

Impressum

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Copies of SDC's Strategy may be ordered free of charge from: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation,

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2010 STRATEGY SDC

sustainable



looking to the future



working in partnership



aiming for impact



DIREKTION FÜR ENTWICKLUNG UND ZUSAMMENARBEIT **DEZA**
DIRECTION DU DEVELOPPEMENT ET DE LA COOPERATION **DDC**
DIREZIONE DELLO SVILUPPO E DELLA COOPERAZIONE **DSC**
SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION **SDC**
AGENCIA SUIZA PARA EL DESARROLLO Y LA COOPERACION **COSUDE**

IMPLEMENTING SDC'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) puts its Guiding Principles into practice. As part of its legal mandate, it coordinates the focus and activities of Switzerland's international cooperation. The strategy presented here provides some guidance.



sustainable

Taking the needs of future generations into account

**looking
to the future**

Global challenges set the course

**working
in partnership**

Approaching tasks together with reliability and flexibility

aiming for impact

Success is measured in terms of impact

Ensuring sustainability

In all its activities, SDC strives to support sustainable development. It promotes peoples' desire for peace, freedom, security, justice and wellbeing, and takes into account the interests of future generations. For SDC, this means giving priority to improving the living conditions and quality of life of disadvantaged people in the countries of the South and East.

SDC's programmes are designed to have the greatest possible impact. They support and promote its partners' own initiatives

- in reducing poverty
- in dismantling the structural causes of conflict
- in bringing relief to those in need

Looking to the future

Faced with increasingly rapid changes in the global context, SDC orients itself towards global challenges:

- An increasing number of problems that are emphasised by population growth: poverty, access to and use of resources, conflicts, involuntary migration;
- The majority of disadvantaged and marginalised people are women – power lies in the hands of men;
- Learning, communication, new information technologies and access to information and knowledge are key factors in development;
- New divisions of labour, requiring joint responsibility, are being established between the State, society and the private sector;
- The globalisation of political and economic systems continues, necessitating international 'rules of the game'.

Aiming for impact

The Strategy 2010 builds on SDC's current strengths and those it must develop in the future. The most important of these are:

- SDC is a reliable partner organisation, characterised by continuity and flexibility;
- SDC establishes the focus of its work according to its comparative advantages. The various instruments of cooperation are utilised efficiently;
- The motivation and professionalism of its staff, as well as its institutional knowledge, are valuable capital for SDC's work;
- SDC is anchored locally within its partner countries, as well as in Swiss public life and among its decision makers;
- SDC's humanitarian aid is rapid and flexible, while longer-term cooperation is designed to foster sustainable development;
- SDC is well positioned to promote inter-sectoral cooperation in Swiss policy;
- SDC works internationally towards forward-looking, as well as environmentally and socially sound, solutions.



MAIN TASKS – THE CORE STRATEGIES

In its work, SDC follows four core strategies to realise its main goals.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation is part of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. Its mandate is based on the Federal Law on International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid of 19 March 1976, and on a federal decree of 24 March 1995 on cooperation with the countries of Eastern Europe. International cooperation is one of Switzerland's foreign policy instruments. SDC sees itself as a competence centre, which coordinates this cooperation within the Swiss administration in collaboration with the other federal offices, actors of civil society and the private sector. In carrying out its mandate, SDC acts as the public face of Switzerland in global development and transformation processes, at the centre of conflicts, and at the scene of natural catastrophes.

Help for self-help

reaching goals with like-minded partners

Knowledge

the most important capital

International dialogue

voice of Switzerland

Solidarity

a Swiss tradition



HELP FOR SELF-HELP – reaching goals with like-minded partners

The broadly based development of the countries of the South and East requires both strong governmental and non-governmental actors. SDC collaborates in a holistic manner with its partners, using bilateral and multilateral instruments that are expressions of one and the same policy.

Objectives

- 1 The countries of the South and East have a right to autonomy and equal opportunities. SDC is working to enable them to design their own future.
- 2 Favourable framework conditions are indispensable for independent and sustainable development. SDC supports its partners in the design of appropriate political, economic and social transition processes.
- 3 For people to flourish, their basic needs must be covered. SDC's programmes contribute to this.
- 4 Natural disasters and violent conflicts lead to massive setbacks in the development of societies, creating need and suffering. SDC is involved in preventive measures and, if necessary, provides rapid and targeted assistance.

