

PART II. NATIONAL REPORTING

A. AFRICA

Government focal point:

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1. General information

First of all, it should be noted that it is difficult to summarize lessons learnt and challenges for the entire continent Africa, since there is not only one Africa, but very different regions and countries in Africa which all have their own singular history, context, barriers and challenges. Having said this, the subsequent text is nevertheless an attempt to synthesize Switzerland's cooperation activities in Africa.

Because of its continuity, its proximity, its knowledge of the contexts, and its flexibility, Switzerland is a recognized actor for private and public partners in Africa. Switzerland also stands out since it does not have a past as a colonial power, does not follow a geo-strategic agenda, nor does it belong to a big alliance.

Switzerland's development cooperation in Africa is steered according to the following principles:

- a) it works in a selective way and focuses on a limited number of partner countries with which permanent relations are maintained and with which programs are jointly implemented
- b) its priorities are aligned with the national development strategies (e.g. Poverty Reduction Strategies) of its partner countries
- c) its orientation relies on content and instruments of the development priorities of the countries (Poverty Reduction Strategy or other similar national strategies).

Switzerland's humanitarian aid in Africa is guided by the following principles:

- a) Main areas of activities are prevention and reconstruction after disasters. Emergency aid and advocacy are conducted following a disaster event.
- b) Jointly with other Swiss and international humanitarian organizations, Switzerland's humanitarian aid works with people affected by crises and armed conflicts. The cooperation is with partners who respect the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality.

Switzerland's activities in Africa contribute to attaining the following objectives:

- a) economic perspectives for the people;
- b) promotion of rule of law as well as legal security;
- c) building up of sufficient, efficient, socially sustainable and economic infrastructure (education, health, water, energy, communication, and transport);
- d) preservation of the environment as intact ecosystems are vital since the populations depend on rural resources (agriculture, forests and livestock); and
- e) protection of the population affected by violent conflict or natural disasters.

Switzerland focuses its activities in development cooperation in Africa on the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, South Africa and Tanzania.

2. Concrete actions taken and specific progress made in implementation

Switzerland's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Africa between 2002 and 2006 (in millions Swiss francs / CHF)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Bilateral ODA	292	344	318	393	392
Multilateral ODA	154	152	157	159	172
Total Swiss ODA to Africa	446	496	475	552	564

Switzerland increased its ODA in Africa by 27% from CHF 446 millions in 2002 to CHF 564 millions in 2006.

Thematic distribution (bilateral ODA)	2006 (millions of CHF)
Debt related activities	64
Humanitarian Aid	52
General Budget Support	36
Health	39
Banking & Financial Services	28
Education	24
Agriculture	23
Governance	23
Water Supply & Sanitation	14
Trade Policy and Regulation	11
Transport	8
Conflict Prevention, Peace and Security	8
Others	62
Total	392

Some examples are given to illustrate the activities of Switzerland's ODA:

Example 1: Health sector reform support programme in Tanzania

In the implementation of reforms, the health sector has been the leading one within the government of Tanzania. Implementation takes place through a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) that strengthens coordinated planning and implementation, and includes both project support and basket funding. Switzerland's non-financial contributions include support in financial management, public expenditure review, performance monitoring, audits and other relevant areas. The financial contributions amounted to CHF 10 million in the first phase and stand at CHF 15 million in the current phase. Switzerland's engagement is at the central and district levels, and it works with six other partners. Experiences so far have shown that the SWAP is the most efficient way to implement and sustain fundamental reforms in the health sector. This has developed out of the realisation that only a comprehensive health sector programme will provide tangible results, such as improved quality health care services, and help the reform process to move forward. Switzerland is therefore willing to support a longer-term effort. Within its engagement, Switzerland seeks a certain specialisation and comparative advantage in the areas of sector performance monitoring, the role of civil society, and coherence between SWAP and PRSP reforms.

