Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
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Swiss Confederation

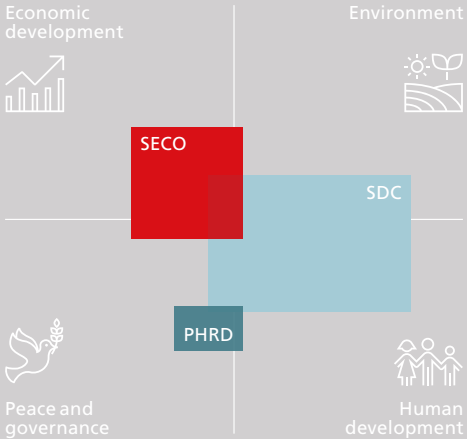
Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

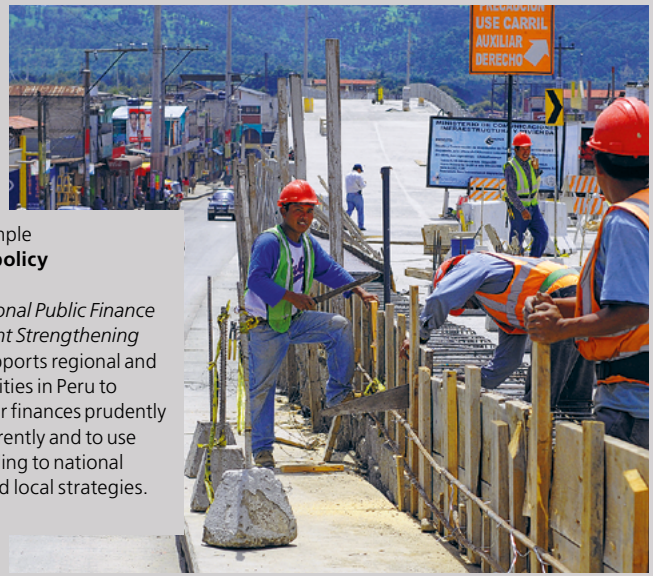
PORTRAIT

For sustainable prosperity

SECO's economic development cooperation

The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) implements Switzerland's economic and trade policy measures for the benefit of developing countries. It coordinates its activities with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD) of the FDFA. The three administrative offices implement Switzerland's international cooperation together.





Project example
Economic policy

The *Subnational Public Finance Management Strengthening Program* supports regional and local authorities in Peru to manage their finances prudently and transparently and to use them according to national priorities and local strategies.

PORTRAIT

Project example
Urban development

The *Bus Rapid Transit System* in the South African city of Johannesburg creates dedicated lanes and stops for buses. Such efficient transport systems provide the public with time-saving and climate-friendly mobility and reduce their travel costs.

Reducing poverty and overcoming global challenges

Objectives

SECO's economic development cooperation aims to use Swiss expertise and innovative approaches to reduce poverty and overcome global challenges in its partner countries. To accomplish this, it promotes economic growth and sustainable prosperity. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an important frame of reference in this context.

Impact

SECO promotes reliable economic framework conditions and innovative private-sector initiatives with the aim of giving people and companies access to opportunities and markets and contributing to the creation of decent income opportunities. It places particular emphasis on gender equality, climate protection and the efficient use of resources.

Projects

SECO's projects follow eight business lines that are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. SECO focuses on areas where its economic and trade policy expertise creates added value.

SECO-relevant sustainability goals

- 1 No poverty
- 4 Education
- 5 Gender equality
- 6 Clean water
- 7 Clean energy
- 8 Economic growth
- 9 Infrastructure
- 10 Reduced inequalities
- 11 Sustainable cities
- 12 Responsible consumption & production
- 13 Climate protection
- 16 Peace & rule of law
- 17 Partnerships

TARGET OUTCOME

Markets and opportunities

SECO promotes reliable economic framework conditions for equal access to markets and opportunities for people and companies. This requires:

Business lines

- an economic policy with a positive long-term impact on economic growth;
- a rules-based trade system that integrates partner countries into the global economy and takes into account social and sustainability standards;
- an innovation-friendly business environment that fosters the competitiveness, productivity and growth of companies;
- cities that enable residents to move around efficiently, that have a reliable clean energy and water supply and that are protected against natural disasters.

Project example
Business environment

The *Swiss Entrepreneurship Programme* works with private actors that offer services to start-ups in partner countries. It also cultivates networks with mentors and investors.

Project example
Trade system

The *Global Trade Facilitation Programme* supports customs offices in partner countries in efficiently processing the import and export of trade goods.

