working groups as well as bilateral donor dialogue and exchange for learning. There is an internal SEAH Network for departments in Bern and for cooperation office staff to exchange and learn from each other on addressing SEAH at the country level.</p> | <p>Switzerland became and remained an engaged member of international donor coordination groups.</p> |
| <p>6. Develop mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting on SEAH prevention and response</p> | <p>SEAH cases by contracting partners are managed by the Compliance Office in close collaboration with SDC's PSEAH Focal Point. The primary responsibility to investigate allegations of SEAH lies with the contracting partners but the Compliance Office will ensure that the partner has taken the necessary measures to protect the alleged victim and has set up an independent investigation. The Compliance Office remains regularly informed and monitors the implementation progress of the proposed actions by the partner. Upon receipt of the investigation report (anonymized), the Compliance Office will ensure that the sanctions taken or planned and/or improving PSEAH measures are adequate and sufficient. If doubts arise about the quality of the investigation or the will/capacity of the organization to appropriately deal with the investigation results, the Compliance Office may recommend to suspend the payment of the funds or to terminate the contractual relations with the partner. The handling of SH internal cases, the whistleblowing platform of the FDFA managed by the Compliance Office allows a centralized reporting and handling of SH cases. For internal cases, the Compliance Office receives and listens to alleged victims in a strictly confidential and secure setting. Depending on the specific situation, the Compliance will discuss the various options available (informal approach or formal complaint) with the alleged victim, whose consent is needed for any further steps. As a rule, formal investigations are led by the Human Resources or Head of mission abroad and trusted to external investigators.</p> | <p>The following HR contacts are available at SDC-level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDC Focal Points PSEAH at HQ (1 FTE) • PSEAH Focal Points in PSEAH-active Representations (25 countries) • SDC PSEAH Task Team including representatives from each department • Focal Point PSEAH for Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (standby personnel) and accompanying working group from HR <p>The following HR contacts are available at FDFA-level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance Office (1.5 FTE) • Direction for Equal Opportunities (mainstreaming gender equality and PSH) (1 FTE) • HR-department for counselling and case management of SH internally (1 FTE) • Whistleblowing platform as one entry complaint and referral mechanism including integrated coordination bodies for case management |
| <p>Comments on missing element(s) in the Recommendation: The 6 pillars of the DAC recommendations build the core principles around which SDC's PSEAH work is organized. They are reflected in internal working streams.</p> | | |

4.3: Implementation of the Recommendation of the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus (2019)

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) has tasked the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) to monitor progress of members against the [DAC recommendation on the HDP Nexus](#). This annex follows the eleven principles of the recommendation. For each principle, guiding questions are provided, and respondents can elaborate further on the actions they have taken, the effects of these actions, or the challenges encountered when applying a Nexus approach to their engagement in fragile and crisis-affected contexts.

Coordination

1. Joint risk-informed, gender-sensitive analysis of root causes and structural drivers of conflict

For instance: Is your country programming based on an assessment of the drivers of crisis or fragility? Is this assessment shared across your administration (diplomatic, humanitarian, development, peace, security...) or made jointly with other actors, such as other donors or multilateral organisations? Does this assessment help to define collective outcomes?

Switzerland applies a joint context analysis tool, called the MERV (monitoring of changes relevant to development). It integrates context, conflict and risk assessment and a gender lens across the analytical categories of the political, economic, social and security context. Furthermore, Switzerland disposes of specific fragility analysis, conflict analysis, Political Economy Analysis tools. They integrate a gender lens, additionally there is also separate gender analysis tools. Whereas the regular update of the MERV is a must and the frequency of the updates depend on the volatility of the context, the other tools are at disposal for the country offices and can be used if required. Usually, they are applied specifically at the moment of the planning of a new multi-year country or regional strategy. Currently, SDCs PGE section also works on a simplification and unification of these tools in order to improve user-friendliness and encourage regular updating.

The MERV exercise is usually undertaken by all WOGA (whole of government) partners that are in an Embassy or cooperation office.

Switzerland also regularly contributes to conflict and context analysis undertaken by other donor groups/clusters and/or multilateral partners.

2. Appropriate resourcing to empower leadership for cost-effective coordination across the humanitarian, development and peace architecture

For instance: Do you support local or national mechanisms in having a coordination role when appropriate or relevant? Do you support the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators, or incentivise partnerships with multilateral development banks?

In general Switzerland supports local and national mechanisms as well as also the UN and the humanitarian system. How it is done, in what role is left with the Embassies and Cooperation Offices since Switzerland operates in a decentralized way. Hence the exact role and contribution can differ from country to country.

At the multilateral level, support at Resident Coordinators (RC) system is provided as well as contribution to the Peacebuilding Fund, in addition, there are peace advisers put at disposition of the UN system (secondments).

3. Political engagement and other tools, instruments and approaches to prevent crises, resolve conflicts and build peace

For instance: How do you ensure that diplomatic, stabilisation and civilian security interventions are joined-up and coherent with humanitarian, development and peace outcomes?

