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# Swiss Position on a Framework for Sustainable Development Post-2015



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## Contents

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Executive Summary.....	2
1 Background .....	4
2 Looking Back and Ahead.....	4
2.1 Building on the Millennium Declaration and the Achievements of the Millennium Development Goals.....	5
2.2 Building on the Rio Principles and Agenda 21 .....	6
2.3 Towards a New Agenda on Global Sustainable Development.....	6
2.4 Towards a New Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.....	7
3 Significance for Switzerland.....	7
3.1 Swiss Commitment.....	7
3.2 Implementation in Switzerland .....	8
4 Important Elements of a new Framework for Sustainable Development Post-2015 .	9
4.1 Principles.....	9
4.2 Characteristics of Goals .....	11
4.3 Means of Implementation .....	12
4.4 Measurement and Monitoring.....	13
5 Key Thematic Areas .....	14
6 Process.....	23

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## **Executive Summary**

This paper puts forward Switzerland's official position in the context of international discussions on a Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015. Coordinated by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), the paper was prepared with the active participation of 16 federal offices. The first draft was submitted to the Federal Council on 26 June 2013 as part of the Swiss priorities for the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly. It has now been updated in the light of national and international discussions. Several broad-based national consultations were held during the drafting process, which has been ongoing since the autumn of 2012, and inputs from civil society, the private sector, scientific community and policy makers were incorporated. The Federal Council approved the Swiss position on 25 June 2014 within the framework of the Decision on Swiss priorities for the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly. It forms the basis of the negotiation mandate of the Swiss delegation to be elaborated by the end of 2014 for the intergovernmental negotiations on a Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015.

### **Key Swiss Concerns Regarding a Framework for Sustainable Development Post-2015**

At the international level, the issues of poverty eradication and sustainable development have so far been addressed under different processes and by various communities (Millennium Declaration 2000, Stockholm Declaration 1972 and Rio Declaration 1992, 2002 and 2012). Post-2015 both these processes are to be converged and poverty eradication and sustainable development addressed in an overarching framework with common priorities and goals. Switzerland supports this initiative and advocates for a comprehensive global framework for sustainable development post-2015.

Switzerland advocates that the overarching objective of a new framework post-2015 should be to achieve sustainable development and the eradication of extreme poverty in all its forms, while respecting planetary boundaries, fostering peace and inclusive societies and meeting human rights obligations. The Swiss position is guided by five principles: respect for human rights, planetary boundaries, social inclusion and justice, universality and policy coherence.

Switzerland has defined its position on a total of 16 thematic areas from amongst the numerous issues discussed under the Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015. These are elaborated in greater detail in this paper (Chapter 5). Switzerland will specifically promote individual goals in the four thematic areas of water, health, gender equality, and peace and inclusive societies. Switzerland will also actively support the prominent integration of the following issues: disaster risk reduction, shift towards sustainable consumption and production, and promoting the economic and social benefits of migration.

The new framework must include all countries. The goals must be universally applicable and at the same time allow differentiated approaches and country-specific adaptation. The goals must be action-oriented, time-bound, limited in number, clear and easy to communicate, and measurable through clear targets and indicators. In drawing up the new framework, Switzerland advocates for the rigorous integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) at the level of the overall agenda and the individual goals.

### **Implementation and impact**

With its approach emphasizing universality and the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, the Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015 will bring about a paradigm shift in international cooperation. The contents of previous global goal frameworks as well as their implementation and financing will be significantly broadened to include new thematic areas, instruments and actors.

Cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors will play an important role in implementing ambitious, universal goals. Rules, policies and responsibilities should be defined within the framework of a new global partnership for sustainable development so as to make available the means of implementation, create an enabling environment at the international level and ensure accountability and monitoring of the achievement of goals.

The creation of an enabling international environment involves several important elements, such as elaborating coherent sectoral policies at the national and international level, the development, transfer and dissemination of environmentally sound and resource-efficient technologies, capacity building and expansion as well as a rule-based, open and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system. One significant instrument for implementing the new framework will also be the availability of financing for sustainable development. Apart from official development assistance (ODA), which continues to be critical especially for the poorest countries, additional resources and financing channels must be integrated. These include domestic resource mobilisation, innovative financing instruments and private financial resources, such as direct investments in sustainable development, remittances by migrants and funds from foundations and philanthropic donors.

To ensure implementation of the Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015, a universal mechanism for periodic review, accountability and progress reporting of the achievement of goals should be established under the new High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. This would also necessitate that the metrics for measuring sustainable development be further improved.

Given the universal character of the new goals, Switzerland will also contribute to their implementation under its domestic and foreign policies. Apart from providing assistance to less developed countries, Switzerland will also adopt measures for implementing the framework domestically. The Sustainable Development Strategy 2016-2019 shall define specific goals for implementation in Switzerland based on the new framework that will contribute to achieving the global goals.

### **International negotiation process**

The process that has been ongoing since 2012 and will continue until the approval of the new goals framework at a UN summit in September 2015 is complex as well as conceptually and politically challenging. This is partly due to the broad thematic scope and complex architecture. While the Group of 77 and China broadly advocate a continuation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Western countries (including the EU and USA) have pressed for greater integration of economic and environmental concerns as well as peace and security, governance and human rights, which are especially contentious. From the outset, Switzerland has been actively engaged in the international preparatory process. Switzerland's position on various issues will be along the lines laid out in this document.

## 1 Background

For more than a decade, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been the dominant development paradigm and organising framework. They have substantially contributed to focusing development cooperation efforts, strengthening the accountability requirement and mobilising support. In view of the 2015 expiry date, the MDG Summit Meeting of 2010 requested UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to launch a consultative process on a follow-up framework after 2015. To that effect, the Secretary-General established a UN System Task Team in 2011 – co-chaired by the UNDP and UN DESA – to coordinate preparations and to support the work of a High-level Panel which he appointed in May 2012 to advise him on the post-2015 UN development agenda.

In June 2012, on the occasion of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, another mandate with similar aspirations was born: the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Rio+20 outcome document *The Future We Want* mandated the creation of an inter-governmental Open Working Group, that will submit a report to the 68th session of the General Assembly (between September 2013 and September 2014) containing a proposal for SDGs. The outcome document furthermore stipulated that the goals should address and incorporate in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) and their inter-linkages, and be coherent with and integrated into the post-2015 UN development agenda.

At the Special Event on the MDGs and the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda held in September 2013 during the 68th session of the UN General Assembly, the international community agreed that both agendas (post-MDGs and SDGs) should be converged. Formal convergence will take place with the commencement of the political process and the intergovernmental negotiations at the end of 2014 or beginning of 2015. The objective is to adopt the new Framework for Sustainable Development at a summit in September 2015.

## 2 Looking Back and Ahead

In the last years, the world has faced a protracted global crisis: unemployment rates are at an all-time high, environmental threats have heightened, unsustainable consumption and production patterns as well as demographic development have increased pressure on natural resources, and persistent inequalities are eroding social cohesion. At the same time, globalisation and growing global interconnectedness as well as new technological developments and innovations in all areas provide opportunities. These challenges and opportunities concern developed, emerging and developing countries, and oblige the international community to rethink global development and its agenda. At the Rio+20 Summit, UN member states recognised the need for a holistic framework for sustainable development, integrating economic, social and environmental concerns, in order to overcome the global challenges facing the planet.

Whatever a new framework may look like, it needs to address the challenges of a world that is fundamentally different from that of 2000, when the MDGs were drawn up: nowadays, a majority of poor people live in middle income countries; the global inequality gap has widened and inequalities within most countries have risen; climate change, natural disasters, biodiversity loss, new forms of violence, conflict and fragility etc. are making developmental progress increasingly precarious; in the most polluted and most populated areas, air pollution is becoming health-threatening; urbanisation, migration and demographic change offer both opportunities and challenges.

The global political landscape has also changed: challenges such as economic and climatic shocks as well as interdependence have increased global risks and insecurity, making cooperation more important. At the same time, emerging economies have changed the face of multilateralism, e.g. with the emergence of the G20. Emerging economies are also increasingly important as donors to low income countries. While official aid budgets are increasingly under pressure in the context of the ongoing economic downturn, non-governmental actors, private or philanthropic donors assume an important role.

