



UN Photo / Jean-Marie Ferré

# Multilateral Cooperation

A cornerstone of Switzerland's  
development and  
humanitarian aid policy



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

# Three reasons for Switzerland to commit

- ▶ **Multilateral frameworks allow it to project its values.**

By participating in the setting of international norms and agendas, Switzerland is able to play an influential role. Thanks to its extensive experience in development cooperation and humanitarian aid, its pragmatism and the values it upholds, it is regarded as a credible and reliable partner in multilateral organisations.

- ▶ **Global challenges call for joint responses.**

Only by working together can we hope to eliminate extreme poverty and face up to the challenges that concern all the countries of the world. Multilateral organisations benefit from political legitimacy and considerable resources to address a wide range of issues worldwide, especially in armed conflict zones. By supporting these organisations, Switzerland offers an appropriate response to the challenges of the 21st century and enlarges its sphere of influence.

- ▶ **Switzerland benefits from its multilateral commitments.**

Multilateral organisations are essential for drawing up international norms. Thanks to its commitments, Switzerland is able to defend its interests and forge close links with key partners. These alliances have a positive impact on Switzerland's international image and on its foreign and economic policies. They are also the ideal means of promoting international Geneva.

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*“Switzerland is a dynamic United Nations member state, consistently promoting multilateral cooperation for the common good.”*

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General  
of the United Nations

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# Partner organisations

Switzerland identifies and selects a number of priority multilateral organisations with a humanitarian or development focus and provides these with a core contribution. They include UN organisations and international financial institutions, as well as global funds and networks.

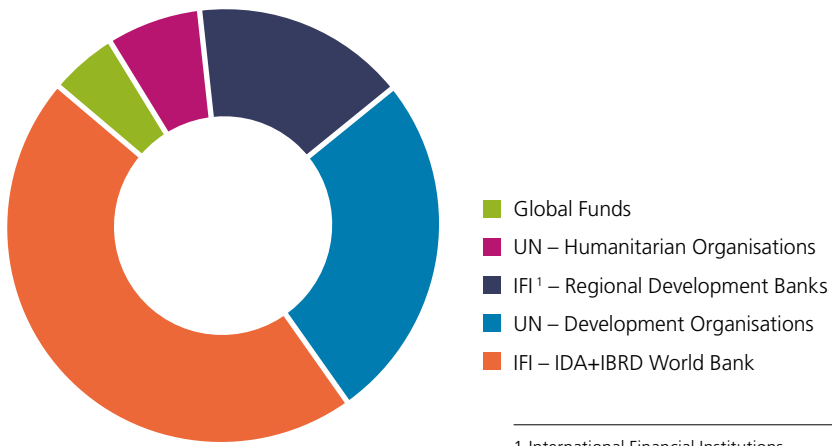
Switzerland's portfolio of partner organisations evolves as new global challenges emerge and development priorities are set. For example, UN Women became a partner of Switzerland in 2010, the Green Climate Fund in 2015, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in 2016.

The portfolio is also guided by the thematic and geographical priorities defined in the Dispatch on Switzerland's International Cooperation 2017–20. These organisations make a substantial contribution to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

They are chosen according to four criteria:

1. **Importance with regard to Swiss development policy**
2. **Results achieved**
3. **Scope for Switzerland to influence their policies and strategies**
4. **Swiss foreign policy interests**

Proportional distribution of core contributions among priority multilateral organisations 2015



<sup>1</sup> International Financial Institutions

# The 2030 Agenda: a multilateral success

The 193 UN member states adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015. It thus enjoys unprecedented legitimacy and will guide development activities at the national, regional and international levels in the period leading up to 2030. It will also serve as a coherent frame of reference for Switzerland's sustainable development and foreign policies, in particular the international cooperation efforts of SDC, SECO and the FDFA's Human Security Division.

**The 2030 Agenda is the result of multilateral action.** Tireless campaigning by many multilateral institutions and organisations also led to the UN General Assembly adopting the Agenda, demonstrating the value and relevance of UN diplomacy.


**The 2030 Agenda is a working tool** for the international community. The multilateral agencies supported by Switzerland are on the front line when it comes to assisting countries with the implementation of the 17 goals it contains. They have the legitimacy to act, the necessary technical capabilities, and the ability to mobilise resources and establish partnerships with the most influential players.

