



For sustainable prosperity

SECO's Economic Development Cooperation

Achievements and future challenges of development cooperation

In recent decades, globalisation and technological progress have significantly contributed to global economic growth and have improved the living conditions of many individuals. Around one billion people have been able to escape from extreme poverty worldwide. Development cooperation has contributed to this positive outcome thanks to its *expertise* and *financial resources*.

Although poverty declined significantly, one person out of ten remains affected by *extreme poverty*. More than half of them are living in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, *global challenges* related to structural change, good governance, demographic change, inequality, climate change, urbanisation and digitalisation persist. Those challenges can jeopardise progress made in poverty reduction and encourage people to migrate.

Objectives and strategic orientation of SECO's Economic Development Cooperation

SECO aims at promoting *economic growth and sustainable prosperity* in its partner countries. The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development represents an important reference framework in this regard. SECO pursues *two target outcomes*. First, it promotes *reliable economic framework conditions* by focusing on:

1. *economic policy* with positive impact on long-term economic growth;
2. a *rules-based trade system*, which helps partner countries to integrate the global economy and promote the implementation of social and sustainability standards;
3. an *innovation-friendly business environment*, which stimulates the competitiveness, the productivity and the growth of enterprises;
4. *integrated urban development and infrastructure services*, which improve urban mobility, energy supply and the resilience towards natural disasters.

The added-value of economic development cooperation

In order to overcome global challenges, SECO focuses its efforts on promoting *economic development*. SECO's *core competences in economic and trade policy* have a significant added-value in this area.

SECO relies on *partnerships* with multilateral organisations, the private sector and civil society to increase the *effectiveness and leverage* of its activities. SECO activities are *strategically aligned with and complementary* to those of other federal agencies, especially the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Human Security Division (HSD) of the FDFA.

For detailed information about SECO's economic development cooperation, please see:

<https://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch/strategy>

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Second, SECO supports *innovative private-sector initiatives* by focusing on:

1. *access to finance*, which contributes to the development of the private sector and the creation of decent jobs;
2. the *integration of producers and enterprises in value chains*;
3. *corporate social responsibility*, providing businesses with incentives to integrate social, ecological and governance standards in their activities;
4. *market-oriented skills*, which meets the demand of the market in the digital age.

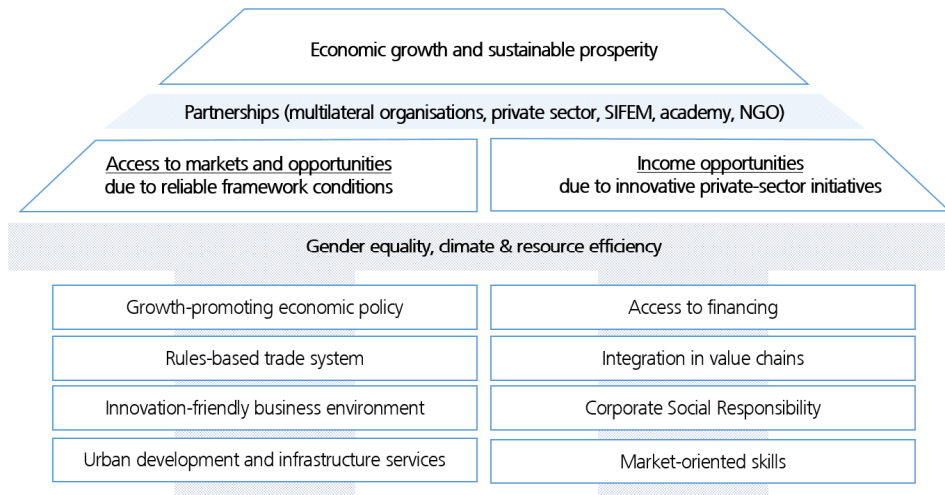


Figure 1: SECO's strategic orientation 2021-2024

SECO's geographic focus

SECO's economic development cooperation acts where it can address needs and challenges and provide the greatest added value. SECO concentrates its activities on *thirteen priority countries*. These countries play a key role in the economic development and political stability of their region and are important for Switzerland with regard to foreign economic policy and foreign policy.

In addition to its involvement in the priority countries, SECO also implements selective complementary measures based on its thematic areas of expertise. The objective is to be able to respond selectively and flexibly to specific challenges in different domains, such as migration. SECO's bilateral activities are complemented by *global measures*, which address global challenges related to Finance and Trade, Migration, Climate Change and Environment, and Water.

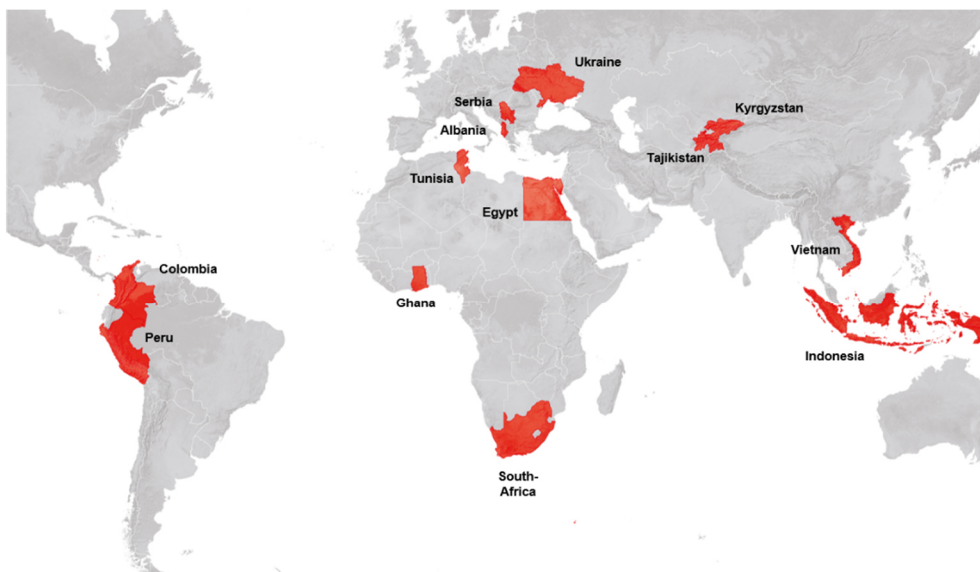


Figure 2: SECO's geographic focus