Approaches

- SDC cooperates with partners who work towards broadly based development. It promotes the institutional competencies and capacities of these partners with a view to long-term impact.
- SDC participates actively in shaping national and international framework conditions for development. Within the multilateral context, it supports the concrete concerns of its partner countries. Bilaterally, it assists its partner countries in designing, establishing and implementing appropriate policies and strategies.
- Locally based development is a central SDC concern. It therefore supports decentralisation programmes that help to strengthen democratic processes, improve provision of services and promote the sustainable use of resources.
- Development processes carry certain risks. SDC takes these on together with its partner countries. As part of its emergency aid, SDC makes human, technical, material and financial resources available to its partners.
- SDC coordinates its activities with other actors.



KNOWLEDGE – the most important capital

For the countries and partners of the South and East, knowledge is a central prerequisite for development. SDC promotes learning processes that are based on knowledge, ability and behaviour, and that extend the possibilities of action. To this end, it incorporates the use of local knowledge, and bases its cooperation with partners on mutual respect.



Objectives

- 1 Openness, willingness to learn and joint learning processes are part of SDC's culture as an organisation and of its cooperation with partners.
- 2 Together with its partners, SDC develops both substantive and methodological knowledge. It applies this knowledge and thereby contributes to the quality and efficacy of the programmes it supports.
- 3 SDC's partners have access to international knowledge and are in a position to make independent use of this towards their development goals.
- 4 In their role as knowledge providers, SDC staff have access to the development of information and knowledge at the international level in their respective areas of work.

Approaches

- In its priority areas, SDC promotes its own knowledge and experience. It possesses expert technical, methodological and social competencies.
- SDC collaborates with partner organisations in evaluating experience acquired, and in translating it into mutual learning and development processes.
- In its priority areas, SDC strengthens its own competencies through cooperation with external centres of competence. It participates in international expert committees and organisations to secure access to knowledge development at the international level.
- In order to extend development options, SDC promotes its partners' innovative approaches and learning processes. It supports networking and the exchange of experience.
- New information technologies are – wherever appropriate and effective – integral components of development programmes.

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE – voice of Switzerland


The increase in problems that extend across frontiers requires a transnational approach to finding solutions. SDC participates actively in these efforts, is committed to international networking, and communicates its development policy concerns in a targeted way.

Objectives

- 1 The Swiss public understands that international cooperation is an indispensable part of foreign and worldwide domestic policy.
- 2 The development institutions and fora in which Switzerland is present accord special priority to the problems and concerns of the poorest countries.
- 3 The poorest countries are able to safeguard their own interests and represent them in the international debate.
- 4 The international debate induces stimuli and reflections that flow back into Switzerland's internal debate on development policy.
- 5 The international institutions coordinate their programmes and activities.

Approaches

- SDC ensures that its most important concerns are expressed in action plans, policies and programmes of international conferences and institutions. It forms alliances with like-minded countries.
- SDC supports partner countries with targeted measures, enabling their inclusion in important international debates and decision-making processes.
- SDC concludes partnership agreements with individual international institutions in strategically important areas.
- SDC promotes and benefits from potentials for synergy between multilateral and bilateral programmes.
- SDC works towards improving the division of labour and cooperation between international institutions. At the country level it encourages the coordination of external aid by the partner country in question.
- SDC periodically examines its participation in international institutions and makes adjustments as necessary. It examines and participates in new forms of international cooperation.



SOLIDARITY – a Swiss tradition

Domestic and foreign policy are interdependent. SDC conveys these interconnections to the Swiss public, Parliament and Federal Administration.

Objectives

- 1 Switzerland's international cooperation is anchored widely in the Swiss public mind, through active communication.
- 2 The Swiss understanding of other cultures, and the public's awareness of the global mutual dependence of countries and peoples, is strengthened.
- 3 Contradictions between Swiss domestic and foreign policies are debated openly and solutions are found.
- 4 The role of the Swiss population and private sector in international cooperation is strengthened.



