Towards a Vision 2030 for the South Cooperation
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEVELOPMENT POLICY CONTEXT</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Global Development Agenda</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Global Challenges and Opportunities</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Landscape of Development Actors</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Effectiveness and Public Relations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GUIDELINES FOR SC</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Reduction</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragile Contexts</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus and Geographical Orientation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THEMATIC ORIENTATION</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Education and Vocational Training</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sector</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty in Middle Income Countries (MICS)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Relevance of Urbanisation to Poverty</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation with Civil Society</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORKING METHODS</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SC'S EMPLOYEES</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ROLE OF SC IN THE SDC AND FDFA</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of the Millennium Development Goals demonstrate that significant progress in poverty reduction can be achieved. International development cooperation has contributed greatly to this. Between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people in developing countries living in extreme poverty fell from almost 50% to 14%, child mortality more than halved, and the literacy rate among young people worldwide increased to 91%, while more girls now attend school than ever before.\(^1\)

The South Cooperation Department (SC) has played a part in this success. From 2013 to 2016, it provided better access to resources and services for 80 million people in its priority countries.\(^2\) Its engagement in political dialogue, hand-in-hand with technical and financial cooperation, has a positive impact on economic and social change in its partner countries.

However, the successes achieved through development are limited in fragile contexts, where poverty is also declining, but less rapidly than in stable partner countries. This shows how closely peace, violence prevention and development are interlinked. The consequences of climate change also jeopardise sustainable development, forcing ever more people to flee their homes and migrate.

The global context of development cooperation is subject to constant change. The world’s population continues to grow, as do urbanisation and urban poverty. Power shifts and the stronger position of non-state actors result in geopolitical fragmentation. At the same time, technological achievements result in direct access to information for many, and increased transparency is brought about by new communication options.

The actor landscape and the financing of international cooperation (IC) are changing too. The share of public funds in development funding is decreasing, with private and multilateral donors playing an ever greater role. Donors with their own interests participate in IC and partner countries increasingly impose specific conditions. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a new international action framework. Finally, in the sphere of domestic politics, IC, its impact, and its relationship to other policy areas, are a focus of public discussion.

The following sets out how SC plans to respond to these trends and challenges until 2030. Building on SC’s many years of experience, this document is primarily intended as a guideline for its staff and describes the cornerstones of a vision for SC until 2030. At the same time, this is SC’s contribution to the development of SDC’s medium-term strategy.

---

VISION STATEMENT

SC'S CORE MANDATE IS **POVERTY REDUCTION** AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF SWISS FOREIGN POLICY, MOTIVATED BY THE **PRINCIPLES OF SOLIDARITY** WITH THE POOREST AND **ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST** ON THE PART OF SWITZERLAND.

IN ITS PARTNER COUNTRIES, SC PROMOTES **SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT** WITH THE AIM OF BRINGING ABOUT PROSPERITY, DEMOCRACY AND PEACE. IT HELPS ENABLE POOR POPULATION GROUPS AND THOSE THAT ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST TO LEAD A **SELF-DETERMINED, DIGNIFIED LIFE** FREE FROM POVERTY AND DISCRIMINATION.

WHEN SC WORKS IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS, IT CONTRIBUTES THROUGH **CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION** TO THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE, Creates complementarities with humanitarian aid and strengthens the ability of public and private institutions and of the population to overcome fragility.

IN THE MEDIUM TO LONG TERM, SC WILL REDUCE THE NUMBER OF CONVENTIONAL BILATERAL COOPERATION STRATEGIES. USING **SELECTIVE INSTRUMENTS**, IT RESPONDS IN A **FLEXIBLE WAY** TO DEMAND, NEEDS AND POSSIBILITIES IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES.

SC MAKES USE OF **ALLIANCES** WITH OTHER BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL DONORS AND SEEKS NEW PARTNERSHIPS WITH ACTORS FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY AND CIVIL SOCIETY. IT PROMOTES **SYNERGIES** AND ADOPTS **INNOVATIVE APPROACHES**.

