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**Swiss Agency for Development
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Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

The SDC – reliable, innovative, effective

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is the Swiss government's centre of expertise for international cooperation and is in charge of coordinating all of Switzerland's activities in this field. International cooperation has three main pillars, which are divided between the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER): humanitarian aid, development cooperation, and the promotion of peace and human security.

Switzerland's international cooperation strategy is one of its foreign policy instruments and is based on the Federal Constitution. It sets out Switzerland's aim to alleviate need and poverty in the world, foster respect for human rights, promote democracy and protect the environment. Every four years, the Federal Council and Swiss Parliament establish the strategic direction and geographical and thematic focus areas for the following period.

Development cooperation with the South

The SDC's development cooperation with the South contributes to the efforts to reduce poverty in countries and regions across Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and helps these countries and regions to meet global challenges. Most of the priority countries and regions are considered fragile or affected by conflict. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the SDC is phasing out its bilateral development cooperation by 2024 in line with a development policy decision to focus on four priority regions.



Cooperation with Eastern Europe

Swiss cooperation with Eastern Europe assists countries of the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia in building social market economies and in strengthening democracy and the rule of law. Switzerland's contribution to selected EU member states is helping to reduce economic and social disparities within the European Union.



Global programmes

Climate change, food and water crises as well as migration increasingly affect the development prospects of low- and middle-income countries. The SDC has launched a series of thematic global programmes and is engaged in international policy dialogue in a bid to address global challenges and to promote globalisation that favours development.



Humanitarian Aid

The humanitarian aid operations of the SDC are an expression of Switzerland's solidarity towards population groups in distress. The Humanitarian Aid of SDC focuses on emergency aid, the reconstruction and rehabilitation of disaster-stricken areas, and disaster risk reduction. It places the victims at the centre of its engagement in a spirit of neutrality, independence and impartiality.



Multilateral cooperation

Major global challenges such as poverty, global warming, armed conflicts, as well as health and food crises require common solutions and coordinated efforts by the international community. Switzerland is therefore committed to a strong, effective and legitimate multilateral system. In particular, it cooperates with the institutions, programmes and funds of the United Nations and multilateral development banks, but also with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).



The SDC's partners

In order to implement programmes in partner countries, the SDC works closely with partners in Switzerland, with the countries concerned and with international bodies: State institutions, Governments, multilateral organisations and funds, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the private sector. First and foremost, the SDC supports its partner countries' own sustainable development efforts and makes its expertise available to them.



The effectiveness of the SDC's work

Ensuring and measuring the effectiveness of Switzerland's international cooperation work is of paramount importance. The SDC carries out systematic, critical assessments of its activities in order to ensure that its programmes are impact-oriented and that resources are being used sustainably. Clear and measurable goals are set for each project. External assessments ensure that projects achieve their goals and that corrective action can be taken where necessary.