## 2.1 Building on the Millennium Declaration and the Achievements of the Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Declaration was adopted by the heads of state at the Millennium Summit in 2000. Its implementation framework, the MDGs, were proposed in 2001 by the UN Secretary General and the UN System as an effective implementation plan for the Millennium Declaration. Although the MDGs have never been formally negotiated and endorsed, they have gained wide acceptance and support. The Millennium Declaration remains a relevant foundation for a Framework for Sustainable Development Post-2015. The Declaration's main pillars of peace and human security, development and poverty eradication, human rights, democracy and good governance, the protection of those in need and the protection of the environment remain relevant today.

The MDGs have demonstrated the value of translating a shared vision on development into concrete time-bound goals. They put a focus on key challenges and have mobilised resources and global action from the development community and beyond.

In 2014, one year before the deadline to achieve the MDGs, broad progress can be reported. The target of reducing extreme poverty by half has been reached: extreme (income) poverty (less than USD 1.25 per day) fell from over 2 billion people (47%) in 1990 to less than 1.2 billion people (22%) in 2010. Since 2010, income poverty has been decreasing in every developing region – including in sub-Saharan Africa, where rates are still highest. The target on access to safe drinking water has also been met and improvements in the lives of 200 million slum dwellers exceeded the corresponding target. Other MDG targets are well on track, such as those for hunger, nutrition and gender parity in primary education, whereas gender inequality in general persists and women continue to face discrimination. The achievement of other targets such as maternal mortality and biodiversity is lagging very far behind.

Despite remarkable results achieved in numerous respects, the MDG framework has also several shortcomings. For example, the emphasis on global targets went to the detriment of accounting for national circumstances and differences in initial conditions. Not meeting certain globally set targets has led to the perception of failure, especially in the case of African countries, even though substantial progress has been made in specific areas. A further critique is that the MDGs have masked inequalities: the formulation of targets in terms of averages allows the impression of progress, even in cases where inequality has been growing. In some countries, progress has been concentrated among the better-off whereas the poorest and most vulnerable have seen little or no change.

The silo approach and poor integration of the dimensions of sustainability (social aspects, the economy and the environment) is another shortcoming of the MDGs. Issues that have not been adequately addressed include social protection/exclusion, disability, biodiversity and other environmental aspects, chronic undernutrition and malnutrition, non-communicable diseases, complexities related to demographic dynamics, quality of education, peace and inclusive societies, governance, the rule of law, human rights, culture, and the role of growth and jobs. Although referred to in the Millennium Declaration, inequalities in general have been neglected by the MDG-framework. Gender equality and women's empowerment were too narrowly focused on school education and were insufficiently addressed with MDG 3. Issues such as violence against women and girls, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and discrimination (e.g. with regard to sex, race/ethnicity, class/caste, age, religion, disability and sexual orientation) were not integrated. MDG 7 did not cover all relevant environmental issues and did not allow for integrating environmental issues into other MDGs. Neither did the framework account for vulnerability to natural hazards and other external shocks. Hence, the MDGs predominantly addressed the symptoms instead of the root causes of poverty and suffering.

It has also become evident that some targets were not formulated adequately or broadly enough. This is the case for MDG 3, which is too narrow in scope, or the rather vague goal on Global Partnership (MDG 8), which has not succeeded in strengthening accountability for promised international support. Finally, the MDGs focus more on quantitative (cf. MDG 1, focus on income poverty) than on qualitative results, and hence neglect the multidimensional and systemic nature of poverty. Thus, they provided little guidance on how the different actors involved should address underlying factors of poverty.



## 2.2 Building on the Rio Principles and Agenda 21

One of the defining moments for sustainable development was the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Reaffirming and building on the Stockholm Declaration, the outcome of the UN Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, it led to a number of international instruments that continue to provide the framework for sustainable development. These include the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Agenda 21. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, an implementation plan (*Johannesburg Plan of Implementation JPOI*) was adopted, which includes practical approaches to applying sustainable development policies at the local and the national level.

To date, Agenda 21 and the JPOI remain the most comprehensive undertaking by the UN system to promote sustainable development. While there are some gaps in coverage (e.g. energy and mining), most of the issues that humanity has been struggling with are covered by the chapters of Agenda 21. However, the implementation of Agenda 21 and the JPOI is far from what was expected in 1992 and 2002. Progress has been varied, and most Agenda 21 and JPOI objectives have not been realised. For example, despite several initiatives in terms of fostering sustainable consumption and production, the world has seen little if any progress with regard to reaching the objectives and mandates set out in Agenda 21 and the JPOI. Another major concern remaining is the protection of the atmosphere: reducing the greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants that are clogging the planet's atmosphere. Insufficient progress has also been achieved with regard to human settlement objectives.

Among the major lessons learnt are the shortcomings of the Agenda's as well as the JPOI's design: similarly to the MDG framework, the different issues were covered separately as sectoral issues. This is in direct contradiction of the concept of integration that lies at the heart of sustainable development, which seeks to promote cross-sectoral solutions.

In its 1987 report, the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission) defined the concept of sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The report also emphasised the interdependence of economic, social and ecological processes and formed the basis of the three dimension concept endorsed by the UN following the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Today more recent concepts exist that propose an integrative understanding of sustainability. The three dimension model however continues to be used in international negotiations within the UN framework.

## 2.3 Towards a New Agenda on Global Sustainable Development

Although poverty eradication and sustainable development have been addressed at the international level in separate strands within different communities, one stemming from the Millennium Declaration and the other from a series of UN summits on sustainable development, the MDG post-2015 process and the work on SDGs need to be brought together towards *one* overarching framework with common priority challenges and objectives. As a result, Switzerland argues in favour of a universal framework post-2015 with global coverage, valid for all countries.

Crucially, many elements of such a conceptual framework are already detailed in the Rio+20 Outcome document and in other conference outcomes and international agreements. The UN Task Team's 2012 publication, *Realising the Future We Want for All*, elaborates on these points from the perspective of the UN system. In the interests of policy coherence, the relationship between post-2015 sustainable development goals, the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 as well as JPOI, the MDGs and other international goals for specific sectors or topics (e.g. education, energy, biodiversity, women's rights, peace and human security) needs to be addressed. Examples are the Beijing Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, the New Deal on Engagement in Fragile States, and internationally agreed environmental goals (Global Environmental Goals, GEGs) from e.g. the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. Respective follow-up processes (such as ICPD+20, Beijing+20 and

post-Hyogo Framework for Action) should be integrated within a comprehensive Post-2015-/SDG-Agenda.

In building on these outcome documents and goals, a new framework for sustainable development should in the first place address the issue of better integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development. New sustainable development goals have to be embedded in a narrative of transformative change, which is needed to realise a common vision of a sustainable reduction of poverty in all its forms; social inclusion; and universal human development that respects human dignity, human rights and planetary boundaries.

## **2.4 Towards a New Global Partnership for Sustainable Development**

The term “global partnership” is used by the international community to refer to the global rules, policies and responsibilities that are intended to create an enabling international environment for the implementation of jointly agreed objectives. In the context of the Millennium Development Goals, MDG 8 (Global Partnership for Development) defines specific means and responsibilities for their implementation. These include financial aid in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA) or debt relief for poor countries, open and rule-based trading systems, access to technologies and to affordable essential drugs.

This global partnership needs to be evaluated in the light of new objectives and its scope widened to form a *new* Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. It should reflect the multipolar world order, the universal nature of the new goal framework and the growing importance of non-governmental actors, who are, in fact, already contributing substantially to sustainable development. Various private sector actors advance sustainable development, e.g. through innovative products and services and by providing employment, education and training. Many civil society organisations possess expertise in different areas of sustainable development and exercise an important monitoring role. Large sections of the scientific community also play a key role in sustainable development through education, research and innovation. Research partnerships between the scientific community and governmental and private actors in the North and South are crucial to strengthening knowledge transfer that will pave the way for a transformation to sustainable development.

The Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation, established under the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan 2011, is one such platform that promotes partnership and cooperation between governmental and multilateral development actors, the private sector, civil society and the scientific community in the area of development cooperation.

A new Global Partnership for Sustainable Development will also have to address financing in the light of a globalised and complex financing architecture and evaluate the opportunities for new and alternative financing instruments.

## **3 Significance for Switzerland**

### **3.1 Swiss Commitment**

Sustainable development is enshrined in Switzerland’s Federal Constitution. Article 2 (Object) declares sustainable development to be a national objective and Article 73 (Sustainability) calls upon the Confederation and the cantons to strive for “a balanced relationship between nature and its ability to renew itself, on the one hand, and the demands placed by the human race, on the other”. Further, Article 54 of the Federal Constitution elaborates on Switzerland's commitment "to alleviating need and poverty in the world, and to promoting respect for human rights, democracy, the peaceful coexistence of nations, and the preservation of natural resources”.

The main policy focus areas for sustainable development are set out by the Federal Council in its Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2015. It is based on the broad definition of sustainable development that was drawn up in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development for



the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro (*Brundtland Definition*). In this strategy, the Federal Council declares its commitment with respect to the "renewal of Millennium Development Goals towards targets for global sustainable development" (measure 8-2).

The Swiss Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015 reaffirms Switzerland's commitment to sustainable development and emphasises its responsibility, as a country that has significantly benefited from globalisation, to act and to tackle the issue in a holistic, constructive and committed way. The strategy clearly emphasises the importance of the field of international cooperation (with countries of the South and East, and in providing humanitarian aid as well as economic development cooperation) and of strengthening human security (peace promotion, human rights, humanitarian policy, and international issues of migration).

In its Dispatch on International Cooperation 2013-16, the Federal Council stipulates a holistic approach to development. Its overall purpose is defined as "global sustainable development in order to reduce poverty and global risks", while respecting, strengthening and protecting human rights. It also emphasises its increased engagement in fragile and conflict affected contexts, in which MDGs are out of reach.

Furthermore, the Federal Council's dispatch concerning the continuation of measures relating to civilian peace-building and the promotion of human rights 2012-16, gives a strategic answer to threats to peace and human security, which are both preconditions for sustainable development.

In the context of the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability as well as the Rio+20 Conference, Switzerland actively promoted the idea of SDGs. In the context of the post-2015 UN development agenda, it co-leads two global thematic consultations of the UN Development Group (UNDG): *Water* (with the Netherlands, Jordan and Liberia) and *Population Dynamics* (with Bangladesh). Switzerland is also represented in the Open Working Group on SDGs, in which it shares a seat with France and Germany. Based on the success of the MDGs, in 2006 Switzerland launched the idea of compiling internationally agreed environmental goals (Global Environmental Goals, GEGs), of which a selection was used in order to measure progress in the 5<sup>th</sup> Global Environment Outlook. In 2005 and 2010, the Federal Council informed the Swiss public through progress reports about Switzerland's contribution towards the implementation of the MDGs and the results achieved.

### **3.2 Implementation in Switzerland**

In contrast to the Millennium Development Goals, which mainly comprise targets for developing countries, the new framework shall be universal (cf. 4.1 below). Consequently, the implementation of the Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015 entails that apart from providing assistance to less developed countries, Switzerland shall adopt measures for implementing the framework domestically along with measures for greater policy coherence. Specific goals for implementation in Switzerland shall be elaborated based on the new framework. These shall contribute to achieving the global goals.

Concretely this means that in the period after 2016, Switzerland's national Sustainable Development Strategy will be aligned with future global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Measures for achieving global goals based on the targets of the new framework shall be formulated for all relevant Swiss policy areas. Sustainable development is viewed as a cross-cutting theme to be mainstreamed in these policy areas. In addition, the Sustainable Development Strategy should further serve as a comprehensive guidance document for other sectoral strategies and action plans (e.g. the Swiss International Strategy for Education, Research and Innovation, Energy Strategy 2050, Green Economy Action Plan, Swiss Biodiversity Strategy, Cleantech Masterplan) and periodic progress reports with regard to implementation must be ensured.

The implementation of these ambitious goals requires cooperation between the Confederation, cantons, local authorities, actors from civil society, the private sector and other relevant sectors. Many of these actors are already making significant contributions to sustainable development, both within the country and outside. They are therefore being consulted accordingly during the drafting of the new national Sustainable Development strategy and the domestic implementation of global goals for sustainable development.

## 4 Important Elements of a new Framework for Sustainable Development Post-2015

The overarching objective of a new framework for post-2015 should be: achieving sustainable development and eradicating extreme poverty in all its forms while respecting planetary boundaries, the fostering of peace and inclusive societies, and the fulfilment of human rights obligations and commitments. Respective goals and targets should provide a coherent and comprehensive response to global challenges until 2030, with a longer-term vision until 2050 for transformative change towards sustainable development in order to ensure prosperity for current and future generations.

### 4.1 Principles

Switzerland considers five principles as necessary underlying elements to address the global challenges of the post-2015 era. They are intended to provide the foundation of an inclusive and rights-based agenda for achieving a better life for all human beings while respecting the planet's limited resources:

#### *i) Human Rights*

A new transformative Framework for Sustainable Development needs to include and make strong reference to human rights, including economic, social, and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights. Since the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, it has been acknowledged that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. All human rights guarantees, regardless of their legal nature, contain duties to abstain, to protect and to guarantee from which specific obligations and guidelines for action can be derived. In specific cases they form a strong legitimacy and a foundation for sustainable, inclusive development paths. They may serve as practical guidelines to design and monitor sustainable development strategies, by distinguishing between duty-bearers and rights-holders or by prioritising equal access to clean drinking water and sanitation, adequate food, clean air, land, education, adequate housing and health services.

The future framework will be based on and refer to existing international human rights instruments (e.g. UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and further additional international human rights conventions and protocols) and key political consensus documents (e.g. Programme of Action endorsed by the International Conference on Population and Development ICPD, Beijing Platform for Action).

Switzerland is strongly committed to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights. Its international cooperation is therefore based on a human rights-based approach that focuses on people and their dignity. Switzerland is particularly committed to promoting, protecting and respecting the rights of women and girls as well as protecting children and respecting their rights. A further key issue for Switzerland is business and human rights. In consultation with relevant stakeholders, including from the private sector, Switzerland will prepare a national action plan for implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights by December 2014. Thus, the whole agenda as well as specific goals will build on human rights, recalling the rights and fundamental freedoms which are guaranteed to any person.

#### *ii) Planetary Boundaries*

The concept of planetary boundaries outlines a "safe operating space for humanity" as a precondition for sustainable development. A framework for sustainable development and its implementation into practice have to respect natural limitations, the sustainability limits of ecosystems and planetary boundaries.

A healthy environment and resilient ecosystems are a precondition for sustainable development. Therefore it is necessary to take into account the fact that natural renewable resources are limited by the services of ecosystems, their flows and their space, whereas non-renewable natural resources are limited in absolute terms. While fostering the implementation of policies to overcome poverty and

social exclusion, and to enhance social resilience, the healthy functioning of the Earth's ecosystems has to be maintained through protection and sustainable management of natural resources. The latter is a precondition for fair and just access to, as well as distribution of, natural resources and goods while respecting human rights obligations and commitments. Thus, planetary boundaries provide a safe space for innovation, growth and development.

### *iii) Social Inclusion and Justice*

Inclusive sustainable development requires tackling structural causes of inequalities and their manifestation of exclusion in everyday life, particularly faced by women and youth, as well as by vulnerable groups (e.g. the poorest social classes, marginalised rural and mountain communities, members of indigenous and other minority groups, persons with disabilities, older and displaced people). Thus, social inequality and discrimination along specific categories such as sex, race/ethnicity, class/caste, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, etc. need to be eliminated. Therefore, to address inequalities, and in particular to mainstream gender equality and strengthen the status of women and their rights, should be a fundamental principle underpinning the entire goal framework. Particular attention needs to be paid to the aspect of multiple discrimination.