SC DRAWS ON THE **EXPERIENCE AND INITIATIVE** OF ITS EMPLOYEES, WHO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND BROADENING OF THIS VISION.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BASES

Switzerland’s development cooperation is based on the constitutional mandate to alleviate poverty and hardship and, in solidarity with the poorest and in its enlightened self-interest, to contribute to sustainable development. The Federal Act on International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid forms the legal basis for this. Every four years, SC defines its thematic and geographical priorities in the Dispatch on International Cooperation. Continuity, predictability and harmonisation with international efforts are important issues here. Lastly, SC aligns itself with the norms of international law, in particular the international agreements on human rights, as well as the declaration of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
DEVELOPMENT POLICY CONTEXT

THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The 17 goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development constitute the frame of reference for the international and national development, environment and human rights policies. They differ from the MDGs in that they have been negotiated and adopted by all countries, are universally applicable and cover all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) as well as governance aspects. For Switzerland, the 2030 Agenda offers an important framework for increased development policy coherence in the areas of development and domestic policy. Through its work, SC helps implement the 2030 Agenda and encourages coherence among national development policies. In addition to this, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for Financing for Development of SC offers an important framework for new and innovative financing instruments.

THE GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Poverty and the unequal distribution of knowledge, power and wealth, pandemics, protracted conflicts, fragile state institutions, corruption and illicit financial flows, different forms of violence, natural disasters, damage to natural resources and environmental degradation – all these impact people’s livelihoods and reduce the potential for development. The greatest poverty can often be found where there are protracted conflicts and crises. Therefore, development issues also relate to aspects of human security. Increasingly, flows of refugees and migrants from crisis regions call for new foreign and domestic policy responses, intensifying the coordination of local and global as well as domestic and foreign policy dimensions. A growing and ever younger world population, greater urbanisation, innovative technologies and new means of communication – these are the drivers of global change and they point towards the direction to be taken by SC in its interventions. In addition, increasing fragmentation and multi-polarity result in a changing power dynamics among international actors. When planning intervention strategies and calculating risk, SC keeps a close eye on these trends and dynamics and makes good use of their positive features.

---

3 While Goal 1 (end poverty in all its forms everywhere) is a core goal for SC, Goals 2 (food security), 3 (health), 4 (inclusive and equitable quality education), 5 (gender equality), 6 (water), 8 (sustainable economic growth and decent work), 10 (reduction in inequality), 13 (climate change), 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies) and Goal 17 (strengthening partnerships) are of particular significance for SC.
THE LANDSCAPE OF DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

Comparatively new donors\(^4\), together with private, philanthropic, transnational foundations and companies, are actively engaging in IC. It is often the case that these actors are not committed to the same values as the OECD/DAC donor countries. There is a danger that such principles as governance, democracy and human rights will be neglected and the focus shifted to the provision of infrastructure and the exclusive promotion of economic interests. Nonetheless, the changing landscape of IC actors also affords opportunities for new partnerships. The relationship between donor and partner countries is also changing. The latter are displaying greater self-confidence and making concrete demands of the donor community. Some of the more developed partner countries are asking for specific knowledge-based cooperation. Simultaneously, the dependence of countries in the south on aid from the north often remains a reality. In this context, SC acts cautiously and insists on compliance with established standards and the principles enshrined in the Busan Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. It is aware of the local power dynamics and carries out analyses of its cooperation partners and relevant actors.

DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

The growing need on the part of Parliament and the public for information, direct involvement and the adoption of a cost-benefit approach (while funds for public development cooperation are being decreased) confronts SC with the challenge of actively communicating how it sets about its work, the results it achieves and its effectiveness. In future, SC will increasingly have to address the public and account for the impact of its activities. It intends to fully meet the need for transparent and modern communication. This includes discussing any failures constructively and openly.

\(^4\) BRICS states, United Arab Emirates, countries of Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America
DEVELOPMENT POLICY CONTEXT - CONSEQUENCES FOR SC

» SC uses the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to strengthen its development policy coherence and to create synergies between Swiss foreign and domestic policy actors.

