Global Institutions Division
Strategic Framework 2017-2020

The world needs a multilateral system that can deliver on the commitments of the 2030 Agenda

Purpose of the document:

The strategic framework of the Global Institutions Division (GI) aims to articulate GI's priorities and objectives for the next four years, in line with the Dispatch on International Cooperation 2017-2020 as well as Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2016-2019.

The strategic framework provides guidance for the division's annual planning, Core Contribution Management (CCM) and project portfolio management;

It also situates GI and its role and responsibilities within the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and explains how GI engages with partners and what guides its work.

It is aimed at an internal audience (federal administration) but may be shared with selected external partners.

Scope of the document:

The GI strategic framework is deliberately kept short. The listed reference documents as well as the annexes are an integral part of the framework.

Process leading to the present version of the document:

The strategic framework has been elaborated over the course of 2016, first within the GI team, then as part of the Global Cooperation portfolio review exercise, followed by consultations with the teams in New York and Geneva, key partners within SDC and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) *and finally in a broader consultation before its presentation to the SDC Directorate.*

By advancing the elaboration of the new strategic framework by one year, its timeframe is now in sync with the Dispatch on International Cooperation 2017-2020.

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1. Context: SDGs and the role of Multilateral Cooperation

Global: Over the last two decades, the global context has significantly changed. An increased sense of uncertainty, insecurity and disenfranchisement in most parts of the world coincide with increased populism and criticism of globalization. The international efforts to prevent and/or end violent conflicts in parts of Africa and the Middle East have fallen short.

At the same time **global challenges** such as climate change, food security, pandemics, resource scarcity, migration or peace and security cannot be solved by countries on their own but require global solutions. This growing realization has led to renewed multilateral efforts such as the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai in 2015, the World Humanitarian Summit, the COP 21 in Paris, and the foundation of Asian Infrastructure and Development Bank (AIIB) in 2016. The most significant achievement was the adoption of the 2030 Agenda including the Financing for Development Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) in 2015 by the 193 member states of the United Nations .

The **2030 Agenda** provides an overarching framework that guides countries in their efforts to foster sustainable development both at the national level, as well as through international cooperation efforts. The principle of universality, the interconnectedness of the agenda, (as expressed by the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets) as well as the explicit recognition of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability represents a paradigm shift compared to the Millennium Development Goals which focused rather narrowly on poverty reduction and social development in the world's poorest countries. Fragility and gender inequality continue to be key inhibitors of progress while the private sector has the biggest potential for positive change.

Successfully implementing the 2030 Agenda requires a collective effort that is guided by the global normative framework and put into action at regional and national levels. To achieve this, the 2030 Agenda requires sustained intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder engagement as well as **effective multilateral organizations** that have the political legitimacy and universal footprint to advance the implementation of international norms at global, regional and national levels. An effective multilateral system can support countries in their national efforts to implement the agenda and to mobilize domestic resources.

The success of the Agenda 2030 will be the sum total of all the positive changes that will have happened on the ground.

Switzerland: The promotion of sustainable development is one of four pillars of Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2016-2019. The Dispatch 2017-2020 on International Cooperation, approved by Parliament in September 2016, guides Switzerland's international cooperation which is, in turn, part of its national effort towards achieving the Agenda 2030.

The dispatch recognizes multilateral cooperation as one of the center pieces of Switzerland's international cooperation. Complementary to its bilateral engagement, **Switzerland's engagement in multilateral efforts** stems from a political imperative rooted in an understanding of the interdependency of nations. Switzerland benefits directly from an international rules based world order, and its engagement in multilateral fora delivers a large dividend in influence, respect and recognition around the world. The multilateral arena, participatory and ensuring equality among countries, allows Switzerland to build its networks, punch above its weight and amplify its reputation. The compact between the operational and the normative work of multilateral organizations requires Switzerland to engage not only at the intergovernmental level but also with the operational work of the agencies.

Switzerland will thus continue to engage in global norm setting as an active player in **relevant intergovernmental negotiations** within the UN General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and related Functional Commissions, as well as the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

On the operational side, Switzerland prioritizes 15 **multilateral development organizations** and 5 multilateral humanitarian organizations in its multilateral portfolio. The multilateral portfolio has evolved over time to ensure that it encompasses both the evolving global challenges as well as Switzerland's policy priorities. These priority multilateral development organizations receive core contributions that constitute 42 % of the financial resources of the *Rahmenkredit Technische Zusammenarbeit und Finanzhilfe zugunsten von Entwicklungsländern ("Südkredit")*.