Approaches

- Within the Swiss population, SDC contributes to the recognition and understanding of the different cultures, values, lifestyles, interests and potentials of its partners.
- SDC actively pursues public information work, with a particular focus on young people and important opinion-makers.
- SDC fosters contacts with the private sector and with non-governmental organisations, and creates new, innovative forms of dialogue.
- SDC encourages its staff to engage personally with diversity through exchanges, personnel rotation and the organisation of fora for intercultural dialogue.
- Within its priority topics, SDC also deals with issues of domestic policy where they relate to development policy.
- SDC introduces the dimension of international cooperation, and in particular questions of coherence, into the internal opinion-forming and decision-making process of the Swiss administration. It supports other government offices in the design and implementation of measures relevant to development cooperation.

KEY TOPICS – the priorities

SDC focuses its activities on five key topics: *crisis prevention and management, good governance, income generation and employment, increased social justice, and the sustainable use of natural resources.* Each topic contributes to the overall objective of sustainable development by targeting a partial goal. All activities are geared towards reducing poverty and dismantling the causes of structural conflict.



The key topics are closely linked to each other. Transversal aspects are integrated within the five topics. Within the general area of each topic, SDC is active at the operational level and/or in terms of development policy.

The individual topics have different priorities and approaches:

— **Priority areas:** These define the focus within a topic in which work is carried out both at the policy and at the operational level;

— **Supplementary or specific areas:** These define areas within a topic in which work is not necessarily simultaneously carried out at the operational level, as well as at the policy level.



In accordance with its legislative mandate, SDC is also involved in various other areas relevant to Swiss development policy. Examples include:



- Peace and security policy
- Partnership for Peace (civilian part)
- Exports of goods and technologies relevant to conflict; applications to export armaments
- National and international economic questions
- National and international financial policy; financial architecture
- Financial services; flight capital
- World trade; social clauses; child labour
- Debt relief
- The war on drugs
- Minorities and marginalised groups
- The use of natural resources in Switzerland

Topics of cooperation

Crisis prevention and management

Priority areas

- Conflict-focused cooperation
- Emergency aid
- Rehabilitation and reconstruction

Supplementary or specific areas

- Natural disaster prevention
- Migration and reintegration of victims of conflict
- Food aid
- Management of manmade environmental catastrophes

Good governance

Priority areas

- Division of labour between State/civil society/private sector
- Rule of law
- Local government and administration/decentralisation

Supplementary or specific areas

- Human rights
- Corruption
- Conflict prevention
- Public spending, including fiscal policy and state institutions
- Global governance
- The media as a 4th power
- Culture

Income generation and employment

Priority areas

- Economic growth
- Small businesses (production and services)
- Agricultural production and marketing

Supplementary or specific areas

- Vocational training
- Finances
- Basic infrastructure
- Knowledge and technology

Increase of social justice

Priority areas

- Poverty and distribution
- Empowerment
- Gender equality

Supplementary or specific areas

- Education for disadvantaged people
- Health care
- Land-use rights and land reform
- Knowledge and technology
- Appreciation and development of culture
- Social networks

Sustainable use of natural resources

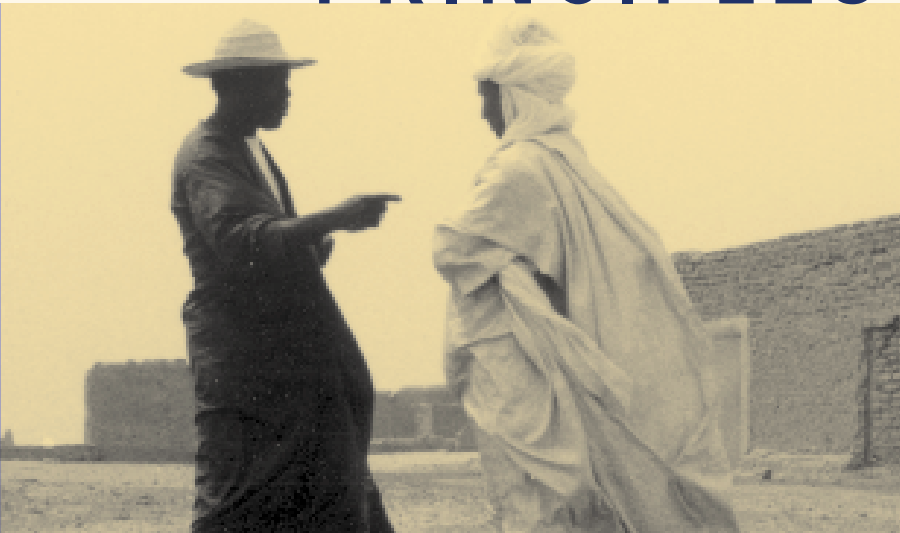
Priority areas

- Biodiversity
- Soil and water

Supplementary or specific areas

- Agricultural production and ecology
- Protection of natural resources from pollutants
- Energy efficiency
- Mountain ecosystems
- Fight against desertification

PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION



Forms of cooperation

Partnerships and alliances

Geographical priorities



Forms of cooperation

combined and effective

Sustainability forms the overall framework for effective development assistance, requiring a joint understanding of objectives, values, procedures and ways of learning. Trust, transparency, and the ability to handle power and power differentials are at the forefront of SDC's cooperation with domestic and foreign partners.

The following principles apply to cooperation between SDC and its partners:

- SDC strengthens the autonomy of its partner countries and organisations. Subsidiarity is the central criterion for the selection and orientation of collaboration. SDC promotes the autonomous activities of its partner countries and organisations;
- Cooperation is based on a holistic and systemic perspective, in collaboration with various partners;
- All forms of cooperation are aligned with the five key topics;
- Policy-level and operational activities are systematically linked. In certain fields, SDC limits its work to the policy level;
- Training and institutional development of partner organisations form the key to their empowerment;
- Support of networks facilitates the exchange of knowledge and technology;
- Using an appropriate combination of instruments, partner organisations are supported both financially and with know-how;
- The medium- and long-term planning of cooperation with our partners is established within each Country or Regional Programme.

Partnerships and alliances

actors with key roles

Interlinkages between countries and between projects heighten the demands made on the partners involved. The role and responsibility of private actors increases. South-South cooperation, including that between countries in transition, becomes increasingly significant. SDC cultivates cooperation with a diversity of partners, favouring particular forms of partnership and networks.

- With a view to impact, SDC provides support to those countries in which government and civil society undertake their own, targeted efforts to promote development.
- In countries where the political will is manifest, but where existing conditions are inadequate, SDC provides support to build and enhance the institutional capacities of government and civilian society, to improve their ability to realise their own efforts.
- In countries that completely lack the conditions for a cooperative partnership, either with government or civil society, existing relations may be suspended, broken off or not taken up, by decree of the Federal Council.

The provision of humanitarian aid is exempted from these conditions.





Effectiveness, credibility and plurality are the underlying criteria for collaboration with partner organisations in Switzerland and abroad. Partnerships are entered into with governmental, non-governmental and multilateral organisations. Transparent procedures are followed when conferring mandates. Agreements are made with partners based on agreed common values:

- Cooperation is based on transparent and mutually agreed performance criteria;
- The intended duration of the collaboration is regulated and time-limited;
- The efficacy of the collaboration is evaluated jointly.

SDC enters into new alliances and deepens existing ones with opinion-makers from civil society and the private sector.

Within the Federal Administration, SDC coordinates Switzerland's international cooperation. It fulfils this task in close collaboration with other federal offices, especially the Political Directorate and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, the National Office for Environment, Forest and Landscape of the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications, the Federal Office for Refugees of the Federal Department of Justice and Police, the Swiss Federal Office of Agriculture of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, the Swiss Federal Finance Administration of the Federal Department of Finance, and the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports.

Geographical priorities



bundling resources

SDC concentrates its activities on selected geographical priorities. Its presence and partnership ensure a sustainable change, preventive action appropriate to the situation, and a bundling of limited resources. The commitment is limited in time and oriented towards explicit development objectives. It is problem- or topic-related, and thus often crosses national borders. The question of rural and urban development is approached within both geographical priorities and context-specific topics. Longer-term local presence simplifies an efficient application of humanitarian instruments in crisis situations.

Within these geographical priorities, planning and implementation are carried out as part of medium-term Country or Regional Programmes.