Switzerland applies joint country strategies between development, humanitarian and the Division for Peace and Human Rights. The link to the security sector is given if there is a defense attaché or where Switzerland is engaged in projects that overlap with the security sector such as Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), humanitarian Demining or Security Sector Reform and Governance (SSRG). Usually, the collaboration between the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry for

Defense are rather close and is very efficient in the local context and at HQ levels. Switzerland usually also closely works with civil society and private sector actors.

Programming

4. Prevention, mediation and peacebuilding, investing in development whenever possible, while ensuring immediate humanitarian needs continue to be met

For instance: How have you increased your effort toward crisis prevention, mediation and peacebuilding and early recovery, including beyond national governments, and across regional borders? Does these efforts include making a positive contribution to voice, access and rights, social cohesion, and trust between state and society?

SDCs Strategy on State and Peacebuilding (2015) implies that all activities are done with a strategic long-term orientation towards peace and state building. Therefore, the contribution to peace happens across sectorial engagements such as governance, social cohesion and trust building through arts, psychosocial approach, economic incentives for peace, peace and security (humanitarian demining etc.), managing of natural resources etc.

Furthermore, SDC increasingly funds programmes that have a specific peace outcome in order to enhance prevention or working on root causes of conflict. These efforts are also geared towards sustainable peace and social cohesion.

Last but not least SDC, together with the Division for Peace and Human Rights contributes to the funding of the international peace architecture such as the PBF or the Peace and Development Advisors Programme by UNDP-UNDPPA. SDC and PHRD are also engaged in the policy dialogue around these instruments.

5. Putting people at the centre, tackling exclusion and promoting gender equality

For instance: Have you put in place mechanisms that allow people affected by crisis to identify their immediate needs? Do these needs feed into your identification of the drivers of crises? Do you address conflict risks by tackling exclusion, persecution and injustice, promoting gender equality as standard practice, notably through the principles of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and promoting women's leadership across humanitarian, development and peace actions?

Yes, see annex 4.6 on gender for information. Planification of programmes and projects take into account [CSPM](#) (Conflict-Sensitive Programme Management) approach. The conflict relevance of gender, governance and other transversal themes has to be assessed (cf. quick guide to the adaptation of country strategies/programmes to the situations of political tensions or during and after violent conflict)

Women, Peace and Security (WPS) is a priority for PHRD at the multilateral as well the bilateral level. The National Action Plan on WPS identifies objectives for the four pillars of the WPS agenda (prevention, participation, protection and relief & recovery). In its efforts, the PHRD focusses on strengthening the role of women in conflict prevention and on the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women in the resolution of conflicts through the support of political dialogue and peace processes.

6. Do no harm and conflict sensitivity

For instance: How do you ensure that staff and partners understand the interaction between the intervention and the context, and act upon this understanding to minimise negative impacts and, where possible and appropriate, maximise positive impacts? Do you participate in collective efforts towards understanding and measuring the impact of ODA and other peacebuilding measures on political and conflict economies, conflict dynamics, social cohesion, exclusion, and resilience, with a view to reducing negative unintended consequences of external interventions?

- Application of 'Do no Harm' and CSPM as a basis of all interventions in all sectors and at bilateral and multilateral level
- Regular tailor-made trainings and capacity building
- PGE advisory services

7. Joined-up programming and the risk environment

For instance: How do you ensure that joined-up development, peace and humanitarian programming is risk-focused, flexible and avoids fragmentation? Is your longer-term development and peacebuilding programming adaptable to future risks and does it incentivise partners to remain present in crisis situations?

See point 1

8. National and local capacities strengthening

For instance: Do you prioritise funding to local organisations that are already present when crises occur? Do you incentivise your partners to invest in local capacities in a way that enables local actors to be part of the programme design and not only implementing agents?

See Self-assessment B.2.3 Locally-led development and the use of country systems

9. Learning and evidence

For instance: Do you invest in joint learning efforts across humanitarian, development and peace actions as well as in data collection, management and sharing? How do you promote best practice and innovative approaches internally and with other actors in fragile contexts?

- Network meetings
- Face to face meetings
- Providing lessons learnt and resources and making them accessible.

Financing

10. Evidence-based humanitarian, development and peace financing strategies

For instance: Do you participate in the design of a collective financial strategy, with effective layering and sequencing of the most appropriate financing flows, with the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators, IFIs, governments, the private sector and civil society with a view to support collective outcomes?

When feasible, see annex: Strengthening the operational Development-Humanitarian Nexus through the use of Contingency Funds

11. Predictable, flexible, multi-year financing

For instance: Do you use financing mechanisms that bring together humanitarian, development and peace stakeholders where possible and appropriate? Do you align financing with agreed collective outcomes where appropriate and with due consideration of humanitarian principles?

Within SDC humanitarian and development budgets are now administered by the same divisions. Whereas the credit lines remain separate, it happens that SDC funds activities with both credits in the same area. There is also a certain flexibility in the use of the funds and there are examples where nexus contingency funding was applied. Contingency funds are designed to facilitate access to resources for development projects to quickly address emergency needs at the onset of a crisis. The emergency nature of the instrument enables partners to trigger these funds without going through a complicated bureaucratic and administrative procedure. The objective of these early actions is typically two-fold, namely to a) alleviate suffering and save lives and b) protect development gains achieved through the project. Contingency funds are often designed for early action before people's livelihood systems are eroded and cover the acute onset of disasters for a short duration before larger humanitarian actors step in. Contingency funds can roughly be categorized into three different models: a) integrated emergency funds, b) pre-agreed crisis appeal mechanism and c) pre-agreed budget re-allocation.