Example 2: Trade-related coherence issues come up mainly in agriculture, export promotion, trade-related intellectual property rights, and export risk guarantees. Switzerland supported the international compromise to facilitate access to drugs while balancing intellectual property rights. In order to complement bilateral cooperation efforts in the Sahel region, Switzerland began working with the group of West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Niger) on an initiative to find a solution for the cotton subsidies within the WTO framework. Furthermore, in 2004, Switzerland became a member of the Advisory Centre for WTO law, which helps developing countries defend their interests in dispute settlement processes. The coherence of trade and development policies in the WTO is being debated intensively within a special internal Swiss Task Force. This interdepartmental group's main task is to analyse the trade concerns of developing countries, in particular the most vulnerable, and to integrate the principle of development policy into trade negotiation positions. This has led, *inter alia*, to placing development specialists in charge of the Swiss position in development-related aspects of WTO negotiations. Consultative processes also took place with the Swiss private sector on determining the extent of tariff escalation. There was further consultation with concerned country delegates and international experts on how to reach a consensus on the country-focus of differential treatment, as well as on the best trade policies for African countries to enhance food security and rural development.

Example 3: Linking emergency relief with capacity-building in the Maghreb countries

The three Maghreb countries of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia are highly vulnerable to natural hazards such as earthquakes and floods. Following the earthquake of May 2003 in Algeria, a team of Swiss rescuers provided immediate relief assistance on the spot. In the reconstruction phase, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) contributed to programmes in the sectors of orthopaedic care, psycho-social support, the rehabilitation of hospitals, and sanitation. Considering the continuous high level of risks, tangible needs have been identified to improve the level of preparedness for future natural disasters throughout the region. Therefore, SDC is now actively supporting the regional programme of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies "Disaster preparedness in North Africa 2004 – 2007" that aims at developing the Red Crescent Societies' own preparedness capacities in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. SDC's primary objective in Northern Africa is to foster transformation processes with regard to democratization, participation of the local population, and improvements in living conditions. SDC programmes strive to empower underprivileged groups, eliminate structural inequalities, and foster awareness-raising and training related to the sustainable management of natural resources.

3. Lessons learned, emerging issues, and major challenges

Despite the renewed commitment of the UN Summit MDG+5 to do the utmost to halve poverty by 2015, the international debate has turned to questioning effectiveness and impact of aid in general. Critics, not only in Switzerland, maintain that public aid does not reach the right addressees, does not reduce poverty, and blocks the reforms required for sustainable development.

Switzerland considers enhancement of aid effectiveness as an essential contribution to the Millennium Development Goals. Switzerland considers the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness as its own work program. Therefore, Switzerland applies the following key principles: a) partner countries own and exercise leadership over their development policies; b) donors align their overall support to the national development strategies of the partner countries; c) donors' actions are more harmonized, transparent, and collectively effective; d) resource management and decision-making are more result-oriented; and e) donors and partners are accountable for development results.

Four types of vulnerability can be distinguished in Africa: a) *social vulnerability*: access to basic social services is not yet sufficient; poor populations are particularly affected by crises and have the weakest capacities to cope with them; b) *political vulnerability*: the entire society in a country has to be able to participate in the process of poverty reduction. Therefore, its participation in political processes is essential. If political institutions are not transparent and accountable in their activities, policies are difficult to implement successfully; c) *economic vulnerability*: in Africa, economies continue to be dominated by the production of basic agricultural and mineral goods. The absence of value-added processes often represents a barrier for more substantial increase of productivity and revenues; and d) *environmental vulnerability*: extreme weather conditions and water shortage make Africa particularly vulnerable to environmental crises. According to latest studies (IPCC and others), the effects of climate change will even increase this high level of vulnerability.

AIDS has been a central development barrier for several countries in Africa. Particularly in Sub-Saharan countries, AIDS has decreased the level of average life expectancy compared with that of some decades ago. AIDS has also caused substantial shortage of human resources in agriculture, food production, health, and education sectors.

In 2006, the Swiss Government decided its cooperation should contribute to the three areas: i) achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; ii) management of the systemic security risks; and iii) the human face of the globalization process. In its partner countries in Sub-Sahara Africa, Switzerland will focus its work on the following areas: governance, health, education, environment and local economic development (including rural development).

Good governance and the fight against corruption have to stay high on the agenda. Public financial mechanisms and public institutions have to be strengthened in order to minimize corruption. Switzerland will continue working with partners at different levels (governmental institutions, civil society organizations, private sector) to foster checks and balances for a functioning democracy.