» SC takes a proactive stance towards global trends and challenges and works with various scenarios. It makes use of modern IT and communications technologies and specifically also addresses young population groups in its interventions.

» SC examines alternative funding options and financing instruments.

» Taking account of the specific context, SC considers flows of refugees and migratory flows, together with the reasons for them, when developing the strategy for its interventions and implementing them.

» SC is aware of the power and relationship dynamics between donor and partner countries, analyses its partners and other actors carefully, and identifies the possibility of forming alliances with new IC actors.

» SC aims to reduce the mutual dependence of donor and partner countries. It makes use of political dialogue and strengthens the negotiating potential and capacity of the partner countries.

» SC bases its programmes and implementation modalities on the demand from partner countries. The principles of Swiss IC, such as transparency and an approach based on results, effectiveness and human rights, are non-negotiable.

» SC communicates the logic behind its interventions, their effectiveness and their limits, self-critically and tailor-made to public expectations.
POVERTY REDUCTION

The proportion of people living in extreme poverty fell below 10% for the first time in 2015. However, many of those who escaped extreme poverty continue to live in relative poverty or in precarious situations. Discrimination is still widespread and particularly affects women, minorities and marginalised population groups.

SC’s primary tasks remain the same: to combat the different forms of poverty and strengthen population groups facing discrimination. Depending on the context, economic and social development, redistribution and social protection are priority areas. In line with one of the principles of Agenda 2030 (“leaving no one behind”), SC also works constantly to alleviate extreme poverty.

In political dialogue with other donors, SC is committed to ensuring that combating poverty remains the focus of international development cooperation.

Depending on the poverty level, root causes and needs of the partner countries, SC weighs up its priorities and then deploys and develops its instruments accordingly. These include the improvement of social insurance systems and the introduction of new ones, including agricultural and disaster insurance, and the strengthening of governance and human rights. The differing prospects and needs of women and men are always taken into consideration.

FRAGILE CONTEXTS

Fragility is one of the main barriers to sustainable poverty reduction. Fragility heightens risks for states and communities as well as for political, social and economic systems, and makes it more difficult to identify mechanisms for the non-violent resolution of conflicts. At the time this Vision is being developed, about half of the SC partner countries and regions are affected by fragility. Others are in danger of falling into fragility.

SC intensifies its work in fragile contexts in the areas of poverty reduction, conflict transformation, peace- and statebuilding, in this way supporting efforts to overcome fragility (‘out of fragility’). It takes account of political, economic and social aspects and causes, bolsters resilience to crises, strengthens human rights and pays attention to human security. Specifically, SC assists

---

5 According to the World Bank, living in extreme poverty means having to get by on an income of PPP USD 1.90 per day. In 2012, 12.7% of the world’s population was living in extreme poverty (in 1990 the figure was 37%, in 1981 44%). http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview
6 The OECD report States of Fragility 2016 introduces a new definition of fragility: it is characterised by the accumulation of risks combined with insufficient capacity by state systems and/or communities to absorb them or mitigate their consequences. Five dimensions are considered: the economic, political, societal, security and environmental.
7 The SDC does not keep a list of countries that are fragile states. A list of country and regional programmes of bilateral IC (South and CEE) exists for statistical purposes, which is used in the Dispatch on International Cooperation 2017–2020 to illustrate the strategic goal of greater commitment on the part of the SDC in fragile contexts.
partner countries that are guided by the principles of the New Deal for Engagement in fragile states (OECD DAC) in their attempts to achieve peace-and statebuilding goals (PSGs) and to implement Agenda 2030, in particular goal 16.

SC defines the limits of its possibilities and determines how fragile a state can be before engagement ceases to be reasonable, for security or cost-benefit reasons. The security of its employees in fragile contexts is SC’s top priority.

**FOCUS AND GEOGRAPHICAL ORIENTATION**

SC allocates more and more of its resources to the world’s poorest and most fragile regions. The trend is towards the countries of Africa and the Middle East, regions with high population growth and a large proportion of young people. Furthermore, SC focuses on those areas in which the poorest of the poor live. These may be the poorest countries or Middle Income Countries (MIC), rural or urban contexts.