Example: Somalia Resilience Program (SomRep)

SomRep was established in 2011 following the devastating famine in the Horn of Africa. The program is implemented through a large consortium and aims to increase the resilience of communities to climatic shocks and other related risks in pastoral zones in Somalia. SomRep adopted early on the crisis modifier model and has also designed the use of crisis appeal mechanisms to support an array of post-shock recovery activities, such as Cash for Work infrastructure rehabilitation, Unconditional Cash Transfers, emergency water trucking, Non-Food Item distributions, and interventions that support immediate disease treatment for livestock.

SomRep employs a complex trigger system for early warning and anticipatory action. In the SomRep design, the contingency fund can be triggered by early warning committees as well as warnings from government and international agencies.

Valuable examples and insights

In the spirit of peer learning, there would be great value if you could elaborate on any issue or area where you deem that progress has been particularly noteworthy, or where your experience would be helpful to other DAC members.

- Unpublished internal note: 'Strengthening the operational Development-Humanitarian Nexus through the use of Contingency Funds. The use of contingency funds within the Eastern and Southern Africa Division

4.4: Implementation of the Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (2019)

The OECD Council has requested the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to monitor progress of members against the [recommendation](#) (together with the Public Governance Committee). **This annex is focused only on coherence of policies with potential to have transboundary impacts on developing countries (Policy Coherence for Development)**. Respondents are kindly requested to provide information on action under the eight principles of the recommendation. Where a [dedicated PCSD profile](#) exists, respondents should provide updated information as needed, or confirm the validity of information previously provided. Attention is also drawn to a [guidance note](#) on implementing the recommendation.

For each principle, please indicate a) actions taken; b) effects of these actions; and c) challenges encountered

Vision and Leadership

1. Political Commitment and Leadership

For instance: commitments to adopt coherent policies that explicitly address the transboundary impacts of policies, including those likely to affect developing countries; at national level (in legislation, sustainable development strategies, co-operation strategies...) or at international level (multilateral frameworks); Action plans to advance policy coherence for development, as part of a PCSD action plan or in policy areas with significant transboundary effects and potential for negative impacts.

Switzerland has put in place coordination and consultation mechanisms between and within different levels of government to support policy coherence. The Federal Council (Switzerland's highest executive authority) promotes policy coherence for sustainable development through a two-stage consultation approach. First, the office responsible for a policy organizes a technical consultation to gather and consolidate comments from other offices. Then, political consultation among Federal Councillors before and during final decisions balances different perspectives and tries to take sustainable development concerns into account. This system has proven to be effective at identifying and addressing potential policy inconsistencies at an early stage. Moreover, Regulatory Impact Assessments are conducted to analyze the expected economic, environmental, and social impacts of new regulations in Switzerland and in other countries.

2. Strategic Long-term Vision

For instance: long-term or scenario planning for development co-operation to identify, prevent and mitigate adverse long-term impacts, or the consideration of long-term effects in planning of policies that affect developing countries.

The 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) and its four-year action plans (adopted by the Swiss Federal Council) are important tools for integrating sustainable development into sectoral policies and contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The SDS guides the Federal Council's sustainability policy and establishes sustainable development as an important requirement for all federal policies. The current action plan for the years 2024 to 2027 includes a measure to conduct qualitative and quantitative analyses of positive and negative spillover effects of new policies and regulations on other countries. In addition, sustainable development and policy coherence are included as important principles in sectoral policy documents (e.g., the International Cooperation Strategy, the Swiss Foreign Policy Strategy, and the Swiss Foreign Economic Policy Strategy).

3. Policy Integration

For instance: both aligning policy objectives with SDGs and articulating how effects on developing countries are addressed in national policies such as on trade and investment, environment and climate, tax and finance, migration.

With regard to policy coherence in foreign relations and economic policy, the Federal Council decided to put a particular focus on:

- international financial flows and taxation;
- environmental and climate-related issues;
- trade, investment, and corporate responsibility;
- migration;
- international health issues

Switzerland draws on internal studies, as well as commissioned reports to identify points of intersection and conflict between development policy and policies of other sectors. Switzerland works towards enhanced policy coherence for development at five levels:

1. Through its membership in international organizations, it campaigns for the adoption and implementation of binding global rules for sustainable global development.
2. In bilateral relations, it ensures that all development programs and projects co-financed by the Swiss Confederation are consistent with the goals of sustainable global development.
3. It works directly in its partner countries to promote the development agenda in domestic policies.
4. It incorporates development aspects into the different sectoral policies and aligns these as closely as possible with global sustainable development.
5. It also draws upon its development commitment when representing Swiss interests in other sectoral policies.

