



International Cooperation

For the period 2013-2016, the Swiss Federal Council has presented a comprehensive Message to Parliament on Switzerland's international cooperation, setting out the operations of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and containing four framework credits. Switzerland's international cooperation encompasses humanitarian aid (within the SDC), technical cooperation and financial assistance for developing countries (SDC), economic and trade policy measures in the framework of development cooperation (SECO) and cooperation with Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (SDC and SECO).

Continuation of Humanitarian Aid (SDC)

The Humanitarian Aid of the SDC has decided to emphasise new aspects of its prevention and crisis-resistance activities, as well as of its advocacy work, victim protection, and multilateral involvement. It is facing especially strong demand to help combat the humanitarian consequences of extreme weather conditions, which are occurring more frequently. In crises and violent conflicts, advocacy for affected individuals, as well as gaining access and protecting victims are of central importance.

Continuation of technical cooperation and financial assistance for developing countries (SDC)

The SDC's development cooperation is focused on the poorest regions of the world and on supporting the efforts of the countries concerned and their populations to overcome poverty and the problems of under-development. In 2013-2016, it will work in the ten following relatively stable poor countries and regions: Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Bolivia, Cuba, Central America. At the same time it will increase its activities in the following fragile contexts: African Great Lakes region, the Horn of Africa, Niger, Southern Africa, Chad, Palestine and North Africa, Hindu Kush, Mekong, Nepal and Haiti.

The programmes focus on:

1. Conflict transformation and crisis resistance, 2. Health care, 3. Water,
4. Elementary and vocational education, 5. Agriculture and food security,
6. Private sector and financial services, 7. State reforms, local administration and citizen participation, 8. Climate change, 9. Migration.

Switzerland continues to participate in those international financial institutions, United Nations agencies and global networks that best advance its concerns and interests in overcoming poverty and global risks, as well as in the management and supervisory bodies of individual multilateral organisations.

Continuation of the financing of economic and trade policy measures within the framework of development cooperation (SECO)

The trade and economic policy measures pursued by SECO in the framework of development cooperation contribute to the sustainable integration of developing countries in the world economy and to job creation. SECO focuses its measures on: 1. Strengthening economic and financial policy, 2. Developing urban infrastructure and utilities, 3. Supporting the private sector and the entrepreneurship, 4. Promoting sustainable trade, 5. Stimulating climate-friendly growth. It focuses its support measures on more advanced developing countries committed to serious and effective reforms. Tunisia has been added to the seven existing focal countries (Egypt, Ghana, South Africa, Indonesia, Vietnam, Colombia and Peru). Economic and trade policy measures are also provided in the poorer countries in a supplementary capacity. SECO aims to achieve ongoing and sustainable growth as the basis for combating poverty.

Pursuing cooperation with the countries of Eastern Europe and the CIS (SDC and SECO)

In the framework of cooperation with Eastern Europe, the SDC and SECO are carrying out joint programmes in the Western Balkans (Albania, Serbia, Macedonia, and Bosnia Herzegovina) and in those countries of the former Soviet Union that are showing the slowest progress in establishing the rule of law, democracy, and social market economics (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and in some aspects in Uzbekistan). Switzerland is supporting the efforts of governments, civil society and the private sector to overcome transition-related problems.