Switzerland strongly supports efforts to remove social, cultural, political, legal, administrative and financial impediments to development, e.g. in terms of access to basic services, natural resources, decent jobs, education, entrepreneurship and technology, as well as to foster social inclusion and justice, in particular the establishment of trusted and inclusive security and justice institutions. By promoting equality of opportunity and of outcomes and by fostering the assignment of autonomy, responsibility and empowerment for all – particularly poor, vulnerable and marginalised populations as well as women and girls – the root causes of poverty can be effectively addressed.

A culturally sensitive approach is essential for achieving inclusive sustainable development that benefits all. At the same time, cultural or religious practices must never serve as a justification for restricting or violating human rights. Promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue as well as leveraging the potential of cultural and artistic resources supports the inclusion of marginalised groups. It is also important for fostering peace and for sustainable development as a whole.

Sustainable development implies intergenerational justice: framing and orienting current political and economic activities in order to enable future generations to grow up healthy, well nourished, resilient, well educated, as well as protected from violence and neglect, in a healthy, reliable and resilient environment.

### *iv) Universality*

Greater interdependence among countries and the global challenges ahead will require a universal Framework for Sustainable Development, with responsibilities shared by all countries. National priority setting must be aligned with global ambitions in a way that context-specific goals and targets at the national level add to global solutions. This would ensure that every country contributes its share to the achievement of universal goals according to its capacity and national circumstances.

This process should set the terms for a much stronger global partnership for sustainable development. A stable and enabling international environment is critical for development to thrive. This would also need to include defining strategies for financing sustainable development based on fair burden sharing. Countries that require support to achieve sustainable development goals should receive this in a targeted manner from countries that are in a position to provide it, for instance through financial assistance or technology and knowledge transfers. The responsibility for national implementation of the new Framework for Sustainable Development must fundamentally lie with the countries themselves.

### *v) Policy Coherence*

In addition to development co-operation, numerous sectoral policies affect global development. In

order to establish a new holistic framework post-2015, it is essential that all relevant policies that contribute to achieving global goals, for example policies on trade, the financial sector and agriculture, or even those relating to health, social affairs and education, be coherently geared to sustainable development.

Improved policy coherence is needed not only at the national but also at the regional and global levels. Although national policies are important for reforms and progress, they must also be complemented by global measures. For this to happen, effective international regimes are necessary.

Switzerland advocates that foreign policy should be geared as much as possible to global sustainable development. According to the Federal Council's Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2015, all the departments of the federal administration make their contribution to sustainable development at the national and at the global level. In its Dispatch on International Cooperation 2013-2016, Switzerland identified the following specific areas for improving policy coherence: migration, agriculture, the environment, health, the financial sector, security, education, research and culture. Switzerland actively engages in international exchanges on coherence issues and, following on from these, is framing proposals to more accurately monitor policy coherence in future. It is also updating the relevant reports for action by Parliament (e.g. the foreign policy report).

The commodities sector is an important area for Switzerland in relation to coherence issues. The Background Report on Commodities produced by an inter-departmental working group and published by the Federal Council in March 2013, deals with topics such as the regulation, monitoring, taxation, transparency of payment flows, corporate responsibility and state responsibility. The report stresses that the Federal Council expects companies operating in or from Switzerland to behave correctly and responsibly with regard to compliance with human rights, environmental and social standards at home and abroad.

Based on these principles and on the Federal Council's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2012-15, Swiss policy regarding the post-2015 agenda is led by the following guidelines:

1. Taking responsibility for the future: continue Switzerland's commitment to sustainable development as a key issue across all policy areas (according to Art 2 of the Swiss Federal Constitution).
2. Balanced consideration and integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) as well as recognition of peace, human security and the rule of law as a precondition for sustainable development.
3. Considering sustainable development as a process to be continuously strengthened and improved.
4. Improving coherence and coordination between policy areas and authorities involved.
5. Enhancing sustainable development partnerships between countries, local authorities, private sector actors, civil society, the scientific community and other relevant sectors, and fostering mutual accountability.

## **4.2 Characteristics of Goals**

Switzerland advocates an action and result-oriented goals framework for sustainable development. The goals should exhibit the following characteristics:

- Goals have to be based on the results and assessments of the MDG-review, the Millennium Declaration, the final declaration of Rio+20, the internationally agreed global environmental goals, other relevant outcome documents, such as ICPD and the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as a sound scientific foundation.
- Goals shall be based on the principles defined above (4.1).
- Goals have to reflect a balanced consideration and integration of all dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) and to recognise peace, inclusive societies and the rule of law as a precondition for sustainable development.
- Goals have to be formulated so as to take account of inter-linkages between different thematic areas and avoid a conflict of goals.

- Goals have to be universally applicable and at the same time allow for differentiated approaches and/or country-specific adaptations.
- Goals have to be measurable through clear targets and indicators.
- Goals have to be action-oriented, time-bound, limited in number (8 to 12 if possible) as well as clear and easy to communicate.
- Goals should be implemented to the highest standards possible by ensuring coherence, coordination and use of synergies with other relevant international agreements and initiatives.

### **4.3 Means of Implementation**

The realisation of a new vision for sustainable development will only be possible if the means of implementation are clearly specified. A new framework should consider setting mutual goals and obligations for all countries while taking into account national circumstances.

The means of implementation are not restricted to financial resources for sustainable development. A key element in implementing the new framework is to design coherent (inter)national sectoral policies. Switzerland continues to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of environmentally sound, resource-efficient technologies and effective knowledge transfer. Capacity building and expansion should be fostered by strengthening technical and scientific cooperation with research institutions, the private sector and civil society. A rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system that enhances the complementarity between trade and the environment is also a key precondition for advancing sustainable development. Switzerland will continue to support the adoption and implementation of rules that facilitate market access for the poorest countries. In addition, regional integration and the creation of an enabling environment, particularly in developing countries, also support the implementation of sustainable development.

Financial resources should include resources that go beyond the funding provided as Official Development Assistance (ODA). Switzerland regards the mobilisation of domestic resources as the most important source of financing for sustainable development. Domestic sources of financing help build functioning institutions for sustainable development, strengthen the government's accountability towards its citizens and reduce dependence on external development assistance. Switzerland supports internationally coordinated initiatives to control tax evasion and illicit financial flows and to frame international standards in this regard since tax evasion and illicit financial flows negatively impact the mobilisation of domestic resources. Switzerland thus supports efforts by the OECD to ensure that taxation occurs at the point of economic activity. Switzerland is also keen to ensure the correct taxation of natural persons and the profits of multinational enterprises and is prepared to implement the automatic exchange of information system.

For the poorest countries, official development assistance will continue to be an important source of financing. Countries should therefore honour their financial commitments in this respect. Switzerland reaffirms its target of earmarking 0.5% of gross national income (GNI) for official development assistance as defined by the OECD (i.e. including public funds for international climate adaptation measures) by 2015. At the same time, it continues to recognise the UN target of 0.7% of GNI for official development assistance. A significant proportion of Swiss financial commitments for development will continue to be invested in the least developed countries because these countries are especially dependent on development aid. In addition, ODA will increasingly be employed to achieve leveraging, for instance by helping to mobilise internal resources or additional resources from the private sector in middle income countries. This would necessitate close cooperation between the public and private sector (cf. 2.4).

Switzerland also emphasises the potential of other official financial resources and instruments, such as loans and guarantees, for sustainable development. Such resources can also help to mobilise additional private funds. Resources from models such as South-South cooperation should be considered within the scope of official financial flows for sustainable development. Proposals for tapping additional resources through innovative sources of financing should also be examined.

Apart from public funds, private financial resources play an important role in financing sustainable development, e.g. private direct investments in sustainable development, remittances by migrants and

funding from foundations and philanthropic donors. Enabling regulatory environments and incentives in all countries are important to encourage the private sector to step up investment in activities for advancing sustainable development. Switzerland supports international initiatives for promoting corporate responsibility (e.g. OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers) and plays an active role in their implementation. The comparative advantages and interplay of financing instruments should be utilised since different combinations of financial resources are possible depending on the goal dimension and context.

