

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

S D C



INTRODUCTION



The present document portrays the identity of SDC for its staff as well as for the outside world. As a statement of our principles, its purpose is to make clear who we are and what we do, and to outline the visions that guide us.



These principles are the guidelines that shape our culture and organisational structure. They provide a frame of reference for the development of our strategies for the coming decade.



The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is part of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. Its mandate is based on the Federal Law on International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid enacted on 19 March 1976, and on a federal decree of 24 March 1995 on cooperation with the countries of Eastern Europe.

International development cooperation and humanitarian aid are instruments of Swiss foreign policy. In order to achieve the greatest possible impact and influence, SDC concentrates its long-term development cooperation efforts on a limited number of countries and areas of activity. Humanitarian aid and disaster relief, on the other hand, are undertaken throughout the world, wherever emergency situations arise.

SDC's operations are subdivided into four branches:

■ Bilateral development cooperation

■ Multilateral development cooperation

■ Cooperation with Eastern Europe and the CIS

■ Humanitarian aid and the Swiss Disaster Relief Unit

VISION



The fundamental change in the global power structure has created new conditions for human co-existence and development. It appears that democracy and the market economy are being increasingly accepted as basic principles of social organisation.

Yet the causes of impoverishment, environmental degradation, inequality and conflict have not disappeared. The world remains a complex place, full of contradictions, and unpredictable. Poor countries and disadvantaged people are being confronted with new risks, but also with new opportunities.

Problems often previously overshadowed by East-West confrontation and glossed over as a result of authoritarianism and ideological isolation now dominate the agenda of international cooperation: the challenges of globalisation, the struggle over increasingly scarce resources, ethnic and religious tensions, the growing gulf between rich and poor, and the rise in migration.

At the same time, open borders, the free flow of information, advances in technology, and an increasing awareness of interdependence among people everywhere offer opportunities for new development initiatives.

In this changed world, SDC aims to confront the global tasks of the future and make a salient contribution so that...

Men, women and children can live in peace, freedom, security, justice, and enjoy a sense of well-being.

Future generations will be assured of access to resources sufficient for their development.

Switzerland will cultivate an attitude of openness, generosity and solidarity.

Within Switzerland, SDC aims...

To convince the public that Switzerland can make a significant contribution towards alleviating the deprivation suffered by more than one billion people.

To foster an awareness of global interdependence and a commitment to international partnership.

To strengthen and coordinate the political and operational capacities necessary for international development cooperation.

**Poverty alleviation**

We provide assistance to the disadvantaged so they can gain better access to productive resources and improve their living conditions by developing their own strengths.

Ensuring sustainability

We are committed to ways of life that safeguard resources and that secure the resource base for use by future generations.

Aiding victims, resolving conflict, and ensuring peace

We provide aid for victims of natural disasters and wars and work to prevent and resolve conflicts.

Empowering the disadvantaged

We support people – especially children and young people – so that they can build confidence in and develop their own initiative and capabilities.

Providing access to information

We consider access to information as a prerequisite for autonomous development and support the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

Ensuring equitable development for women and men

In both our activities and our approaches, in partner countries as well as in Switzerland, we seek to promote gender equality in development.

Fostering understanding between cultures

We respect the cultural diversity of our partners, while remaining aware of our own values; we seek to promote mutual understanding between cultures.

Supporting human rights, the rule of law, and democracy

We regard the rule of law, democracy, and respect for human rights as universally valid principles without which lasting development is impossible.

MANDATE



Improving living conditions

We support the efforts of disadvantaged men and women to improve their living conditions and develop societies that offer freedom, equal rights for all, and sustainable development.

Protecting lives and aiding victims

We provide protection and aid to victims of both human-induced and natural disasters.

Shaping Swiss foreign policy

We play an active role in helping to solve international problems that also affect Switzerland, and we are committed to ensuring that development is supported in every aspect of Swiss foreign policy.

SDC's mandate is defined by the Swiss Parliament and the Federal Council. In carrying out this mandate, SDC projects an image of Switzerland in global processes of development and transformation, at the heart of conflicts, and at the scene of disasters.



PARTNERSHIP



Responsibility for development and transformation lies with our partners. SDC supports them in exercising this responsibility.

Constructive and equitable partnership is the starting point for sustainable cooperation that strengthens accountability. We therefore work with partners who are willing to cooperate in a spirit of responsibility, openness, and efficiency, in order to achieve common long-term aims.

The poor and the disadvantaged need alliances

People who are poor and disadvantaged need freedom and the opportunity to develop above all else; they cannot improve their situation without alliances.

Working with effective and credible partners

In order to ensure that our efforts are effective and lasting, we work with partners who are willing and capable to permanently enhance the development potentials and opportunities among the disadvantaged.

Linking up with the forces of change

Freedom and development opportunities for the disadvantaged depend on technological and political conditions. We collaborate with partners who strive to achieve positive changes in these areas.

Cultivating diversity in partnerships

In carrying out our mandate, we support individuals, non-governmental organisations, and public institutions at the local, national and global levels.

Commitment to multilateral cooperation

We collaborate with international organisations that have a positive impact on framework conditions, work efficiently towards the achievement of particular objectives, complement our own activities, and show an interest in open dialogue.

Building strategic alliances in Switzerland

Within Switzerland, we seek development-related partnerships with all those forces that support international solidarity and a general attitude of openness.



SDC is a value-oriented, forward-looking institution that is open to learning.


Our working culture and the interests of our staff reflect the commitment to a common cause, which we share with our partners.



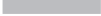
VALUES

**Justice, solidarity, equity**

Justice, solidarity and efforts to achieve equity are basic values underlying our mandate; they determine our attitudes as individuals and as an institution.

**Trust, respect and participation**


The success of our activity is based on trust, respect and understanding, and on sharing knowledge, resources and decisions with our partners.

**Responsibility, commitment and competence**

In carrying out our mandate, we count on personal commitment, professional capability, willingness to assume responsibility and to learn, and team spirit among our staff.

**Performance and cost-consciousness**

With a view to achieving the greatest possible impact, quality, and efficiency, we employ structures and processes that provide incentives to performance and creativity, and to overcoming bureaucratic procedures and attitudes.

**Personal fulfilment**

The personal fulfilment of our staff members, and a sound balance between work and private life, are prerequisites for good performance by our institution – and vice-versa.

ORGANISATION



The organisation and working culture of SDC are a reflection of its mandate and its values. Our form of institutional organisation and development should allow us to fulfil our mandate well, provide effective support for our partners, and engage in constructive interaction with the federal administration, the public, and the political environment in Switzerland.

SDC is structured and organised so that...

Duties, areas of competence, and responsibility are concomitant and delegated to the appropriate level of expertise.

Standards of quality for effective and cost-conscious execution of our mandate exist, are acknowledged, and are observed.

Work is encouraged in flexible, interdisciplinary, task-oriented processes that motivate staff members.

SDC is a continually developing organisation where...

Staff members are encouraged to develop a profile that corresponds to the mandate and the values of SDC.

Learning and interaction are regarded by all staff members as an ongoing challenge and opportunity.

Communication both within SDC and between SDC and the external environment is open, to the point, and constructive.

Women and men have equal opportunities to shape the objectives and the culture of cooperation.



DIREKTION FÜR ENTWICKLUNG UND ZUSAMMENARBEIT **DEZA**
DIRECTION DU DEVELOPPEMENT ET DE LA COOPERATION **DDC**
DIREZIONE DELLO SVILUPPO E DELLA COOPERAZIONE **DSC**
SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION **SDC**
AGENCIA SUIZA PARA EL DESARROLLO Y LA COOPERACION **COSUDE**