Policy interactions

4. Whole-of-Government Coordination

For instance: building on research into potential effects on developing countries, using co-ordination mechanisms to discuss these - for policy coherence for sustainable development, specifically for policy coherence for development, or on specific issues; responsibility of each ministry to reflect effects on developing countries and support for capacity to do so.

Switzerland has established various types of interdepartmental coordination mechanisms to ensure that its foreign policy is coherent. Examples of such mechanisms include the Interdepartmental Committee on Development and Cooperation, the Interdepartmental Structure for International Cooperation on Migration, and the PLAFICO Coordination Platform (for environment). The 2030 Agenda Directors' Steering Committee is responsible for strategic steering and coordination of cross-sectoral tasks in relations with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDS (including its action plans). The aim of such whole-of-government coordination is to ensure that different departments dealing with different policy areas do not operate in isolated silos, but communicate regularly and at all levels from junior officials preparing policies to senior officials finalizing them, and to ministers making policy decisions. In this way, Switzerland ensures that new policies take into account the positive and negative effects that they may have on other policies and/or countries.

Through its international cooperation, Switzerland also aims at building capacity in developing countries to design and implement evidence-based, coherent, and integrated policies that are in line with and support the achievement of the SDGs.

5. Subnational Engagement

For instance: involvement of / co-ordination with subnational entities (e.g., regions, municipalities) in relevant policy areas or policy coherence frameworks; promotion of decentralized development co-operation initiatives to address potential incoherence.

The pilot project 'Network of cantonal sustainability offices' started in 2017 and was transformed into an association in March 2022. It coordinates sustainable development at the subnational level, both horizontally between cantons and vertically with the federal government.

In addition, the federal government has developed an Agenda 2030 toolbox for cantons and municipalities to support both cantons and municipalities in developing sustainable development strategies and defining sustainable development measures. This online resource provides information

on sustainable development, highlights best practices and offers ideas for local/cantonal implementation.

Finally, an annual conference (Sustainable Development Forum) is held with a focus on regional and local governments to provide a platform, open dialogue and showcase both challenges and progress in the subnational implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

6. Stakeholder Engagement

For instance: multi-stakeholder mechanisms to discuss policy coherence for sustainable development that include stakeholders with development expertise; raising awareness of coherence issues and potential for incoherence through communication and development education; consulting with stakeholders in developing countries.

Switzerland has set up roundtables with external partners such as NGOs and the private sector to ensure that Switzerland's development priorities are better understood in relation to the overall Swiss foreign policy and foreign economic policy priorities. These roundtables take place twice a year. Moreover, Switzerland launched a voluntary national consultation process to assess the coherence, accuracy, enforceability and acceptability of the International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024 and the forthcoming Strategy for 2025-2028. During the consultation process, cantons, political parties, NGOs, umbrella organizations and other interest groups were able to express their opinions (matrix submitted for the 2022 mid-term review). Swiss international cooperation also regularly engages with partner organizations, cantons, cities, and the interested public at the annual International Cooperation Forum. The forum takes place in a different city each year and focuses on a specific thematic area of international cooperation. With regard to the organizational structure for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Switzerland expanded its Advisory Group in 2022 from 12 to 18 members and formalized its scope. The 2030 Agenda Advisory Group directly advises the Steering Committee of the 2030 Agenda Directors, giving it access to the political process. As part of the process of drafting the Swiss Voluntary National Review (VNR), stakeholders were much more broadly involved in taking stock of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Switzerland. Through an online tool, all organizations from academia, the private sector and civil society, as well as regional and local authorities, were invited to present their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This information was published alongside the national stocktaking and is considered part of the comprehensive voluntary national review. This platform provides information on sustainable development in Switzerland from all stakeholders. For this stocktaking, some 300 organizations were invited to provide information, as well as all 28 cantons and all municipalities. Switzerland plans to do the same for its next VNR, which will be submitted to the UN in 2026.

Impact

7. Policy and Financing Impacts

For instance: regulatory impact and sustainability assessments that include the impact on developing countries; commissioning of dedicated studies; discussion of studies by other actors.

New Federal Council directives on regulatory impact assessments (RIA) were introduced at the end of 2019. These guidelines include a preliminary RIA (a so-called RIA quick-check). The RIA quick-check is mandatory for all regulations. Its purpose is to provide an early rough assessment of the need for regulatory action, the expected impacts (including economic, social and environmental) and possible alternatives to the proposed regulatory measures. It also serves to determine the need for and scope of further RIA analysis. The Quick Check form is reviewed by the relevant federal offices at a very early stage in the legislative process as part of interministerial consultations. For example, the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) checks whether the regulatory costs for companies have been sufficiently analysed, or the Federal Office for the Environment can examine the environmental dimension. According to Art. 2 (2) of the RIA Directive, the results of the RIA must be presented in explanatory reports for public consultations (i.e., for all regulations for which a public consultation is held) and in dispatches of the Federal Council (i.e., for all primary legislation). For most regulations, stakeholders are consulted at an early stage on the nature of the problem and possible solutions, but this consultation is not open to the public.

