Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

Independent Evaluation of SDC's Performance in National Policy Dialogue 2013 – 2020

Annexes - Volume 2

Commissioned by the Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division
of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Prepared by:
PEMconsult A/S, DK-Copenhagen K
pemconsult@pem.dk

Authors:
Susan Ulbaek (Team Leader), Eric Buhl-Nielsen, Vera Devine,
Ivan Naletilić, Iryna Bezverkha

March 2022

Table of Contents

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS I
ANNEX A METHODOLOGY 3
ANNEX B EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES OF COUNTRY CASE STUDIES 10
Country case study Burkina Faso 10
Country case study Moldova 14
Country case study Nepal 18
Country case study Tanzania 20
Country case study Ukraine 26
ANNEX C SURVEY RESULTS 30
ANNEX D BIBLIOGRAPHY 36
ANNEX E NPD RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EARLIER SDC EVALUATIONS 42
ANNEX F LINKING FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 43
ANNEX G LIST OF INFORMANTS (disponible seuelement sur demande) 46

Abbreviations and acronyms

AA	Association Agreement	HOC	Head Of Cooperation
ADA	Austrian Development Agency	HOM	Head of Mission
ADB	African Development Bank	HPSS	Health Promotion and System Strengthening
ANSAF	Agriculture Non-State Actors Forum	IFSP	Strengthening the Institutional Framework in the Water and Sanitation Sector in Moldova project
APASAN	Moldovan abbreviation for Water, Sanitation and Health (WASH)	IMS	International Media Support
AR	Annual Report	LED	Local Economic Development
BBC	The British Broadcasting Corporation	LGA	Local Government Authorities
BFC	The Basket Fund Committee	LMIC	Lowe Middle Income countries
CCHP	Comprehensive Council Health Plan	LSG	Local self-government
CCM	Party of the Revolution	MCT	Media Council of Tanzania
CHF	Swiss Francs	MENSANA	Mental Health Project
CHF	Swiss franc	MinRegion	(informal) Ministry for Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	MoFP	Ministry of Finance and Planning
DAC	Development Assistance Committee	MoH	Ministry of Health
DCF	Development Cooperation Framework	MoH	Ministry of Health of Ukraine
DHFF	District Health Financing Facility	MTEF	Medium term Expenditure framework
DP	Development Partners	MTR	Mid-term Review
DPG	Development Partners Group	NCD	Non-Communicable Disease
EPR	End of Phase Report	NGO	Non-Government Organisation
EQ	Evaluation Question	NHIF	National Health Insurance Fund
EU	European Union	NPO	National Programme Officer
EUD	European Union Delegation	OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
FCS	Foundation for Civil Society	OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
GAVI	The Vaccine Alliance	P4H	The Global Network for Health Financing and Social Health Protection
GBV	Gender Based Violence	PCCB	Prevention and Combatting of Corruption Bureau
GD	Government Directive	PD	Policy Dialogue
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	PF	Policy Forum
GNI	Gross National Income	PHC	Primary Health Care
GOT	Government of Tanzania	PORALG	President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government Tanzania
HBF	Health Basket Fund	RLGSP	Regional and Local Governance Strengthening Program
HBFC	Health Basket Fund Committee	RM	Republic of Moldova

SAM	Social Accountability Monitoring
SAP	Social Accountability Programme
SCO	Swiss Cooperation Office
SCO	Swiss Cooperation Office – Swiss cooperation team
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SECO	Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SWA	Sector Wide Approach
TA	Technical Assistance
TAPAS	Transparency and Accountability in Public Administration and Services (USAID/UKaid project)
TMF	Tanzania Media Fund
U-LEAD	Ukraine – Local Empowerment, Accountability and Development Programme (a multi-donor programme of the EU, Germany, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia and Slovenia)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Health
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organisation
WOGA	Whole of Guvernement Approach

Annex A Methodology

Overall approach

A combination of five different approaches and methods were used in this evaluation:

- Reconstruction of the theory of change
- Sampling
- Desk study of normative documents and meta evaluation/review documents
- Interviews with stakeholders
- Country and project level analysis (including visit to Moldova, Tanzania and Ukraine)
- Survey