**The 2030 Agenda will serve as a framework** for evaluating the concrete, measurable results of the reforms that are put in place. While the individual countries have primary responsibility for monitoring and assessing progress, they are aided by UN bodies, notably the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# Examples and results



**Syrian crisis:** SDC employs financial, diplomatic and human resources in the region to support more than 13 million Syrians (based on 2016 figures) affected by the conflict. It also supports initiatives aimed at offering victims of the conflict a ray of hope by helping them to earn an income in spite of the hardship they are enduring. For example, SDC is co-financing a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project that is recruiting people, displaced or not, to rebuild infrastructure such as schools and healthcare facilities.

**Health:** The number of deaths due to malaria has fallen by 60% since 2000. This is a new record, and it illustrates the power of multilateral organisations. The World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank all played a key role here. Through its support for these institutions, Switzerland has helped to save the lives of 6.2 million people, many of them children.

**Setting norms:** The first Credit Information Bureau of Tajikistan was established in 2010 with support from the World Bank Group and Switzerland. The Bureau helps to reduce the risks in lending among Tajik citizens by collecting and distributing information about all borrowers in the country. It also strengthens the financial infrastructure and improves access to financing for small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as for businesspeople in Tajikistan. So far over 1.3 million contracts have been signed to allow credit information to be shared.



**2030 Agenda:** Global sustainable development requires sustainable political decisions in all countries based on hard facts. Many countries lack a sufficient body of data, such as reliable census figures. The UN and the World Bank have the legitimacy and the capacity to support countries in collecting and analysing this data and translating them into political decisions.

**Lobbying:** The sixth goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development covers all challenges relating to water. Switzerland is playing a significant role here. It has lobbied intensively for the international community to adopt an integrated approach to water management focusing on four axes: i) water, sanitation and hygiene, ii) integrated management of water resources, iii) management of water and water quality, and iv) ability to respond to water-related disasters.

**Reaching out to people in need:** The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) improves social and economic development in rural communities by promoting gender equality. In 2015, IFAD supported 114 million individuals across the globe. Some 2.5 million, 51% of them women, were trained to use new agricultural technologies, while over a million received business training. These efforts have resulted in better management of 2.3 million hectares of land under collective ownership.

# Switzerland's role

Switzerland supports multilateral organisations in a variety of different ways, including political dialogue, funding and providing experts. These activities are the responsibility of the SDC and SECO, which work closely together.

**Switzerland as a member state:** Switzerland has been a member of the Bretton Woods institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund) since 1992 and of the United Nations since 2002. Since joining the UN after the electorate voted in favour of membership, it has been able to play an active part in decision-making within numerous multilateral organisations. It engages at the political level for better coordination of the system and assumes an influential role in setting priorities.

**Switzerland as a donor:** Switzerland provides financial support to a number of banks and organisations in the fields of development and humanitarian aid. It allocates funds to agencies to which it accords a high priority and with which it maintains intensive dialogue. Switzerland is often an indispensable partner. For example, it is among the main donors of CGIAR, the global partnership for agricultural research,

and the UNAIDS programme. It also funds specific projects, especially in its priority intervention countries. Multilateral organisations appreciate the quality of political dialogue with Switzerland, which is well acquainted with the reality on the ground.

**Switzerland as a player on the ground:** Switzerland regularly provides multilateral agencies with experts who pass on valued Swiss technical knowhow. It aims to increase the number of its nationals seconded to multilateral organisations. In addition SDC and SECO are funding a programme to recruit young professionals and support Swiss candidates for senior positions in the multilateral organisations.



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# Facts and figures

- Roughly a quarter of Switzerland's official development assistance flows into multilateral cooperation. This amounted to CHF 771 million in 2015.
- In 2016, Switzerland is among the top ten donors of priority organisations such as UN Women and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).
- Switzerland is the fifth-largest provider of goods and services to the UN (CHF 620 million per year). Demand for Swiss pharmaceutical products is especially strong.
- Geneva, meanwhile, is the world's second-largest centre of governance, with 33 international institutions and 174 states represented. International Geneva attracts an average of 200,000 visitors and experts each year.
- Switzerland collaborates with global organisations that are active in almost 170 countries.
- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was placed third in the Aid Transparency Index 2016.
- Switzerland's priority partner organisations are capable of mobilising unmatched resources. Between 2015 and 2016, for example, the World Bank provided USD 50 billion in funding to infrastructure projects.

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