In 2007-2008, Switzerland pioneered the development of the first set of indicators to measure the global impact of Swiss lifestyles (MONETGlobo project). This set has been expanded over the years and these indicators are still integrated in the MONET 2030 system (the national monitoring system for sustainable development). In the current National Action Plan 2024-2027 (of the SDS 2030), a measure aims to review the conceptual and data source developments based on this experience and developments in the field, in order to fill gaps already recognized, identify new ones and make possible additions to the monitoring system. The further development of the existing MONETGlobo approach should provide support for the measurement of Switzerland's international spill-over effects and insights for improving the statistical evidence for explicit correlations and their treatment, whether positive or negative. The action also includes an in-depth analysis of Switzerland's cross-border spillovers, using both MONETGlobo and additional information, to provide an evidence base for policy recommendations on how to expand positive spillovers and mitigate negative ones.

8. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

For instance: reporting on transboundary issues in national sustainable development plans or specifically on SDG 17.14; reporting to Parliament on policy coherence; progress reports under action plans; evaluations on policy coherence for development generally or evaluations of policies of high relevance.

In the last five years, Switzerland has presented two voluntary national reviews, in 2018 and 2022. Both were preceded by a comprehensive stocktaking exercise involving more than 50 federal offices and other national stakeholders. Switzerland sought to use these processes to advance the PCSD, creating both more ownership of the 2030 Agenda and more exchange between the different offices. Within these processes, responsibilities were defined at the goal level and the stocktaking was widely consulted within the government. In particular, the process for Switzerland's VNR 2022 was conducted via an online tool, which fostered collaboration between offices and allowed for open contributions from all relevant offices.

In addition, the organizational structure for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Switzerland was reviewed in 2023 and found to be adequate for advancing the PCSD. A mid-term review of the 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy was published in early 2024 to review implementation to date and identify gaps and areas where further action is needed.

Also, every four years, the strategic direction of Switzerland's international cooperation is renewed and set out in a Dispatch, which the Federal Council submits to Parliament for approval. At the end of the four-year dispatch period, Switzerland publishes a report summarizing the results and challenges of its international cooperation during that period. This report covers the work of SDC, SECO and the peacebuilding interventions of FDFA's Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD) since the beginning of the 2017-20 period. Among other things, these reports take into account the use of Switzerland's five framework credits for international cooperation. In May 2024, the Federal Council adopted the Accountability Report on the implementation of the International Cooperation Strategy 2021-24, which is expected to be submitted to Parliament in the fall of 2024.

Valuable examples and insights

Please elaborate on any issue where you deem that progress has been particularly noteworthy, or where your experience would be helpful to other DAC members.

Switzerland's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Indonesia, negotiated within the framework of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), is an example of policy coherence in several respects, aligning trade, environmental and social policies in support of sustainable development. The sustainable development provisions in Switzerland's FTA with Indonesia aim to ensure that economic growth and trade liberalization do not come at the expense of environmental integrity and social well-being. The agreement's focus on sustainable development, labor rights, environmental protection, and corporate social responsibility ensures that trade and investment are mutually beneficial and support long-term sustainable growth. A notable aspect of the agreement is its focus on sustainable production and certification of palm oil, addressing concerns about deforestation and habitat loss. This comprehensive approach demonstrates how FTAs can be designed to align with broader policy objectives and promote coherent and sustainable development outcomes.

4.5: Implementation of the DAC Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance (2021)

The following annex is to be completed by the DAC member undergoing peer review. It is intended to monitor the implementation of the 2021 [DAC Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance](#).

Respondents are requested to answer a general question on what changes have been or will be made since the Recommendation came into force on 6 July, 2021. They are invited to share implementation progress and/or plans, as well as implementation constraints, related to each of the Recommendation's three pillars, indicating the most relevant provisions that their responses address. Respondents are also invited to share areas of their enabling civil society work that they deem as offering lesson learning opportunities for other DAC members (e.g., particularly good practice). Finally, they are invited to share areas of the Recommendation they deem as needing additional toolkit(s) or guidance to help advance implementation.

Part A: General question

What has changed or will be changed since the Recommendation came into force?

This question could address steps taken or planned in relation to dissemination, implementation or monitoring of the Recommendation.

Switzerland participated actively in the elaboration of the three tool-kits: Funding civil society in partner countries; shifting power within partnerships; Coordinating action and civic space. Switzerland disseminated the first toolkit widely and made together with the PGE section a webinar on the topic.

In 2023, SDC conducted a survey among its country offices with the objective to map existing practice of SDC programs and projects supporting civil society and civic space with regard to the DAC recommendations (report attached to the annex). The report shows that the SDC's efforts to support civil society and defending civic space are already well in line with the DAC recommendations, while it also outlines areas that require further attention.

As co-chair of the Community of Practice for the DAC Recommendation, Switzerland advanced the discussion on harmonising DAC members on due diligence requirements. The toolkits inform in parallel the internal process of Locally led development, humanitarian aid and peace, that Switzerland launched with the goal to have a guidance in place at the end of 2024 to implement the newly established modality of locally led development within the IC Strategy 2025-28. Clear objectives with measurable indicators will be defined, which should further strengthen civil society and locally led development.