Given the multiplicity of international processes in the areas of environment, development and sustainability, several separate financing mechanisms also currently exist. Coherence between these processes should be aimed at achieving an integrated framework for sustainable development.

#### **4.4 Measurement and Monitoring**

The implementation of the post-2015 framework requires that measurement and monitoring of sustainable development be further improved.

Improvements to sustainable development metrics should be made taking into account existing experiences and progress made in the domain of statistics, indicators and analysis. The “Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations on Measuring Sustainable Development” report, which in turn is based on the report on *Measuring Sustainable Development* from the Task Force of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Eurostat and OECD, is significant and widely recognised in this respect. According to the recommendations, the measurement of sustainable development must factor in human well-being, including its distribution across and within countries, and the conservation of social, human, natural and economic resources needed by future generations. In addition to prevalent macroeconomic indicators, such as GDP, the measurement must also focus on the depletion of natural resources, climate change and other factors that affect society in the long run. The System of Economic and Environmental Accounting (SEEA) is an important tool for measuring the state of the environment and interactions between the economy and the environment and is expected to play a significant role in this regard. Indicators to measure the level of achievement of goals should allow for disaggregated data evaluation according to socially marginalised groups (e.g. sex, age, disability or ethnicity). Improvements in measurement must be based on the principles of official statistics, such as transparency, independence, coherence and neutrality.

The 45<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission in March 2014 resolved to establish a global working group for assessing the opportunities and risks of a “data revolution”. In addition, the Friends of the Chair Group on Broader Measures of Progress is to work actively together with the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG). Consequently a Statistical Note was drafted for all the 29 thematic areas under discussion. This will serve as a basis for further discussions and for selecting the indicators.

To ensure implementation of the Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015, a universal mechanism for periodic review, accountability and progress reporting of the achievement of goals should be established within the new High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Such a mechanism should be based on an already existing system of indicators and an interactive dialogue with the prominent involvement of the country concerned, marginalised groups, civil society, the private sector, statistics providers and other relevant stakeholders. It should also promote the sharing of best practices and experiences relating to the implementation of sustainable development of the reviewed state. The broad inclusion of all relevant stakeholders is an important prerequisite for strengthening ownership and accountability. At the same time it should give guidance and recommendations for the implementation of sustainable development commitments of the reviewed state.



## 5 Key Thematic Areas

Aligning human development objectives with the provision of global public goods (instrumental goals) ranks among the greatest challenges in view of a comprehensive agenda for global sustainable development and the eradication of poverty. Based on i) the relevance of a topic for all dimensions of sustainable development, ii) whether it is equally important for all countries, iii) specific Swiss expertise, and iv) the potential of improvement, Switzerland advocates that the key issues listed below should be addressed in a new Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015.

The contents of these thematic areas contribute to the global goals. Switzerland will actively promote these thematic positions in international discussions and negotiations. However, positions are also flexible and subject to change in the course of international negotiations.

Individual thematic areas and positions discussed in this chapter should be grouped together in the process of developing a Framework comprising about eight to twelve goals. The grouping should facilitate synergies and draw connections between goals and contents. At the same time, each goal area and the overall set of goals should reflect the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way and take into account references to peace and human security.

Given the inherently transversal nature of a new Framework for Sustainable Development and the respective goals, all topics and goal areas mentioned also have a cross-cutting character, which is not explicitly repeated in each description.

The following 16 thematic areas correspond to summaries of detailed working papers that can be accessed at the Swiss web platform [www.post2015.ch](http://www.post2015.ch).

### 1. *Eradicating Extreme Poverty*

Despite considerable progress in the fight against poverty since 1990 (the number of people living on less than USD 1.25 per day has been halved), some 1.2 billion people, 70% of whom are women, are still living in extreme poverty. A new universal Framework for Sustainable Development must now aim to achieve the complete eradication of extreme poverty by 2030. This objective is to be prominently enshrined in a new framework, taking account of various contexts and national poverty lines. Switzerland supports efforts to establish a stand-alone goal in this respect.

The inclusion of the eradication of extreme poverty *in all its forms* as an overarching goal in the new Framework for Sustainable Development is an acknowledgement of the fact that poverty is a multidimensional problem that is not only linked to income poverty, but also to factors such as hunger and malnutrition, gender inequality, disability, lack of access to education, health, infrastructure and other basic public services, lack of opportunities to participate in social and political processes, and inadequate access to job opportunities as well as economic and natural resources etc. In addition to being a goal in its own right, the eradication of poverty in all its forms must therefore also be incorporated through specific targets in all other relevant thematic areas.

Global inequalities are massive and present one of the biggest obstacles to sustainable development and the fight against poverty. Inequality within several countries has been rising in recent years. Inequalities limit the possibilities of social groups to participate in and make significant contributions to social, cultural, political and economic life. It is therefore imperative that all goals in the framework take account of issues related to reducing inequality and strengthening social inclusion, equal opportunities, equal access and equitable participation.

The poor are particularly vulnerable to economic and political crises, the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services, natural disasters and violence. This hampers efforts to eradicate poverty and increases the risk that large numbers of people will fall back into poverty. Switzerland advocates that the issue of the specific vulnerability of the poor and the resulting obligations for their protection is included across the board in the new framework.

In order to ensure that due account is taken of poor communities in the implementation of the framework, they must be given an opportunity for meaningful participation in measuring and monitoring the goals.

## 2. *Food Security and Nutrition for All through Sustainable Agri-food Systems*

Despite significant improvements in a number of countries, the right to adequate food has yet to be realised. Indeed, nearly 870 million people were suffering from hunger and more than 2 billion from malnutrition in 2010-2012 according to estimates of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). Besides insufficient access to adequate and nutritious food, availability also matters, since it is estimated that global food production would need to increase by 50% on average by 2050 to respond to future global demand. The Rio+20 outcome document reaffirms the necessity to promote, enhance and support more sustainable agri-food systems, which improve food security, eradicate hunger, and are economically viable, while conserving all natural resources, promoting sustainable land use, reducing soil erosion and desertification and enhancing resilience to climate change and natural disasters.

To achieve food security and quality for all, it is crucial to enhance the sustainability of agri-food systems along the entire value chain. A stand-alone global goal could be formulated along the lines of the UN SG's *Zero Hunger Challenge*, which is based on the following five sub-goals: i) 100% access to adequate food all year round; ii) zero stunted children under 2 years old; iii) all agri-food systems are sustainable; iv) 100% increase in smallholder productivity and income; v) zero loss or waste of food. In so doing, the four dimensions of food security (access, availability, utilisation and stability) and its multisectoral character can be addressed. Issues to be addressed transversally include: good governance on food security and nutrition at all levels, fair and transparent markets at all levels, focus on gender equality and youth, participatory and inclusive monitoring.

## 3. *A Water-secure World*

Access to drinking water and sanitation is a human right and together with the resource water it is a key determinant in all aspects of social, economic and environmental development. Because water insecurity can generate widespread social and political instability, there is also a direct link to issues of peace and inclusive societies. Despite the fact that targets on drinking water and sanitation were integrated in the goal on environmental sustainability (MDG 7), crucial aspects for sustainable development such as water resources management, wastewater management and issues of water quality, and enhancing resilience to water-related disasters have not been addressed with the MDGs.

For the Post-2015/SDG-agenda it is, however, not sufficient to look at water merely as a transversal topic, including water-related targets within other goals. Switzerland therefore advocates a stand-alone goal with sub-goals and targets in the following four domains: i) water supply, sanitation and hygiene; ii) water resources management; iii) wastewater management and water quality; iv) greater resilience to water-related disasters. The corresponding sub-goals should be: i) safe and sustainable basic sanitation, hygiene and drinking water for all; ii) ground and surface water is managed sustainably and growth achieved through increased water productivity while respecting ecosystems' requirements (including mountain regions, forests and wetlands); iii) all wastewater is managed based on the concept of reduction, treatment, reuse/discharge to protect water resources and aquatic ecosystems; iv) increased resilience to water-related disasters focusing on the needs of the poor.