The experience over the last years has shown that, given Switzerland's limited resources, maintaining a thematic focus over several years at the intergovernmental level as well as at the operational level can maximize Switzerland's leverage and impact. In particular the thematic areas of fragility, gender and partnerships/private sector have proven to be strategically well chosen to reinforce Switzerlands role as the custodian of a system-wide approach to UN operational activities. At the level of SDCs more can be done to link bilateral cooperation with multilateral cooperation.

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2. GI's role and institutional responsibilities within SDC

Within SDC, the Global Institutions Division is part of the Global Cooperation Domain. Its scope of work includes the following:

A) Services for all of SDC:

- **SDC's Multilateral Budget**: GI manages and administers the budget of SDC's multilateral core contributions to priority organizations (42 % of the Südkredit). The institutional responsibilities for the individual organizations are thematically or geographically allocated to different divisions within SDC. This set-up allows for the necessary overview, oversight and strategic planning.

- **Core Contribution Management System:** GI manages and administers SDC's core contribution management system (CCM) and the annual assessment of results achieved by the multilateral priority organizations (AMPA[1]). The core contributions and the corresponding results are thus brought together which allows for harmonized reporting throughout SDC.

- **International Financial Institutions (IFIs) Board Document Management:** GI manages the information flow for the Executive Board agenda and the corresponding documents for the priority International Financial Institutions (WB, AsDB, AfDB, IDB, AIIB) as well as for IFAD and the IMF.

- **Swiss Staff in Multilateral Organizations:** GI promotes increased representation of Swiss staff within all multilateral priority organizations via the UN JPO and UN Volunteer Programmes, targeted secondments, as well as dialogues with the priority organizations. GI is the entry point for CINFO[2] and for AIO[3] in this regard.

- **Multilateral Network: GI is the host of SDC's multilateral network.** GI is the competence center for multilateral cooperation within SDC and, through the network, actively promotes a more coherent approach within SDC with regard to the multilateral and the bilateral interaction with the priority organizations and the relevant multilateral processes. A strategic discussion regarding the network and its future role will take place in 2017.

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[1] Annual multilateral performance assessment
[2] CINFO: Center for Information, Counselling and Training for Professions relating to International Cooperation
[3] AIO: Division for International Organisations, Political Directorate, FDFA
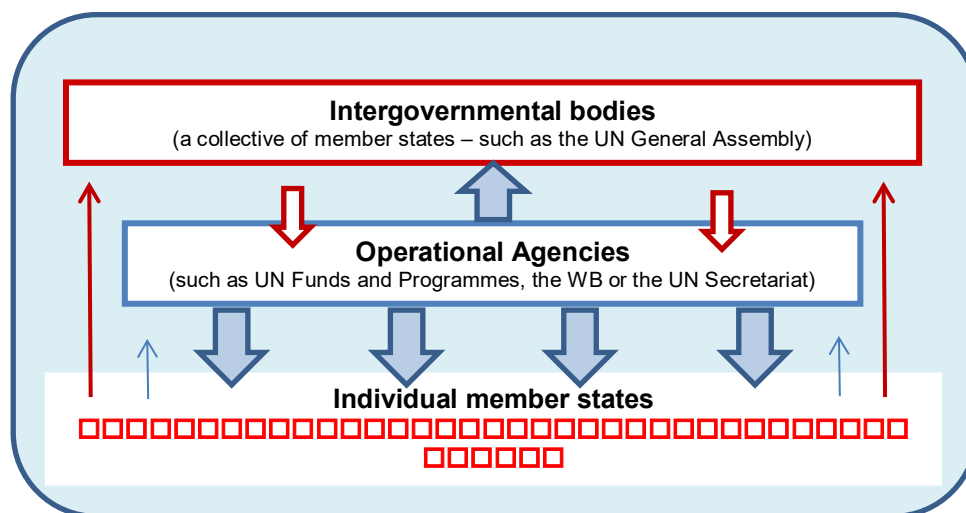
B) Division specific scope of work:

- **Intergovernmental multilateral processes**: GI is responsible for the intergovernmental processes relating to sustainable development in fora under the auspices of the United Nations such as the UNGA, ECOSOC and HLPF. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the HLPF has become the center piece of the intergovernmental debate on sustainable development.

- **Five priority Multilateral Organizations**: GI is in charge of the institutional relationship with five of the fifteen Swiss multilateral priority organizations: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN-Women and, in collaboration with SECO, the World Bank (WB) and, pending an assessment of its regional or global nature, the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank. UNDP and the World Bank are the two central pillars of the multilateral development system. Engagement in the governing boards of the respective organizations is at the heart of GI's efforts to contribute to their better results delivery on the ground.

