

THE “DEMOCRACY WITHOUT BORDERS” INITIATIVE

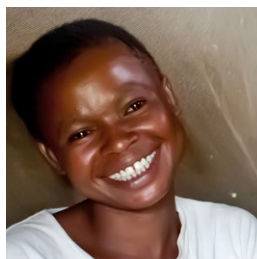


CONTEXT

The principle behind “Democracy without borders” is simple: a nationally or internationally renowned Swiss personality agrees to become the ambassador for a Swiss development cooperation project. In the course of supporting the project, the personality will employ his or her expertise to raise awareness with the relevant parties and sectors not only “in situ” but also in Switzerland. Former politicians, artists, journalists, and entrepreneurs – it is an additional advantage that the personalities come from such varied backgrounds.

The first three projects selected are from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the FDFA’s Human Security Division (HSD).

The “Democracy without Borders” initiative associates nationally and internationally renowned Swiss personalities with development projects aimed at strengthening democracy, peace and human rights. These collaborations will help to raise awareness of the challenges in the project countries, both among people in Switzerland and in Switzerland’s partner countries alike.



SUPPORT FOR WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE: THE GREAT LAKES REGION (DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC), RWANDA AND BURUNDI)

Every year, in the provinces of North and South Kivu, several thousand women and girls are the victims of sexual violence in armed conflict. Switzerland accommodates these women and girls in centres established in South Kivu (DRC), Rwanda and Burundi. It provides them with medical, psychological, legal and reintegration support.

The project ambassadors help to fight against the impunity of the perpetrators of these acts by organising conferences in Switzerland and in the regions concerned. They establish local and Swiss networks to bolster justice in this field.



SUPPORT FOR THE DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION PROCESS IN TUNISIA

Switzerland supports the democratic transition process in Tunisia through various projects implemented by the SDC and the HSD. Project ambassadors, mostly former Swiss politicians, undertake to meet Tunisian members of parliament and political party representatives to impart their experience and best practice. With this same objective of democracy in mind, Switzerland supports the local and national press in Tunisia so that it may report the changes taking place across the country in a transparent manner.



PROMOTION OF DUAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: HONDURAS AND MYANMAR

In the underprivileged regions of Honduras and Myanmar, vocational training and the income it generates can free young people from violence and the vicious cycle of poverty. The SDC is establishing training of this type in the tourism and construction sectors. The long-term goal is to integrate dual vocational education and training into the professional training systems of both these countries.

Project participants will be involved in developing adapted teaching methods, campaigns to raise awareness "in situ" and training courses in Switzerland.

Collaboration with the "Projovent" project in Honduras is currently on the agenda of the initiative. Extension to projects in Myanmar is still in the planning stage.

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Swiss Agency for Development
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Staff unit Regional Cooperation
3003 Bern, Switzerland
www.sdc.admin.ch

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Kontakt: dsf@eda.admin.ch