In the medium to long term, SC will be working with fewer priority countries and regions than in 2016. It will reduce the number of conventional bilateral cooperation strategies so that they only cover those countries in which added value can demonstrably be generated. Particular emphasis will be placed on the regional, transnational approach, while withdrawal from small-scale country programmes will be sought. Country selection, entry into and departure from partner countries are based on clear criteria and SC’s mandate (see box). SC complies with the OECD/DAC criteria and endeavours to be one of the 10 major donors in the partner countries.

SC adapts its way of working to the respective context and makes use of opportunities. In countries with an increased availability of resources (e.g. MICs), it operates with fewer resources than it does in priority countries and regions, and pursues – depending on demand – monothematic approaches and thematic flexibility. In fragile contexts, SC adjusts its approaches, seeks synergies and complementarities with humanitarian aid, and cooperates increasingly with civilian peacebuilding. In urban contexts, SC fosters economic and social development. With a focus on urban-rural areas, it contributes to reducing rural and urban poverty. By creating and identifying prospects for potential migrants, SC increasingly addresses the causes of migration.

---

**CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT**

SC defines development as a complex and multidimensional process of change within societies. Depending on the starting point and environment, this takes different forms and directions. Development always involves reconciling sometimes contradictory concerns. The development goal of SC is social, political and economic change leading to stable, but democratic structures, and peaceful inclusive societies with equality of access to economic, social and cultural resources.

---

8 The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States is an agreement between fragile and conflict-affected states, development partners and civil-society actors to improve development strategies and activities in fragile states. http://www.pbsbdialogue.org/en/

9 In 2016, SC is present in 21 partner countries and regions.
ENTRY AND EXIT CRITERIA

SC aligns itself to the entry and exit criteria set out in the Dispatch on Switzerland’s International Cooperation 2017-2020 and, as needed, adapts these to changes in the international context. The intention is to fulfil most of the following criteria. Engagement: great poverty; fragility; the country’s openness to dialogue and political reform; it is located in Africa or the Middle East; of interest to Switzerland’s development policy and foreign policy; enabling Switzerland to influence international policy and play its part in negotiating global regulations; other donors are only represented to a limited extent. Withdrawal: the country has sufficient own resources and capabilities; pursues a robust policy geared towards reducing poverty and has been able to continually improve its ranking on the Human Development Index; the government is relatively stable; state investment encourages private investment activity or the country has no longer been seeking support from Swiss cooperation.

FUTURE GUIDELINES FOR SC

Poverty reduction

» SC tackles different forms of poverty. Depending on the context, the focus lies on economic and social development, redistribution or social protection.
» SC works to tackle the causes of poverty and adopts a systematic approach, which also addresses gender relations and their consequences.
» SC aims to become one of the ten major donors in the partner countries.

Fragile contexts

» In fragile contexts, SC deploys the instruments at its disposal more flexibly and, with a mix of interventions, seeks synergies with foreign policy actors, in particular humanitarian aid, and works increasingly with civil society (see concept ‘Fit for fragility’).
» In order to analyse fragility and context and to determine its contribution in fragile contexts, SC utilises and continuously develops existing criteria so that they take accurate account of technical, political, social and economic factors.
» SC systematically applies conflict-sensitive programme management (CSPM) and improves the working conditions for its staff and the protection for them. It formulates risk statements and carefully weighs up the costs and benefits of its intervention.

Focus and geographical orientation

» SC allocates more of its resources to the world’s poorest and most fragile regions.
» In the medium to long term, SC will reduce the number of classic bilateral cooperation strategies. In parallel to this, it will work with instruments selected on the basis of demand and context.

10 Initial results are anticipated within the framework of evaluation of the SDC’s results-based management and the white paper process.
11 The criteria are based on the five peace and state-building goals of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States as well as on the factors of violence, exclusion and discrimination, and a lack of human rights and the rule of law, which are impediments to a country’s development.
THEMATIC ORIENTATION

In selecting its thematic priorities, SC takes into account the existing and recognised expertise and needs in the partner countries. Depending on the context, SC works in close cooperation with global programmes in the following areas: the climate, health, migration, food security, water, security and governance.