- **Four priority themes**: Over time, and in line with SDC's priorities, GI has developed its expertise in three priority thematic areas: Fragility, Gender, and Private Sector and Partnerships. All three are key in the implementation of the SDGs but need "affirmative action" for the multilateral system to be able to mainstream them and to produce the transformative results expected. The fourth priority is Asset Recovery/Asset Return and Anti-Corruption.

The multilateral system:

The multilateral system can be divided into intergovernmental bodies (consisting of member states) with their respective secretariats and operational agencies such as UNDP or UNICEF. The operational agencies support member states in their efforts to comply with the norms, standards and goals that member states have collectively agreed on.

All operational agencies depend on donor contributions. Switzerland is a member state and a donor to the multilateral system.

Intergovernmental bodies
(a collective of member states – such as the UN General Assembly)

Operational Agencies
(such as UN Funds and Programmes, the WB or the UN Secretariat)

Individual member states

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3. Objectives and Priorities 2017-2020

Within its scope of work, GI has articulated an overarching goal and three interlinked objectives. They allow GI to focus its efforts and to better communicate its aspirations and role.

**We aim to contribute to a multilateral system that can
deliver on the commitments of the 2030 Agenda**

In practical terms, GI works on the acceleration, accountability and coherence of the 2030 Agenda and to ensure that positive change happens on the ground. The four priority themes 1) gender, 2) fragility, 3) private sector and partnerships and 4) asset recovery/asset return and anti-corruption allow GI to advance on its **three objectives** with a sharpened focus:

1. **Accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda:**
   The success of the 2030 Agenda hinges on the realization that business as usual will not suffice. The transformational character of the Agenda requires the international community and the multilateral organizations to waste no time, be courageous, work hand in hand, increase their effectiveness, and push for reforms where needed. For GI this means working towards:
   - *increased quality of the inter-governmental debate reaching beyond the traditional silos,*
   - *progress on systemic UN and IFI reform efforts,*
   - *increased focus on four thematic priority areas (gender, fragility, private sector and partnerships and asset return) in the intergovernmental fora and priority organizations.*

2. **Ensure accountability for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda:**
   The 2030 Agenda has been called the teamwork of humanity. Teamwork requires all to do their part and to report on their achievements. Multilateral organizations need to improve their results orientation, individual countries need data for evidence based policy decisions and tracking progress, while the international community needs to find a common way of reporting on results; For GI this means working towards:
   - *evidence-based and inclusive "follow-up and review" process of the 2030 Agenda*
   - *effective evaluation functions and better results orientation in priority organizations*
   - *improved alignment of budget, objectives and results in priority organizations*

3. **Improve policy coherence for the 2030 Agenda in Switzerland's multilateral cooperation**:
   Sustainable development can only be achieved through policy coherence. Coherence starts at home and with increased mutual understanding of roles and mandates. For GI this means working towards:
   - *increased understanding within SDC, the Swiss administration and the broader public on the role of multilateral efforts for sustainable development (see separate concept paper)*
   - *closer links between SDC's bilateral collaboration with priority organizations and the multilateral institutional dialogues*

4. Partners and Approach

Partners:

At the core of multilateralism lies the idea that no one can do it alone. This also guides the way GI works. Its most valuable assets are its networks, its outreach and its voice. As a team, GI strives to be pragmatic, competent and approachable *("PKZ": pragmatisch, kompetent und zugänglich)* in its relationships with all partners.

GI's work is supported by strong partnerships within SDC both from the global and bilateral domains as well as humanitarian aid, excellent and close collaboration with the Directorate of Political Affairs (in particular the Division for International Organizations (AIO)), the Directorate of International Law, the Economic Cooperation and Development Division of SECO and the international divisions of many other parts of the Federal Administration. GI is also an active member of the Taskforce 2030.

Beyond the Federal Administration, GI works not only with other member states and international organizations but also with NGOs, think-tanks, academia and the private sector. This broad range of partners reflects the wide range of engagements needed to advance the 2030 Agenda. Communication and outreach is crucial in fostering partnerships of all sorts. For GI communication means to inform, to advocate and to engage. A brief concept note is included in Annex C.

Approach:

- The elevator: Similar to SDC's Global Programmes, GI tries to ensure the link (*aka "the elevator"*) between the development reality in an individual country, the international debate and the priorities of the multilateral development system. This allows Switzerland to imbue policy debates with a reality check and a dose of pragmatism. Key to the elevator are the relationships and exchanges with Swiss staff members of multilateral organizations as well as SDC staff in the field.