As co-chair of the Community of Practice for the DAC Recommendation, Switzerland advanced the discussion on harmonising DAC members on due diligence requirements.

As many contexts shift to authoritarian regimes, Switzerland has established a guidance on working in these contexts. The work with civil society becomes, thus, more and more important.

Part B: Progress and/or challenges with implementation

Recommendation Pillar

Progress and Plans

Pillar ONE: Respecting, Protecting and Promoting Civic Space (10 provisions)

1.1 What are you doing or planning in order to implement the Pillar One provisions? Please

At policy level: advocate for an inclusive and independent civil society and for the participation of civil society at all levels in the policy dialogue with duty bearers (provisions 1, 2, 4, 5, 9); advocacy for respect

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| <p>specify to which provisions these actions apply.</p> | <p>and protection of human rights (including rights to the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, and expression) and international humanitarian law at all levels.</p> <p><u>At operational level:</u> continuous strengthening and application of CSPM in programming including to do no harm to civic space (provision 4).</p> <p>Support to civil society networks for coordinated approaches</p> <p>Support anti-corruption through training and as transversal themes in several contexts (programmes, capacity building, U4 trainings; Partner Risk Assessment (PRA); audits where CSO and government are included) (provision 6)</p> <p>Support media in the dissemination of informed material and strengthening independent and free media work (ex. Fondation Hironnelle) (provision 7)</p> <p>Donor coordination: joint or coordinated advocacy amongst donors to protect civic and political rights, counter misinformation regarding civil society; joint context analysis; (provision 8)</p> <p>Strengthening civil society and locally led development will continue to be a cornerstone of SDC in the IC Strategy 2025-28 – strengthen both, civil society as implementing partner and as actors in their own right.</p> |
| <p>1.2 What constraints are you facing to implement the Pillar One provisions? Please specify to which provisions these constraints apply.</p> | <p>Principal constraints are:</p> <p>Shrinking civic space and increasing authoritarian regimes, which applies for all provision that include duty bearers (esp. provisions 2, 6, 9)</p> <p>In certain contexts, politisation of civil society hampers efforts to promote civic space.</p> <p>Increasing civic space requires political coherence which is contested by different political and sectorial interests be governments.</p> <p>Advocating for the protection of civic space towards partner governments at times conflicts with other foreign policy interests (e.g., related to security, economic or migration policies)</p> <p>Additional considerations are needed regarding how to measure impact, in particular in contexts of shrinking civic space where it is particularly difficult to demonstrate impact).</p> |
| <p><u>Pillar TWO: Supporting and Engaging with Civil Society</u> (10 provisions)</p> | |
| <p>2.1 What are you doing or planning in order to implement the Pillar Two provisions? Please specify to which provisions these actions apply.</p> | <p>In 2022, SDC issued a Policy Note on governance in authoritarian contexts which puts a focus on strengthening civil society. In addition, SDC is working on a guidance on the implementation of the modality of locally led development to more systematically address local ownership, joint decision making, funding and harmonisation amongst donors for due diligence requirements (provision 5,6,4)</p> <p>Engagement with civil society through a)</p> <p>Mandates, b) project contributions and c) core contributions with a total financial volume of CHF 840 Mio/year (provision 3,5)</p> |

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| | <p>Piloting of new, context specific modalities of support, e.g., partnership/network grants, constituency building grants etc.</p> <p>Long-term and capacity strengthening support is an integral part of SDC's work with civil society and in ensuring their participation and representation in political processes (provision 4)</p> <p>Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH): During the past years, the FDFA has taken bold measures to address SEAH. It developed a comprehensive resource package for its staff and offers guidance and collaboration to a gradually increasing number of country offices. It has also engaged in dialogue with partner organisations including of civil society. PSEAH is part of the PRA and thus mandatory to address in a structured and formalised way by supported CSOs. PSEAH and the triple nexus are both criteria to qualify for a core contribution by SDC (provision 9)</p> <p>Switzerland is the donor lead on topics of justice, human rights, decentralisation, governance, etc., which enables Switzerland to promote joint analysis amongst other donors and coordinated approaches to engage with civil society, including on the promotion of IHL (provision 10).</p> |
| <p>2.2 What constraints are you facing to implement the Pillar Two provisions? Please specify to which provisions these constraints apply.</p> | <p>While Switzerland already plays a leading role in multilateral discussions on LLD, it could explore how to better involve local actors in the design of its bilateral programming. This would not only work towards the goal of aligning with local priorities, but also leverage local capacity and knowledge more systematically. Consistent guidelines and specific policy to strategically do so have not been elaborated and adopted yet (provision 2)</p> <p>At the same time, we see, that there is a trend of earmarking increasingly contributions for civil society (less core, more projects) which constraints effective and long-term capacity building (position 3, 4). To include respective criteria into mandates could be useful to increase the systematic capacity strengthening.</p> <p>Additional considerations are required regarding (1) how to consider the political and security risks for SDC-supported civil society partners (duty of care) (2) and how to ensure that legitimacy of CSO actors is not undermined through our support.</p> |
| <p>Pillar THREE: Incentivising CSO Effectiveness, Transparency and Accountability (8 provisions)</p> | |
| <p>3.1 What are you doing or planning in order to implement the Pillar Three provisions? Please specify to which provisions these actions apply.</p> | <p>SDC's approach to PRA includes provisions on transparency, accountability, non-discrimination, PSEAH etc. Identification of risks as part of a PRA does not imply the automatic exclusion of such an organization as a partner, as long as complementary measures to strengthen internal policies and processes of the partner organization are taken to address the weaknesses, potentially with Swiss support (provision 1, 2, 3).</p> <p>Switzerland's CSO engagement builds on existing systems and in several contexts on CSO networks (provisions 2, 3).</p> |