## 4. *Ensuring Universal Access to Sustainable Energy*

Development is not possible without energy, and sustainable development is not possible without sustainable energy. Access to energy is a necessary precondition to achieving many goals for sustainable development that extend far beyond the energy sector – eradicating poverty, increasing food production, providing clean water, improving public health, enhancing education, creating economic opportunity, and empowering women. It is therefore important that a future

framework addresses energy issues (the MDGs did not include an energy-related goal).

A stand-alone goal could be formulated along the lines of the UN SG's initiative to achieve *Sustainable Energy for All*, which is consistent with limiting global warming to below two degrees Celsius. The initiative is based on the following three sub-goals to be achieved by 2030: i) ensuring universal access to modern energy services (e.g. clean and efficient cooking solutions; access to electricity, including through micro- and mini-grid solutions as well as off-grid solutions such as solar lighting); ii) doubling the share of renewable energy from currently 15% to 30%; iii) doubling the annual rate of improvement in energy efficiency to 2.4%, compared to 1.2% from 1970 to 2008.

Switzerland proposes to complement this proposal with the following objective: iv) strengthening national energy policy frameworks. This additional dimension would underline the crucial role of states with respect to implementation of objectives and refer to the responsibility of states for national energy policy, e.g. with regard to the new energy philosophy now being pursued in Switzerland, the reduction of fossil fuel subsidies and fostering low carbon economies.

#### 5. *Ensuring Equitable, Inclusive, Quality Education and Life-long Learning for All*

Education is a human right and is indispensable for realising other human rights and, more generally, sustainable development. Education empowers people to participate fully in their communities. It is the vehicle which enables socially and economically marginalised children, young people and adults to lift themselves out of poverty. Switzerland advocates a stand-alone goal for the realisation of the right for all to quality basic education and learning.

This refers to a comprehensive set of education objectives and goes beyond the narrow focus of the MDGs (universal primary education for boys and girls). In terms of quality, education should respond to the basic learning needs: learning how to acquire knowledge, how to act, how to live together and simply to be. Equity is important in the sense that everyone has the right to have access to quality education, relevant in regard to their needs, at all ages. There should be a focus here on ensuring equal educational opportunities for girls, women, people with disabilities and those who are socio-economically marginalised. As a public good, quality basic education should be made compulsory and free of charge for all. It should be highlighted that basic education and learning extends beyond primary school and elementary knowledge of reading, writing and counting. It should be considered as an interactive and continuous process, which considers values, includes institutions, learners, teachers and parents or guardians, and ensures access to relevant knowledge and to practical life skills as part of life-long learning through a diversity of educational provisions that qualify learners to take up training or higher studies.

In this context, vocational education and training programmes and tertiary level education should also be promoted to facilitate continuing education and entry into the workforce. Moreover, action should be taken to prevent school dropouts. It is therefore important to ensure a school environment that is safe, free of discrimination and able to provide education of a high standard.

#### 6. *Maximising Health for All in All Life Stages*

Health is a precondition for, as well as an indicator and an outcome of, progress in sustainable development. The right of every human being to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is one of the fundamental human rights. In order to realise this right, a comprehensive approach is required, which incorporates the underlying determinants of health, is people-centred, equity-focused and deals with existing inequalities.

In the Post-2015-/SDG-agenda Switzerland supports a stand-alone health goal, which aims to maximise health for all in all life stages. The goal supports universal health coverage, but its intent is to go further. This means 1) accelerating efforts to achieve the health MDGs, particularly to significantly reduce maternal and infant mortality and the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and 2) to include other issues into the MDG agenda (e.g. non-communicable and neglected tropical diseases, sexual and reproductive health and rights). Special attention must be

paid to maternal health and 3) to ensuring that all people have access to quality preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative health services and health promotion without being exposed to financial hardship.

This health goal also encourages the implementation of evidence-based measures to promote healthy living, tackle risk factors and address the social, cultural, economic, environmental and political determinants of health.

#### 7. *Employment and Decent Work for All, Sustainable Growth and the Green Economy*

The challenges in the field of employment, growth and the green economy are manifold. According to current figures, over 200 million people around the world are unemployed, especially young people, and more than 50% of women worldwide do not have a paid job. Since the end of the first decade of this century, the need for a green economy and more sustainable growth has been evidenced in many ways: i) The financial and economic crisis has shown the importance of economic stability, resilience to external shocks and sound public finances in all countries so that development achievements are not lost and negative effects on other countries can be avoided. ii) The current patterns of resource use and emissions are not sustainable. Increasing calls for green growth, resp. a transition to a greener economy in both industrialised and developing countries have been voiced based on a stronger awareness of the planetary boundaries. One of the goals of green growth is to manage and to use natural resources efficiently so that sustainable economic activity can be ensured. iii) Unequal patterns of growth have resulted in higher income inequality and increased tensions within countries. iv) The evidence indicates that greater economic independence for women and men alike has positive effects, including economic effects. This is why the new goals should take this aspect into account.

Although productive employment was covered by MDG 1, sustainable economic growth, a green economy and the importance of the private sector were not prominently dealt with in the MDG framework. Promoting sustainable growth to foster sustainable development, a green economy and the creation of sufficient "good" jobs for shared prosperity, while respecting human rights and planetary boundaries, is essential not only for developing countries, but also for emerging and industrial countries. In order to effectively tackle these challenges, Switzerland advocates "full and productive employment and decent work", either as a stand-alone goal or in combination with "sustainable growth and a green economy". The inter-linkages between these topics should be taken into account. Aspects of employment and decent work should also be integrated in other relevant thematic areas. In line with international discussions, both goals can also include aspects of "sustainable consumption and production". The goal of full and productive employment and decent work for all must address the following areas: implementation of the ILO's international labour standards and the ILO Decent Work Agenda, social protection systems and promotion of employment. A goal for sustainable growth and a green economy must contain the following two elements: i) sound and stable economic conditions (macro-economic stability, business environment incl. trade system, economic governance), and ii) the green economy (pricing of natural resources, ecological market transparency, sustainable trade, correction of misguided incentives such as fossil fuel subsidies, internalisation of external costs, (more) resource efficient and clean/er production and consumption, innovation and technology transfer as well as standards to ensure these). In this context, Switzerland will also emphasise the importance of creating sound framework conditions for sustainable economic development as well as strategic policy and regulation in the areas of environmental protection, resource efficiency, social protection and labour markets.

#### 8. *Sustainable Consumption and Production (including chemicals and waste)*

Fundamental changes in the way societies produce and consume are indispensable for achieving global sustainable development. A shift towards sustainable consumption and production (SCP) is needed in order to promote social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems. This requires raising efficiency and ensuring sustainability in the use of resources and

production processes, internalising external costs and reducing resource degradation, pollution and waste.

Important elements to be integrated in a future goals framework include: integration of sustainable consumption and production patterns in national policies and strategies, sustainable public procurement systems, corporate responsibility, sustainability reporting, consumer information and labelling policies, life cycle approach including resource efficiency and sound management of chemicals and waste.

The above elements can be formulated as a stand-alone goal on sustainable consumption and production or integrated in other goals, especially a goal on food security and sustainable agriculture as well as a potential goal on sustainable growth and the green economy. The position has to be based on the valuable work that has led to the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production adopted at the Rio+20 Conference.

While the poorest and socially disadvantaged suffer most from the unsound management of hazardous chemicals and wastes, the sound management of chemicals and waste is a critical engine for social and economic development, prosperity and human wellbeing. Based on its specific expertise and international engagement in the domain of chemicals and waste, Switzerland advocates the integration of this subject in all relevant goals and targets of a Post-2015/SDG framework, specifically in a possible goal on sustainable consumption and production. The sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle, and of hazardous waste, in ways that lead to minimisation of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment should be achieved, which would also bring about improvements to social and economic welfare.