- The systemic approach: GI tries to look at the multilateral development system as a whole - focusing on its functioning as an organism - instead of prioritizing individual sectors. This does not prevent it from applying "acupuncture" to specific parts of the system – with a view to improving its overall performance. The systemic approach to multilateralism includes ensuring the links between its parts like the WB and the UN and within that, international Geneva with its specific thematic and technical competences, and UN Headquarters in NY and the UN hubs such as Rome or Vienna.

- The bridge-builder: GI builds on the long-standing reputation of Switzerland as a bridge-builder and broker of compromise solutions and welcomes all forms of facilitation mandates. This sometimes requires the Swiss national positions to take a back seat but is a key investment in networks and knowledge, which in turn translates into influence and opportunities.

5. Resources

Human resources (as of September 2016):

In addition to the GI team in Berne, there are three "outposts" at the Swiss Missions in New York and Geneva, as well as in the World Banks's Executive Director's Office in Washington.

- Global Institutions Division Team (Berne):   13.9 FTEs,
- Sustainable Development and Humanitarian Team (Mission NY):   5.8 FTEs[4],
- Thematic Section (Mission Geneva):   1 FTE[5]
- Executive Director Office (WB Washington):   2 FTEs

All teams welcome trainees and interns who provide valuable additional support. The staff members listed only include posts allocated to GI. The teams in NY, DC and Geneva are composite teams including staff members from Humanitarian Aid, the political Directorate (NY and GE) and SECO (DC). The organizational charts of all four teams can be found in the Annex.

The increasing interest in the 2030 Agenda has been putting a lot of pressure on the SDH Team in NY and the thematic section in GE. Should this trend continue, solutions could include secondments from other parts of the Federal Administration. No additional SDC posts are currently foreseen.

Multilateral Budget

As the custodian of the multilateral budget of the "Rahmenkredit Süd", GI manages the commitment and disbursement cycles for the core contributions to the priority organizations, provides budget overviews and coordinates the strategic debate on multilateral resource allocations with SDC's Regional Divisions, Global Programs, and SECO (for the IFIs).

The dispatch 2017-2020 breaks down the basic allocation by type of multilateral organization (66% IFIs; 24% UN; 10% Funds and Networks). The amount of CHF 2.77 billion over 4 years demonstrates Switzerland's commitment to core contributions for its priority organizations.

The decreasing core contributions by other donors and the resulting debate on performance based allocation, investment approaches and light-earmarking of core contributions are going to be at the forefront of the debate in the years to come. GI's coordination role will help to ensure coherence within the Swiss positions on these issues. GI will explore the possibility of light earmarking and linking part of the core contributions to results achieved for the core UN Agencies it is responsible for (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNWOMEN). Efforts to harmonization Switzerland's commitment periods with the cycle of the strategic plans of the respective multilateral organizations will continue.

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[4] Of the 5.8 FTEs, four FTEs are programme staff and two FTEs are support staff.
[5] Shared with SDC Global Programme Health (GPH)

GI Division Budget & Portfolio

The budget of GI is allocated to projects that support its three objectives. The budget allocations alone are no indication of relative strategic importance: for some issues - especially advancing the intergovernmental agenda – staff time (and brains) is more important than funding. For others, such as the thematic priority areas, financial contributions can be the entry ticket to the institutional policy dialogue.

The main part of the portfolio is clustered around the four thematic areas:
- o Gender
- o Fragility
- o Private Sector and partnerships
- o Asset Return

The rest of the portfolio can roughly be split into four baskets of smaller projects:
- o Evaluation and results orientation of priority organizations
- o Accountability for the 2030 Agenda
- o Reform of the UN development system
- o Potpourri and strategic acupuncture

The budget of the GI Division is forecast to be stable for the duration of the Dispatch 2017-2020. However, the fact that previous commitments were based on a scenario of increasing budgets resulted in unsustainable over-planning. The necessary cuts are painful and substantive.
As a rule, the cuts have to take into account contractual obligations and commitments to partners. A number of projects will be terminated after the current phase. Efforts are being made to have some projects taken over by other parts of SDC or another directorate of the FDFA and negotiations on payment schedules will be undertaken.

Within the thematic areas, the allocations for "fragility" and "gender" will decrease, equally "asset recovery/asset return and anticorruption" will terminate one partnership. "Private sector and partnerships" will see a slight increase.