TARGET OUTCOME

Income opportunities

SECO supports innovative private-sector initiatives. These create decent local income opportunities and help the economy grow sustainably. This requires:

Business lines

- companies with access to financing that invest, tap into new markets, grow and create decent jobs;
- producers and companies that are integrated into international value chains;
- responsibly managed companies that respect human rights and international labour and social standards;
- specialised employees with skills in demand by the market and the digital working world.

Project example
Financing

SIFEM, the development finance institution of the Swiss Confederation, offers financing opportunities for businesses, making it possible for them to create and maintain jobs.

Project example
Value chains

The *Better Gold Initiative* makes it possible for small mines in Peru, Colombia and Bolivia to mine gold under responsible conditions and deliver it to Switzerland.

Multilateral Cooperation

Together with other federal agencies, SECO defines Switzerland's multilateral cooperation, advocating for and helping shape a strong multilateral system. Switzerland supports international organisations that are committed to the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including multilateral development banks, various United Nations organisations, and global funds.

Development banks reduce poverty, create markets and promote good governance. They not only provide advice and technical support but also grant loans and guarantees on attractive terms in accordance with international financial standards. In doing so, they implement international social, environmental and governance standards. Switzerland contributes capital to the development banks and supports selected projects that increase the impact of its bilateral activities. Therefore, Switzerland has a role in determining how the banks position themselves and implement their projects.

→ 180 000 people received improved access to education in 2019 thanks to the African Development Bank.

→ 2.6 million SMEs benefited from loans granted by the Inter-American Development Bank from 2016 to 2019.

→ 47 million people gained better access to drinking water from 2016 to 2018 thanks to the help of the World Bank.

Centre of expertise for economic development

SECO *Economic Cooperation and Development* makes targeted use of SECO's economic expertise in order to further international cooperation. On this basis, it reaches key economic organisations, government agencies and central banks.

SECO focuses on advanced developing countries that face specific development policy challenges. It bases its programmes on national and international development strategies.

Since 2007, SECO has also been involved in reducing economic and social disparities in the enlarged European Union. This contribution is part of Switzerland's European policy.

Since 2000, SECO *Economic Cooperation and Development* has had an ISO 9001 certification. It systematically ensures the quality of its work, monitors risks and manages its programmes with a focus on achieving results. Thereby, it ensures that the measures taken actually have an impact.

At a glance

ANNUAL BUDGET
Roughly 410 million Swiss francs.

EMPLOYEES
110 employees in Berne share 90 full-time positions. In addition, there are the staff in Switzerland's representative offices in the partner countries.

PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS
SECO implements roughly 300 programmes and projects each year. Since 2005, external evaluators have rated 80 to 90 per cent of them as good to very good.

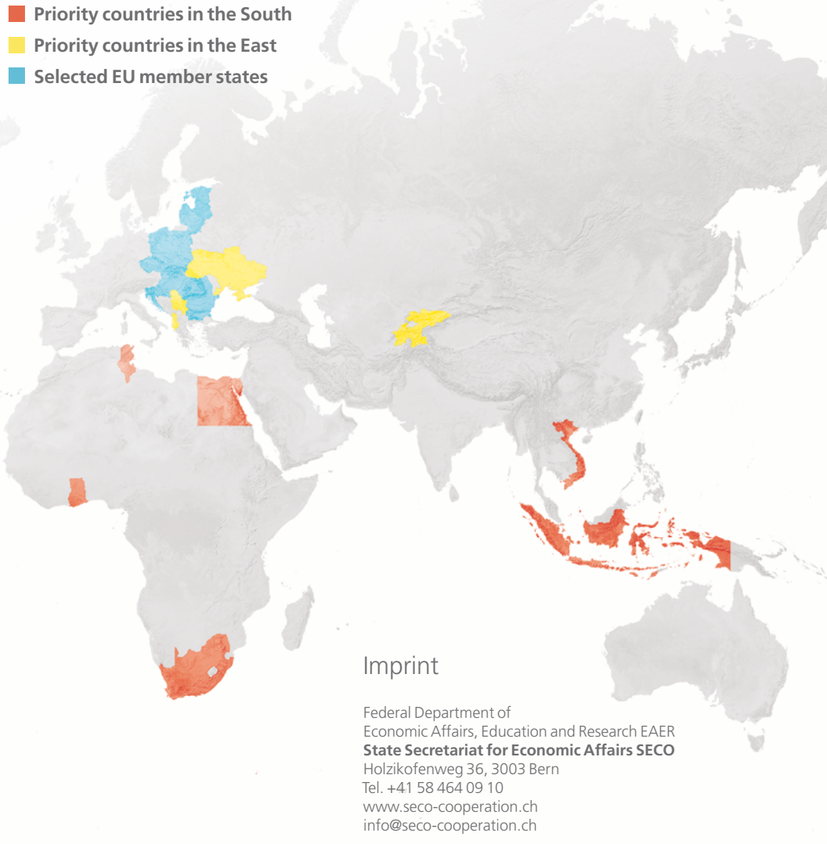
PRIORITY COUNTRIES IN THE SOUTH
Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Peru, South Africa, Tunisia, Vietnam.