BASIC EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

High-quality basic education and vocational training, adapted to the context, are a prerequisite for individual, social and economic development and contribute to the prevention of poverty, conflicts and exclusion. In view of population growth and a predominantly young population in the partner countries12, access to education is crucial and opens up prospects.

SC strengthens its activities in the area of education, guided by the comparative advantages of Switzerland.13 It creates access to basic and vocational education of good quality and improved employability, with a focus on vulnerable groups. In basic education, the main aim is to strengthen education systems. In vocational education, SC supports the integration of school-leavers into the labour market. The goal of inclusive, permeable education systems, and orientation towards the local labour market, also guide its work in international dialogue. SC uses its expertise in the area of education to strengthen cooperation between Swiss and IC actors.

PRIVATE SECTOR

It will not be possible to achieve the SDGs without the private sector. That is why Swiss IC intends to use its experience in cooperating with stakeholders from the private sector by developing partnerships with the private sector. SC reviews the effectiveness of its existing instruments and partnerships and replicates successful approaches. SC helps private firms to play a key part in poverty reduction, as enshrined in SDG 17. Another core concern is to promote the local private sector in its endeavours to develop economically and create incomes and jobs. Public-private development partnerships (PPDPs) play a special role in this. As a contribution to SDG 8, SC hopes to use its experience and develop new instruments, such as mixed-financing models for the promotion of social entrepreneurship. Partnerships with private companies, including Swiss ones, lend a further dimension of reach and effectiveness to economic development projects.

---

12 90% of the world’s young people live in developing countries. Two thirds of them are unemployed or underemployed.
13 Permeability in the education system, decentralisation, linguistic diversity, dual vocational education and training model
POVERTY IN MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES (MICs)\textsuperscript{14}

In 2030, around half of the poor will still be living in countries with middle incomes (MICs).\textsuperscript{15} The MICs category is based on average income, and inadequately reflects human development and the degree of poverty within a country. While a new priority engagement in MICs is not high on SC’s agenda, the development of an existing partner country into an MIC is not a sufficient criterion for exiting from it. In MICs, the focus of SC is to provide more support in the area of governance, with the aim of helping reduce poverty through the transparent allocation and efficient use of resources, and to respond to the partner country’s needs with thematic flexibility. It increasingly works with more streamlined portfolios, makes greater use of partnerships with global programmes, other development actors and the private sector. It promotes social welfare systems and improves social, economic and environmental conditions. In MICs, SC acts on behalf of development actors as a mediator and fosters synergies with complementary instruments of the SDC and Swiss foreign policy. It examines the opportunities for and limits to regional cooperation approaches. In advanced MICs, especially UMICs, modalities and resources differ significantly from interventions in traditional priority countries, whereby SC makes it clear to outsiders that it adapts to changes in context.\textsuperscript{16}

THE RELEVANCE OF URBANISATION TO POVERTY

The world population will have risen from 7.3 billion (2016) to 9.7 billion by 2050. It is estimated that 85% of this growth will take place in Asian and African cities. The demographic trend is relevant to poverty in two respects. Poverty is increasingly shifting to cities. Today 25% of the poor population live in cities. By 2050 that figure is likely to have increased to over 50%. At the same time, cities contribute to poverty reduction through their economic dynamism. However, not all cities profit equally from this growth, and inequality will continue to exist or grow. SC makes targeted contributions with the aim of achieving an inclusive and sustainable urbanisation process. It promotes the economic and social development of urban-rural spaces in order to minimise poverty in both the cities and the country. The strengthening of urban and regional governance plays a central, unifying role. Moreover, at a national level SC supports decentralisation, migration and national development strategies,