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| | <p>Commitments to strengthen locally led development including more equitable partnerships have been taken and SDC plans to more systematically address the role of international NGO in the discussion of localisation as an aim and a means to achieve more sustainable solutions (provision 4). Adherence to international and national standards are required (provision 8)</p> <p>SDC includes the implementation of the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) as a criteria for Swiss NGO to qualify for core contributions.</p> <p>SDC also promotes innovative solutions through the means of the small action credit (provision 6) and has the possibility to pilot innovative actions through opening credits.</p> <p>The support to CSO to collaborate amongst themselves is strongly supported (not only to local NGOs but also to Swiss NGOs where the core contribution was an incentive to form alliances amongst NGO).</p> |
| <p>3.2 What constraints are you facing to implement the Pillar Three provisions? Please specify to which provisions these constraints apply.</p> | <p>Competition for funding can be an obstacle for mutual support and capacity strengthening outside an existing network</p> <p>In certain contexts, lack of donor coordination especially with new donors, hampers the coherent application of principles such as IHL and HRBA.</p> |
| <p>Part C: Lessons and guidance</p> | |
| <p>What, if any, areas of your enabling civil society work do you deem as offering lesson learning opportunities for other DAC members (e.g., particularly good practice)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The centrality of predictable long-term support to local CSOs that enables organizational development • Support NGO through core contributions wherever possible (knowing that there is no blueprint for funding modalities, and that the funding modality should be chosen in response to the needs emerging from the local context) • Going the extra-mile in coordination of donors and technical assistance for a more coherent approach • The recommendation offers a platform for discussion and alignment with multilateral partners, which can be further exploited | |
| <p>What, if any, areas of the Recommendation do you deem as needing additional toolkits or guidance to support implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political coherence • Measuring results and scaling impact: SDC is under pressure to show results for its ODA investments. Democratic backsliding underlines the importance to support civil society and civic space, demonstrating results in adverse environments is however even more challenging. | |

4.6: Implementation of the DAC Recommendation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance (2024)

The following annex is to be completed by the team of the DAC member undergoing peer review. It is intended to monitor the implementation of the [DAC Recommendation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance \(2024\)](#).

Respondents are requested to address each of the six pillars of the Recommendation, referring to the provisions included under each, and underline, under each pillar:

- i) current/recent or planned actions, including any good practice examples, and
- ii) any constraints/challenges in implementing the provision set out in the pillar.

Pillar 1. Consistently promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls globally and in a collaborative and inclusive manner.

- Regular gender and social inclusion sessions have been provided to SDC standard Project Cycle Management trainings (3-4/year)
- In the past years, **dedicated information on gender responsive and transformative work** has been included in these trainings, and a short working paper and webinar are underway.
- At SECO, its gender network promotes gender equality and supports the systematic integration of the transversal theme of gender equality into SECO's activities (including capacity building).

Pillar 2. Develop policy frameworks and consider legal frameworks for development co-operation and humanitarian assistance, intended to achieve gender equality and leave no-one behind. This includes adopting a dual strategy of both dedicated actions and integration (mainstreaming)

- Gender equality and eliminating all forms of gender-based discrimination are fundamental values of Swiss society, firmly enshrined in Switzerland's constitution and legal frameworks. Switzerland considers gender equality essential for economic growth, democratic governance and peace.
- Gender Equality is and remains a priority in the Dispatch on International Cooperation 2025–28 which sets out the priorities for development cooperation and humanitarian assistance

Pillar 3. Design and implement development, humanitarian and peacebuilding programmes and projects aimed to accelerate gender equality.

- In 2023, SDCs institutional target (8%) had still not been achieved, stagnating around 4%. An important, but not the only decisive explanation is the very low value for the Humanitarian Aid. This was discussed in the Directorate, and joint dialogue with the management of country offices is planned. Further, the gender unit specifically approaches offices where it still sees a need for action.
- SECO created specific instruments to facilitate the inclusion of the gender dimension in its activities. For example, it developed an orientation paper on gender equality that formulates SECO's approach to gender equality in development cooperation and defines key areas for targeted actions to strengthen the systematic implementation of gender equality in its activities. SECO also developed a gender equality guidance and checklist, enabling program managers to identify gender-relevant opportunities, risks and measures at each stage of the project cycle management. This document fulfills two functions: it provides indications on key aspects to analyze from a gender-sensitive perspective (i.e., guidance) and, at the same time, identifies critical questions to answer (i.e., checklist).

Pillar 4. Strive to increase financing for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls through official development assistance (ODA) and other forms of finance.