Geographical priorities are defined taking into consideration the following criteria:

- **Need:** mass poverty; precarious resources; a high degree of vulnerability and susceptibility to crisis;
- **Potential:** development-related policy conditions; good governance; the will to extend the rule of law, democracy and human rights;
- **SDC's relative advantages:** previous anchorage in the local context; importance of the priority topics and core competencies; opportunity to help shape policies;
- **Switzerland's political interests – in particular:** participation in special peace programmes and processes of social transformation; help in the management of critical bottlenecks, especially in the aftermath of complex crisis situations and natural catastrophes; measures to stem migration; commitments from international memberships and global conferences.

Humanitarian aid is exempted from these conditions.

RESOURCES AND THE WAY WE WORK



Human resources

Financial resources

Organisational development



Human resources

promoting flexible work patterns and staff

The constantly changing context requires SDC staff to be responsive to the particular needs of differing situations. This readiness builds on the staff's great personal commitment and willingness to learn. The staff's knowledge, experience and competencies are used in a targeted fashion. SDC positions are assigned in a transparent and attractive manner, including new patterns of working.

With a view to implementing the Strategy in a consistent way, SDC acts according to the following principles:

- Targeted recruitment and deployment of staff. Participation in junior professional programmes and preparation of job descriptions. The age pyramid is constructed as evenly as possible at all levels in the medium term. Opportunities for women are particularly encouraged;
- Staff education and training to strengthen process, methodological and social competencies;
- Promotion of staff rotation within and outside SDC as well as intersectoral secondments. Temporary placement in external institutions both increases internal knowledge and transfers SDC's institutional experience to the outside world;
- Promotion of part-time work, job-sharing and teleworking;
- Polyvalent placement and work possibilities in interdisciplinary work teams;
- Experienced staff to act as mentors to the next generation;
- Employment of local staff to benefit from country-specific and specialist competencies and capacities in SDC's priority countries and regions;
- Recruitment of external personnel to create or maintain necessary specialist competencies.



Financial resources

growth and targeted application

In recognition of political constraints, one of SDC's goals is increased public aid. Allocated resources are used as an instrument to steer the strategic orientation of its activities. SDC promotes cost-consciousness in all forms of cooperation.

Swiss official development assistance should reach 0.4 per cent of gross domestic product by 2015 at the latest.

With this in mind,

- SDC is drawing up a strategy to increase official development assistance and is forming alliances with other federal offices and representatives of civil society;
- SDC is systematically sensitising and informing civil society, Parliament and the Federal Administration, especially in the context of legislative planning and credit lines;
- Access to additional financial means from public and private sources is being carefully examined and made available to international cooperation.

The following guidelines and principles apply to the allocation of available financial resources:

- The distribution key for bilateral and multilateral resources is periodically reviewed and adapted by the management. Bilateral development cooperation remains dominant;
- Cooperation with Eastern Europe will continue in the medium term and will be increased to approximately 10 percent of SDC's budget;
- The average proportion of humanitarian aid in SDC's budget remains constant at approximately 20 percent;



- Allocation of finances according to topic will be introduced. The necessary mechanisms and criteria for this will be established as part of SDC's medium-term financial planning;
- Increased financial flexibility should allow SDC to react rapidly to new developments and needs. This flexibility should amount to at least 10 percent in all the organisation's operational units by 2010;
- Administrative costs will be examined every four years and linked to targets for the following four-year period.

optimising organisational structure and procedures

SDC is structured and organised so as to be able to carry out its mandate effectively.

In doing so, it observes the following principles:

- Structure and procedures ensure transparent horizontal and vertical communication. Mandates for divisions and units are drawn up to this effect;
- SDC implements its leadership principles in its daily work;
- A consistent, transparent and appropriate delegation of authority is established with the aim of creating rapid and unbureaucratic decision-making paths;
- The organisational structure is partner-oriented, allowing targeted contacts for external strategic partners. SDC Coordination Offices represent all organisational units in the countries of operation;
- SDC Headquarters is responsible for the strategic management and quality assurance of the overall programme. It aims for an effective deployment of resources;
- The decentralised organisational units of SDC within the countries of operation implement the Country Programmes and carry out operational monitoring;
- At SDC Headquarters, various organisational measures simplify and ensure the efficient interaction of the different divisions. A particular goal is the stronger integration of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, long-term and short-term forms of cooperation and topical and geographical work and other areas of activity;
- Work is promoted by way of flexible, interdisciplinary, task-oriented processes and projects that motivate the staff. Staff motivation is also promoted through high-quality working environments.