\textsuperscript{14} Various categories exist for the classification of countries and their level of development. To clarify the categories: 1) On the basis of their per capita income, the World Bank classifies countries into Low Income Countries LICs (<1045 USD/capita), Lower Middle Income Countries LMICs (1045-4025 USD/capita), Upper Middle Income Countries UMICs (4026-12735 USD/capita) and High Income Countries HIC (>12736 USD/capita). LMICs and UMICs are grouped as MICs; 2) The UN’s category of Least Developed Countries (LDC) is based on per capita income, an indicator of human development and economic vulnerability. Almost all LICs and around a dozen LMICs are at the same time LDCs (for political reasons, some LICs have refused to be included on the list of LDCs); 3) The OECD DAC prepares a list of countries that qualify as recipients of official development assistance (ODA eligible countries). This comprises all LICs and MICs (as defined by the World Bank), excluding G8 and EU member states and countries for which an EU accession date has been set. All LDCs are on this list.

\textsuperscript{15} Currently around three quarters of the poor people live in MICs

\textsuperscript{16} In 2015, 17% of South Cooperation bilateral funding went to LDCs. If one applies the World Bank’s categorisation, the 2015 allocation looks like this: LIC (55%), LMIC (approx. 41%) and UMIC (approx. 4%). When gradations arise, these figures are subject to change.
which make a contribution to inclusive urbanisation. SC acts in a manner that complements the work of other SDC departments and SECO, and cooperates closely with them.

COOPERATION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

Dynamics in the context of international cooperation also influence the role of stakeholders from civil society. SC intends to identify approaches that build on and extend beyond the classic understanding of civil society’s role as a development actor and monitoring body for state institutions. The 2030 Agenda provides a good opportunity not only to pursue technical approaches, but also to offer more support to civil society in its political engagement. This engagement should have as its goal systematic changes, for example, enabling citizens to exert influence at the political level and play an active part in shaping the world they live in. This means first rethinking the perception of civil-society organisations and the understanding of their role, as they move from being service providers to actors in political processes. SC helps bring about such a change in role and is committed to foreign policy coherence and close institutional cooperation.

FUTURE THEMATIC ORIENTATION FOR SC

» SC creates access to high-quality basic education and vocational training as well as improved employability. In basic education, it promotes personal and professional further development. In vocational training, it supports integration into the job market.

» SC uses public-private development partnerships as an instrument and endeavours to promote local private sectors. It systematically reviews the effectiveness of existing partnerships and examines the possibilities offered by new ones, and develops new instruments.

» In the MICs, SC adapts its interventions to the respective context. It supports improved governance, as well as a better mobilisation, equitable distribution and efficient use of resources.

» SC makes specific poverty-related contributions in an attempt to render the urbanisation process inclusive and sustainable. To that end, it steps up its support for economic and social development in urban-rural areas in order to reduce poverty in the country and in cities.

» SC promotes a rethinking of how civil-society organisations are perceived and their role is understood, as they move from being service providers to actors in political processes.
WORKING METHODS

SC plans its activities for the long term. In doing so, it draws on well-founded analyses and tackles the causes of poverty. In implementing its programmes, SC makes use of tried-and-tested as well as new, innovative instruments, adjusted to the purpose in hand. SC aligns itself with current and future trends. It focuses in particular on effectiveness as well as on partnership and the creation of synergies with other stakeholders. SC assumes an active role in shaping the direction of multilateral actors’ programmes. It does so by participating in strategy development and multi-stakeholder dialogue, and adapts its participation to the activities of those actors.

FUTURE WORKING METHODS FOR SC

Addressing root causes, coherence and sustainability
» SC analyses the causes of poverty and conflicts and its commitment is long-term.
» SC works to achieve coherence in development policy, primarily in respect of environmental issues, agriculture, commodity trading and arms trading.
» SC bases the planning of interventions and programmes on possible scenarios.

Partnerships and synergies
» SC works together closely with other departments. It promotes a ‘whole-of-government’ approach and makes use of synergies within the Federal Administration.
» SC works with a mix of partners that is appropriate to the context and intensifies trilateral partnerships and South-South partnerships in a spirit of shared responsibility.
» SC sets great store by multilateral institutions, engages in multilateral donor dialogue and uses this activity to create synergies with global cooperation, including within the framework of ‘multi-bi’ projects.