The financial consolidation exercise should result in a sustainable 2:1 balance between the allocation to the four thematic areas and the rest of the portfolio.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

In line with GI's aspiration of a pragmatic approach the monitoring and the reporting on the implementation of the GI strategic framework builds on existing processes and documents.

- For each priority organization the CCM cycle (harmonized with the organization's own planning cycle) establishes Switzerland's priorities and objectives and includes relevant indicators to measure progress.

- For each of the four thematic areas, there is either a SDC or a FDFA strategy or concept paper that guides GIs engagement on the issue.

- For the systemic approach to the multilateral development system, the guiding documents include "A resolution for a quiet revolution"[6] as well as position papers established in response to relevant UN and WB reports and processes.

The monitoring of the GI strategic framework is supported by two annual documents:

The annual report is an accountability, planning and internal communication tool. A narrative part is complemented by aggregated selective results (based on the results-framework in Annex 1).

The annual workplan (aka "Detailplanung") is a management tool that will reflect the outputs, activities, major milestones and timelines of each individual staff member's responsibilities. Each individual output is linked to one of the 8 outcomes of the results-framework in Annex 1 or allocated to "GI core tasks". These "core tasks" are the regular items within GI's workload – such as CCM reporting and core contribution credit proposal writing.

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[6] A resolution for a quiet revolution: taking the United Nations to sustainable development 'beyond aid'; Wennubst, Pio / Timo Casjen Mahn; Discussion Paper 22/2013; German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

Outcomes (what we want to happen)	Suggested selective indicators of "success"
Accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda	
1) measurable progress on systemic UN and IFI reform and operational results are achieved	- The QCPR 2016 has a reliable Results-Framework allowing measuring progress on UN reform and selected Indicators (tbd building on QCPR 2016) improve over time - The WB Group uses its four institutions in a mutually supportive manner in particular in fragile contexts (e.g. forward look) - The UN Development system and the World Bank Group further strengthen and institutionalize elements of their partnership in context affected by fragility, conflict and violence.
2) improved and measurable results are achieved in the four thematic priority areas (gender, fragility-conflict-violence, private sector and partnerships and asset return and anti-corruption) in intergovernmental fora and in priority organizations	- Normative Frameworks in the thematic priority areas include Swiss positions (e.g. CSW) - Priority multilateral organizations articulate and implement coherent and results-orientated plans on the four thematic priory areas (e.g. Fragility-Conflict-Violence) and translate them into action at field level - Forced displacement: Development solutions continue to be promoted and are increasingly implemented by the UN system as well as the WB
Ensure accountability for the 2030 Agenda	
3) "follow-up and review" process of the 2030 Agenda including FFD is evidence-based and inclusive	- The national reports, and the follow-up and review processes on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda including FFD are largely evidence based - The elaboration and presentation of the national reports at the HLPF is inclusive and allows for multi-stakeholder engagement (eg. shadow reporting). Relevant stakeholders (e.g. civil society, private sector, academia) are systematically included in the intergovernmental debates and mechanisms - Synergies and coherence across different sectors, SDGs and processes are purposefully promoted at intergovernmental level (e.g. ECOSOC Review)) - Data, evidence and analysis are available and used to inform intergovernmental policy decisions (e.g. GSDR)
4) priority organizations have improved alignment between strategic plans, objectives, results and resources (agreed)	- Priority organizations have harmonized their cost recovery methodology and report transparently - Annual Planning and reporting of priority organizations links results and resources
5) priority organizations have more effective evaluation functions and are more results-oriented	- the results frameworks of the priority multilateral organizations are harmonized with the SDGs' indicators - The implementation of evaluation recommendations are systemically tracked - Priority Organizations have resource targets for evaluation established and report on them.
Improve policy coherence for sustainable development within Switzerland's multilateral Cooperation	
6) increased understanding within SDC, the Swiss administration and the broader public on the role of multilateral development efforts	- See Communication and Outreach concept - Number of tailor-made communication products and outreach activities delivered - Use of existing externally produced communication tools/products that are thematically relevant for GI.
7) GI and SDC's bilateral and global cooperation (HQ and field levels) collaborate and engage more closely on multilateral approaches and institutional/thematic issues	- All new and rotational staff briefed on GI's multilateral engagement and work programme - Support tools for multilateral engagement (e.g. field handbook,) updated and built on best practices - Partnerships established with selected number of SCOs on GI thematic / institutional priorities - GI active engagement in thematic networks and relevant moments forts (e.g. OPKOM entry proposal, first phase, elaboration of thematic strategies etc.)