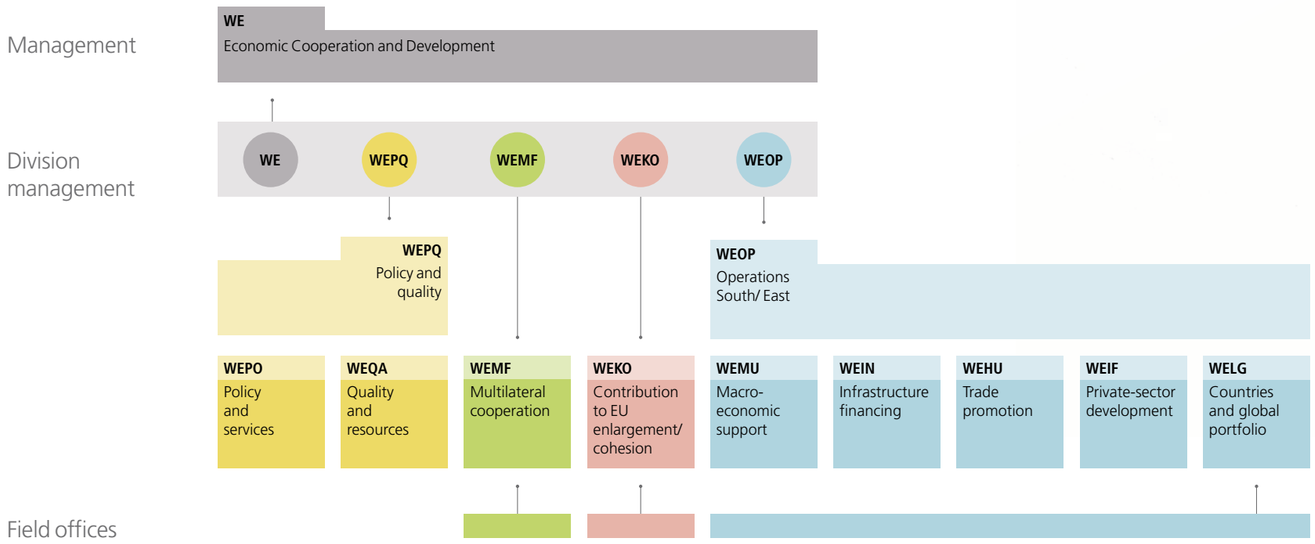
PRIORITY COUNTRIES IN THE EAST
Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan, Ukraine.

COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES
In some developing countries, SECO supports other federal agencies with complementary measures.

CONTRIBUTION TO SELECTED EU MEMBER STATES
Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia.

Partner countries





Imprint

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Photos
Project examples economic policy and trade system: World Bank
Project example market-oriented skills: S4D
Project example financing: SIFEM/Mostafa Darwish

Graphics
vollprecht gestaltung, Basel

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RESULTS

Results in the partner countries from 2016 to 2019

157 000 jobs were created
and 15,000 jobs were preserved.

1.3 million companies
were supplied with capital.

1.2 million people
were trained to export sustainable products embedded in value chains.

29 million tonnes of CO_2 emissions
were avoided and more than 21 billion kilowatt-hours of renewable energy were generated.

USD 430 million of turnover
was generated through the export of sustainable products.

94 cities
in Africa, Asia and Latin America were integrated into sustainable urban planning.

Project example
Market-oriented skills

The *Skills for Competitiveness* project supports five Indonesian technical colleges in the metal, wood and food processing sectors to develop dual vocational education and training in cooperation with the private sector and the authorities.

Project example
Corporate Social Responsibility

The *Better Work* programme improves working conditions in export companies of the textile industry. Factory management and staff improve their collaboration. The factories are becoming more productive.