#### 9. *Governance – Achieving More Open, Inclusive and Accountable Institutions*

Governance comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which people articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences. It encompasses executive, legislative and judicial branches of government at global, regional, national and sub-national levels and relates to principles such as the rule of law, accountability, transparency, non-discrimination and equality, responsiveness and participation. Solid institutions are equally needed in the non-state sector, including in the private sector.

It is not just economic, social and cultural rights, but also civil and political human rights, including the right to take part in government, freedom of expression and opinion, freedom of peaceful assembly and association and access to justice, that are an integral part of sustainable development. They correspond to fundamental human needs and are important objectives in their own right. Therefore they could form a stand-alone post-2015 goal. Furthermore, there is overwhelming evidence that governance enables progress towards other sustainable development goals from food security and sustainable agriculture to access to drinking water. Its underlying principles should be integrated across all goals and/or be considered in a post-2015 implementation framework. Switzerland particularly emphasises the following enablers: strong local governments, high standards of transparency and accountability, effective management of public finances, and policy coherence for sustainable development.

#### 10. *Gender Equality, Rights of Women and Empowerment of Women and Girls*

Gender inequality is one of the biggest obstacles to sustainable development, economic growth and poverty reduction. MDG 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment created a lot of visibility for gender parity and considerable progress was achieved in school enrolments of girls and integrating women into the job market. However, owing to the narrow focus of MDG 3, important issues such as violence against women, sexual and reproductive health and rights, discrimination, economic disparities and the low participation of women in political decision-making were not addressed. Large gender inequalities continue to exist in all societies. Therefore, Switzerland advocates a stand-alone goal on gender equality and a transversal approach, integrating gender-sensitive targets in the formulation of other goals. The stand-alone goal proposed by Switzerland includes three goal areas: i) equal opportunities for men and women with regard to economic

development and access to decent work, natural resources and means of production, as well as social protection, which also includes the recognition, reduction and equitable distribution of unpaid domestic and care work that form the backbone of society; ii) elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including the elimination of early and forced marriages and other harmful social norms and practices; iii) equal participation at all levels of social, economic and political decision-making mechanisms. True gender equality and sustainable development can only be achieved if a future framework for development does not merely tackle the symptoms but also removes the causes of inequality and discrimination.

#### *11. Sustainable Peace and Inclusive Societies*

Evidence shows that without peace and personal security, development cannot become sustainable. Issues related to violence, conflict or fragile situations are often rooted in and/or directly linked to development deficits. Indeed, indicators of low development, such as the lack of education or jobs, weak institutions and governance, the absence of the rule of law, high inequalities, violation of human rights, or the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources have been widely recognised as local, national and global drivers of violence, conflict, impunity, fragile situations and lack of resilience to crisis. In turn, issues related to violence, conflict and fragile situations seriously impede the achievement of sustainable development goals. They cause death and injuries, provoke displacement, destroy physical and social capital, damage the environment and the economy, discourage investment and destabilise or even completely hinder the provision of basic goods and services.

Against this background it is hardly surprising that conflict-affected and so-called fragile states – home to more than 1.5 billion people today – are the furthest away from achieving the MDGs. On the other hand, evidence also shows that in many countries re-establishing peace and inclusive societies results in fast progress in achieving MDGs.

It should be noted that the reasons for and causes of violence, conflicts, fragile situations and insecurity are rarely internal to a given state and that their effects are not confined to a given state either. Regional and global economic and political dimensions also play an important part. Refugees and internally displaced persons put a strain on the capacities of receiving countries and regions and they reduce the human capital in the regions of origin. In addition, fragile regions where the rule of law is absent or weak are increasingly becoming centres of (global) criminal activities and illegal trafficking of human beings, drugs, raw materials or arms. This not only threatens the development of the states concerned but can also become a cause of conflict, violence and vulnerability to crisis in far removed regions.

Switzerland argues for a goals framework that promotes peace, inclusive societies and the rule of law and eliminates the root causes and drivers of violence, conflicts and fragility. To do so, Switzerland advocates a stand-alone goal and a transversal approach. A stand-alone goal could encompass the following areas: personal safety, including a reduction in the number of victims of violence and conflict, access to justice and formal and informal conflict resolution, as well as strengthening resilience to crises in response to internal and external tensions. Possible drivers that could be addressed within other goals include: prevention of and protection against violence, especially against women and girls, social inclusion, domestic and international policy coherence, the rule of law, accountability and effectiveness of institutions, enabling environments for civil society, addressing past human rights abuses, greater respect for international humanitarian law and granting space for humanitarian activities, gender equality, equal participation of women in preventing and reducing violence, promoting cultural diversity and access to natural and cultural resources.

#### *12. Disaster Risk Reduction*

Natural disasters and technical risks are threatening human life, people's health, livelihood and personal safety, whereby women and girls, the poor and people with disabilities are most affected. Moreover, they can also heavily impact the environment and its ecosystems, put communities



further at risk and destroy development achievements. Owing to the acceleration of climate change, the frequency of hazardous events (e.g. storms, floods, prolonged droughts, pandemics) is expected to increase in the future. The exposure and vulnerability to such events – especially of vulnerable groups – is further exacerbated by factors, such as on-going population growth, unplanned urbanisation, lack of or non-compliance with building codes, inequality, environmental degradation and increasing poverty.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) addresses the further increase of risks, the reduction of existing risks as well as the preparation for stress or shocks without historic parallels, e.g. owing to climate change. DRR was not included in the MDGs but figures prominently on today's global agenda. The upward trend of disaster losses (livelihoods, assets) is likely to continue if DRR is not fully integrated in a future framework. Investing in DRR will pay off on a major scale. Improved resilience of populations at risk is the best remedy to cope with stress and shocks, such as extreme weather events (e.g. earthquakes, droughts, floods).

Owing to the major impact of disasters at multiple levels and the importance of DRR for achieving sustainable development, Switzerland argues for integrating DRR in the targets of all relevant goals (e.g. water, infrastructure, food security and sustainable agriculture, education, environment, ecosystems, natural resources, energy and health). Furthermore, Switzerland opts for linking the DRR discussion in the context of a new Framework for Sustainable Development with the follow-up process of the Hyogo Framework for Action, which serves as an important guideline for many nations to frame their DRR activities. It is important not to exclusively focus on natural hazards, but rather on multiple risks; to establish holistic and integrated risk management approaches building on comprehensive hazard and risk fundamentals; to strengthen capacities at a sub-national level; to engage with the private sector (e.g. insurance and finance sectors); to monitor progress in all countries following a standardised approach; to make available fundamental information about risks for concerned stakeholders; to enhance women's participation in disaster risk reduction; to strengthen the resilience of societies; and to integrate economic considerations. The economic assessment and prioritisation of risks is critical for implementing public measures for risk reduction.

### *13. Population Dynamics / Migration and Development*

The world is currently experiencing major population dynamics: continued global population growth, major compositional changes in age structures associated with youth bulges and population aging, and population redistribution as a function of urbanisation and migration. These mega population trends present significant challenges to sustainable development, but offer new opportunities as well. The success and sustainability of the corresponding strategies requires that countries proactively address, rather than merely react to, population dynamics through the promotion of human capital, and through human-rights-based and gender-responsive policies.

Since population dynamics have important implications for all dimensions of sustainable development, Switzerland promotes a transversal approach, ensuring that relevant targets of other goals take population dynamics into account (relevant goal areas include: sustainable peace and inclusive societies, environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources, economic growth and employment, education, food security and sustainable agriculture, health, equality, water and energy).

It is widely acknowledged that migration has had a major impact on the achievements of the MDGs without being formally reflected in the current framework. Switzerland recognises that global economic and social gains linked to migration require increased attention to have their potential realised, subsumable in three guiding objectives: 1) ensuring safe and regular migration, notably by protecting the rights of migrants and guaranteeing the access to justice; 2) reducing the economic and social costs of migration through the transferability of rights, the recognition of qualifications and the limitation of transfer taxes; 3) facilitating migrants' contribution to sustainable development by, for example, engaging the diaspora as agents for development and planning any sectoral policy from a mobility and demography perspective.