Focus on effectiveness
» SC systematically brings the experience it has gained from bilateral cooperation to multilateral political dialogue and vice versa.
» SC adopts a systematic approach and aims for cost efficiency and the greatest possible leverage of its interventions.
» At a global level, Switzerland continues to be committed to the Agenda for Effective Development Cooperation, implementing the Agenda’s principles in its country programmes and coordinating its country strategies with the partner countries’ development plans.
GOVERNANCE AND GENDER REMAIN STRONG CORNERSTONES

For SC, poverty is more than a lack of income, food and school education. It also means insecurity, a lack of rights, discrimination and arbitrary state action. In the long term, poverty can only be reduced if the rule of law, human rights and legal systems are promoted. For SC, the strengthening of governmental and administrative structures at all levels of the state and improved governance are means of fostering economic, social and democratic developments. The objective of improved governance is to create enabling state environments and inclusive societies supported by strong civil societies.

SC regards gender equality and the strengthening of the rights and position of women as a basic prerequisite for sustainable development and inclusive, peaceful societies. That is why SC promotes gender equality in programmes and projects and consistently raises it in political dialogue, including with the involvement of relevant state institutions. Particular attention is paid to work with men and boys and to the phenomenon of multiple discrimination in an effort to improve relations between the sexes. Gender equality is both a strategic goal and an instrument in combating poverty, and thus a central part of all SC activities.
SC’s Employees

SC deploys its human and financial resources efficiently and target-oriented.

SC attaches great importance to the methodological, specialist, thematic and social competence of its employees, and their ability to use their own initiative. As an institution that learns, it thus benefits from their experience.

SC fosters the diplomatic skills of its employees in respect of its activities in multilateral and regional processes within the framework of development diplomacy and political dialogue with partner countries.

SC regards as its top priority the protection of its employees, especially in fragile contexts. SC promotes preventive and protective measures in the face of such risks as earthquakes, disease and violence.

SC promotes knowledge and awareness of equality of opportunity and promotes diversity at all levels.

SC relies on the competence and experience of local staff and promotes their positioning. At the same time, it sets great store by the work of Swiss rotational staff in the field.

SC draws on the work of thematic networks, which are a source and a resource for the further development of its professional expertise. It strengthens the position of the networks and the resources available to them. The objectives are effective learning and management to improve SC’s effectiveness.

SC encourages its employees to think in a forward-looking and networked way, and to follow new, innovative paths. With this in mind, management displays a willingness to take calculated risks at the programme level, project level and in its selection of partners. It fosters a conscious and transparent culture of tolerating errors. A corresponding risk statement is being drawn up and will be actively communicated.

SC encourages its employees to be innovative and adopt innovative approaches. Account is taken of the comparative advantages of Switzerland (‘Swissness’). For the purposes of innovation development, SC enters into new partnerships and maintains dialogue with selected innovation-oriented national and international think tanks and competence centres.
ROLE OF SC IN THE SDC AND FDFA

With its long-term and context-specific approach, SC has a key function within the SDC. SC understands its role as being that of a bridge builder between various actors, for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the promotion of development policy coherence. SC promotes and utilises the process of FDFA integration and the integrated embassies on strengthening the creation of institutional synergies and coherence. Within the SDC, SC takes responsibility for leadership in strategic cooperation with the partner countries. It participates actively in the existing whole-of-government approach (WOGA). As part of its interventions in regions experiencing protracted crises, SC strengthens the creation of synergies and a clear division of labour with Humanitarian Aid and civilian peacebuilding. SC attaches special importance to cooperation with the global programmes and steps this up. In this sense, SC perceives itself as a driver of integration with the SDC and has set itself the goal of promoting synergies within SDC as well as within the FDFA.
IMPRINT

Editor:
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
3003 Bern
www.fdfa.admin.ch/sdc

Layout:
Visual Communication FDFA

Cover picture:
Swiss Malaria Group

Specialist contact:
SDC South Cooperation Department
bereichregionalezusammenarbeit@eda.admin.ch

Bern, December 2016