- Promotion of gender principal programmes: Since 2020, the Gender Unit made a dedicated outreach to all geographic divisions to promote increasing investments for gender principal programmes

Pillar 5. Ensure that mechanisms are in place to monitor, evaluate, and learn from gender equality outcomes.

- Continued exchanges in the institution-wide Gender Network
- Gender Equality specific Aggregated Reference and Thematic Reference Indicators (so-called ARI and TRI) are measured and reported on across the institution on a yearly basis

Pillar 6. Continually strengthen Adherents' institutions to deliver for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

- Example of the so-called 'gender action plans': Most of SDC's country offices have developed and implement gender action plans, at country and/or regional level to foster the integration of the gender perspective in programming, in the office and with partners. The gender unit has facilitated peer exchange and access to respective examples. The aim is to enable more explicit and systematic monitoring and steering in geographic sections.

Annex 4.7: Update on the 'Recommendation on Environmental Assessment of Development Assistance Projects and Programmes (2020)' and the 'Declaration on new approach to align development co-operation with Paris Agreement' (2021)

Political commitments, strategies and tools

- The **Swiss Foreign Policy Strategy 2024-2027** names climate, biodiversity, pollution and energy as one of its thematic priorities, in line with the national 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy.
- Climate and security is one of the priorities for Switzerland's UN Security Council membership 2023-2024.
- Switzerland's current International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024 aims at increasing funding for climate, DRR and environment from CHF 300 Mio per year to CHF 400 Mio per year by 2024. This target was reached in 2023.
- In the upcoming **International Cooperation Strategy 2025-2028** (still to be approved by Parliament), climate change and environment remain a strategic objective, including the financial target of CHF 400 mio./year. As of now, the large majority of Swiss climate finance is ODA and the mobilisation of additional financial resources, namely from the private sector, remains a challenge.
- The Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework confirmed that development can only be sustainable if it is risk-informed. DRR must be better integrated into broader sustainable development processes. In line with this, SDC has merged its thematic networks on climate and environment as well as on DRR to promote holistic solutions to strengthen people's resilience to climate change and disasters.
- A shift from 'risk-proofing' to 'integrating Climate, DRR and Environment for adding value and sustainability in development initiatives' emerged in the past years, and the Climate, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Integration Guidance (**CEDRIG**) tool is being upgraded to cater for such considerations, including towards a stronger support to strategic planning processes.
- Thematic Integration Briefs are currently being developed by SDC that provide concrete entry points for interventions and which are at the intersection of Climate, DRR and Environment and other themes, e.g., migration or economy and education.
- In view of fostering its alignment with the Paris Agreement, SECO Economic Cooperation has formalized its Development's Approach to Climate Change in a Position Paper outlining 5 measures with a particular focus on the following areas of intervention: Energy, Sustainable Production, Green Public and Private Finance and Sustainable Urban Development.
- The Position Paper is complemented with a Climate Action Plan including various measures to support SECO's alignment with the Paris Agreement. Examples of such measures are the deployment of tools, procedures and guidelines specifically related to the alignment, building SECO's climate capacities at the HQ and in the field, and mainstreaming climate into the design of its cooperation projects.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks

The institution-wide Results Data Management (RDM) system was launched in 2022 and aggregates data from country and regional programmes through so-called Aggregated Reference Indicators (ARI) and Thematic Reference Indicators (TRI). These are included in individual project logframes and programme results frameworks. The ARI/TRI have been reviewed in line with the new IC Strategy 2025-2028 and have been disseminated in summer 2024. The former ARI and TRIs for Climate Change and the Environment CCE as well as Disaster Risk Reduction DRR were "merged" into a new set of CDE indicators. The new set for CDE are largely based on the former set, but more comprehensive (e.g., integrating CDE

aspects in more indicators rather than having separate CC or DRR indicators, covering more explicitly environmental aspects and thus closer following the overarching strategic frameworks) and simplified.

SECO's Economic Cooperation Results Framework considers Climate as a transversal theme. It is operationalised with a dedicated Theory of Change, which in turn is tracked through three standardized indicators.

In 2023, SECO Economic Cooperation conducted an [Independent Evaluation of its Climate Approach](#), which led to further mainstreaming Climate and informed its Position Paper and Climate Action Plan.

How are development programmes supporting country-owned transitions to environmentally sustainable, low-emissions and climate-resilient development pathways?

No changes since 2021

How are development programmes supporting SIDS to achieve sustainable development?

- SIDS benefit from some targeted support, notably in the field of Climate and Meteorological Data and services as a key resource for DRR and Climate Change Adaptation and a key input for early warning systems. The CREWS Initiative, supported by SDC, has established itself as a successful mechanism to support least developed countries and small island developing states in improving their early warning systems and will be one of the key actors for implementation of the Early Warnings for All Initiative.
- SIDS continue to benefit from access to finance through the multilateral climate funds (Adaptation Fund, Green Climate Fund, etc.) to which Switzerland contributes. The recently established Santiago Network in the field of Loss and Damages, to which Switzerland plans a voluntary contribution, also has a strong focus on SIDS.