Focusing on vulnerable groups, such as migrants, and measuring their progress with regard to

selected other goals (cf. transversal approach) would contribute to reducing inequalities. Based on these arguments and given Switzerland's high engagement in this domain, a specific focus will be given to migration and human mobility issues.

#### 14. *Biodiversity (including forests)*

Biodiversity is a precondition for the development of human beings and other creatures as well as ecosystems. Biodiversity and forests contribute to poverty reduction and to sustaining human livelihoods and well-being through, for example, underpinning food security and human health, providing clean air and water, storing carbon emissions and supporting economic development. There is evidence of ongoing decline of biodiversity and forest loss – despite having been integrated in MDG 7. It has been recognised that failure to better conserve and sustainably manage biodiversity and in particular ecosystems, such as forests, mountain regions and even soils, may put at risk the achievement of other internationally agreed goals, inter alia, those related to food security and sustainable agriculture, water, climate change, poverty alleviation, energy and human well-being.

Given the importance for sustainable development in all its dimensions, biodiversity and forests should feature prominently in a future set of goals. In doing so it is important to take account of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi biodiversity goals adopted by the international community. The goals address the causes of biodiversity and forest loss, the rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems, promotion of sustainable use and management as well as equitable access to genetic and forest resources for poverty reduction. Biodiversity and forests should be formulated as stand-alone goals as well as be integrated in each relevant goal in the form of concrete targets, particularly in possible goals on "Food Security and Nutrition for All through Sustainable Agri-food Systems", "A Water-secure World", "Sustainable Consumption and Production", "Sustainable Cities/Infrastructure", "Universal Access to Sustainable Energy", "Sustainable Growth and the Green Economy, Employment and Decent Work for All".

#### 15. *Sustainable Cities / Infrastructure*

More than half of the global population live in cities and towns. Cities of emerging economies are expected to double from 2 billion to 4 billion people between 2000 and 2030, accompanied by a tripling of their physical footprint from 200,000 to 600,000 km<sup>2</sup>. This places urbanisation among the most significant global trends of the twenty-first century. Urban areas are the main drivers of local and national economies. At the same time, cities have an enormous environmental footprint: occupying roughly 3% of the Earth's surface, they are responsible for about three quarters of the global resource consumption and for approximately 70% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Cities have become a major factor in environmental trends and sustainability processes, and global change will not gain enough momentum to make a difference without getting urbanisation right. Targets in the fields of climate change, hazard prevention, water, energy, food security, sanitation, migration, health, employment and economic development cannot be reached without sound urbanisation. In its transformative dynamic, the process of urbanisation is increasingly revealing its pervasive impact on sustainable development. A new agenda cannot afford to ignore it. A stand-alone goal could thus be relevant. Possible targets should cover areas such as urban and infrastructure planning (including land use, road safety and access to sustainable and safe transportation), urban administration (knowledge and capacity building) and sustainable infrastructure financing.

The new framework should be formulated building on the experiences made in the Aalborg process (commitments and charter) as well as in other local sustainability initiatives, e.g. coordinated by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), in order to create synergies with local Agenda 21 processes.

## 16. Climate Change

Climate change is a central challenge for sustainable development. The changes in the global climate system triggered by the warming of the earth's atmosphere put the livelihoods of large sections of the population at risk in less developed countries, while in developed regions the infrastructure and certain economic sectors in particular are vulnerable to the risks of climate change. Furthermore, changes in cycles of precipitation and temperature also affect ecosystems such as forests, agricultural land, mountain regions and oceans, as well as the plants, animals and people that live in them.

In order to mitigate the risks of a disruption of the global climate system and the associated impact on people and the environment, the greenhouse gas emissions caused by humankind must be substantially lowered. To reach this goal, the international community agreed at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 to adopt the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). As part of this convention, a new climate convention that will be binding on all countries after 2020 is currently being negotiated and is due for completion by 2015.

Switzerland is working to ensure that due account be taken of climate as a cross-cutting theme in various goals of the post-2015 framework. Various aspects relating to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change adaptation are to be addressed in this context. The aim of integrating climate-related targets into various goals of the post-2015 framework is to contribute to low-emission development and to economies and societies resistant to climate change. However, because of the ongoing negotiations as part of the UNFCCC, Switzerland is unwilling to formulate a stand-alone climate goal. A duplication of targets would bring no added value and could even have a detrimental effect on the two negotiation processes.

Concrete targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions can, for example, be integrated into goals pertaining to energy, sustainable consumption and production, sustainable/green growth, food security and sustainable agriculture as well as sustainable cities and infrastructure. A separate energy goal, based on the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, is of central importance in this respect. Climate adaptation targets can be addressed in the areas of disaster risk reduction, food security and sustainable agriculture, water, biodiversity and forests as well as sustainable cities and infrastructure.

### *Thematic positioning*

Switzerland will actively present its proposals and represent its corresponding positions in all the above-mentioned thematic areas in international discussions and in negotiations. Based on the results of national consultations, its specific expertise within the federal administration, civil society, academia and private sector, and on its profile and comparative advantages at the international level, Switzerland will be particularly active in the following domains:

With regard to the conceptualisation of a new framework, Switzerland believes that the new set of goals must adequately reflect all three dimensions of sustainable development. The new framework should be based on human rights and at the same time comply with the principles of respect for planetary boundaries, social inclusion and justice, universality and policy coherence. Switzerland will actively promote the outlined principles and provide ideas on conceptual issues.

Switzerland will promote specific goals in the following areas:

- A water-secure world
- Maximising health for all in all life stages
- Gender equality, rights of women and empowerment of women and girls
- Sustainable peace and inclusive societies

Switzerland will also increase its efforts to ensure the integration of the following themes (as goals or as transversal aspects):

- Disaster risk reduction
- Shift towards sustainable consumption and production
- Integration of global economic and social gains linked to migration

With regard to other themes and key concerns, Switzerland will actively advocate its corresponding thematic positions. These positions remain flexible and may be the object of adjustments in the course of negotiations.

Switzerland will increase its efforts to promote these issues and objectives in international negotiations, within the Open Working Group on SDGs (aligned with the positions of France and Germany), conferences, in exchanges with UN organisations and countries and in public events. At the same time, it will emphasise these selected aspects across various channels and forums, in order to enhance its profile and credibility. It will therefore seek alliances with like-minded partners and actors across the globe, sharing the same aims and ambitions for a transformative change towards sustainable development, while respecting human rights.

## **6 Process**

Switzerland contributes to the unification and convergence of the post-MDG and SDG-processes, in order to obtain one single set of goals under a new Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015. It is prepared to recognise new international goals for sustainable development as an important framework for national policy in a globalised and interdependent world. Switzerland is convinced that the intergovernmental process for elaborating new goals must be inclusive and transparent.

Indicators and targets should be in line with the above principles (4.1) and should be resolved at the expert level wherever possible. Monitoring and reporting are important features of a Framework for Sustainable Development post-2015. Therefore, statisticians need to be involved early on in the process and indicators should refer to existing datasets and statistics. This position is based on experience with the elaboration of the MDGs and the monitoring of sustainable development. A mechanism for periodic review, accountability and progress reporting of the achievement of goals should be established within the new High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

The process used for defining new goals for sustainable development post-2015 will be crucial with regard to their quality and acceptance. Switzerland will therefore actively engage in the UN's inclusive processes with the aim of finding broad consensus on a limited number of concrete goals, targets and indicators. Since it maintains excellent relations and effective cooperation with developed and emerging economies, Switzerland is well positioned to build bridges between them. It will also closely cooperate with other partner countries, multilateral institutions, donor agencies and/or groups, public and private sectors, civil society and the scientific community. At the national level, Switzerland is keen to mobilise knowledge and expertise within the federal administration and from the scientific community, the private sector and civil society.

As a member of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG), Switzerland is actively engaged in framing concrete proposals for Sustainable Development Goals. In the autumn of 2014, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon will release a synthesis report on based on the report of the OWG as well as, for issues relating to financing, on the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing. These reports will form the basis of subsequent intergovernmental negotiations. The new goals framework is to be adopted at a summit to be held in September 2015.