Reconstruction of the theory of change

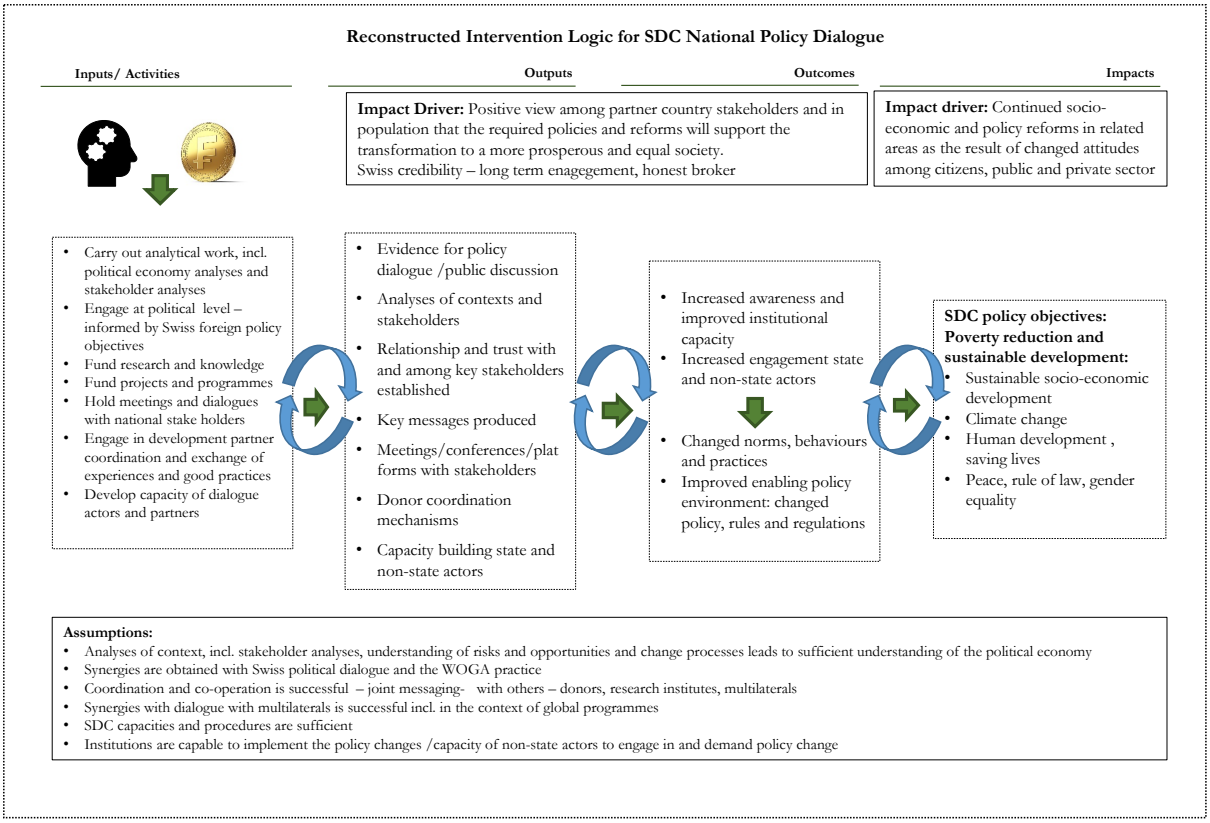
The theory of change shows the causality between policy dialogue inputs in the form of knowledge (technical, policy and political) as well as funding and outcomes in the form of policy changes, behavioural changes etc. that eventually will have an impact on beneficiaries in accordance with Swiss international cooperation objectives. The intervention logic is not linear – e.g., an output in the form of an analysis of the context might lead to more analysis activity being done and a second deeper analysis being developed; greater engagement of state and non-state actors might lead to refined outputs in terms of the messages produced. The intervention logic underscores the many assumptions that impact on the success of policy dialogue activities. In the figure below, we have listed those that are somewhat within the control of SDC/Switzerland or relate to activities carried out by Switzerland. In addition, there is a string of assumptions that are beyond the control of Switzerland; these pertain to the political situation in the country, various forms of crises, including economic and financial crises, climate crises, draughts etc. that will also impact on the opportunities for policy dialogue-induced changes.

The Inception Report marked the end of the inception phase of this assignment; it was to a considerable extent informed by in-depth stakeholder interviews—more so than would typically be the case in other evaluations, and for reasons outlined in the inception report (i.e., data is not systematically collected for policy dialogue inputs, nor are projects that support policy dialogue processes financially marked for identification). The choice of countries proposed, too, was influenced by suggestions from interlocutors during the inception phase.

For the following stages of the evaluation process, we continued with desk research of relevant documentation. However, we also anticipated that data collection will continue to be heavily reliant on in-depth stakeholder interviews. The interviews were complemented by targeted online surveys distributed to different stakeholder groups. This ensured as participatory a process as possible and contributed to the learning objective of the evaluation, as more stakeholders were challenged to reflect on the topic at hand, which is itself of value. It also ensured that the evaluation is representative and can draw on a convincing amount of data.

The ToR foreseen field visits to 3-5 case study countries if relevant and possible due to Covid 19. The team carried out field visits to Moldova, Tanzania, and Ukraine.

Figure 1 Reconstructed Theory of Change for SDC National Policy Dialogue



Inception Phase – During this phase, we mapped the landscape of policy dialogue at national, regional and global levels, and solicited input from CLP and other SDC management and staff on the ToR to understand specific areas of interest to be further explored in the process. The inception phase also established the data collection approach and data collection instruments. Overall, we conducted 15 interviews (see Inception report) in this phase. We also analysed the key policy documents guiding SDC policy dialogue, annual country reports, and conducted a scanning of evaluation reports made available by E+C.

Data collection – This was the most extensive part of the evaluation. As highlighted above, a key focus was on stakeholder interviews and data collection through a semi-structured questionnaire; desk study of information will accompany the in-depth interviews.

- Desk study of documentation

The evaluators returned to key overarching policy documents already considered during the inception phase, including the SDC 2017 How-To Note on Results-Oriented Policy Dialogue, as well as the Policy Dialogue content in the SDC Governance Network Toolbox. We also looked at other framework documents with a bearing on policy dialogue, including consecutive Swiss Foreign Policy Strategies and Strategies for International Cooperation/Dispatches that established the framework for what Switzerland is aiming to achieve through policy dialogue.

The evaluation selected number of countries (see below), and the team zoomed in on country-relevant documentation, such as the Swiss Country Cooperation Strategies, including performance indicators and reports on the achievement of the strategic objectives, programme and project documentation, and other documents that provided background and data on policy dialogues at the country and sector level. The team asked SDC and

SCOs for suggestions/inputs into suggested documentation that can illustrate experience at the country level.

- Interviews

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were the primary data collection instrument. A key challenge was how to ensure that there is sufficient external perspective on SDC policy dialogue, either by peers (i.e., other donors), development partners, or third-party stakeholders, i.e., interlocutors that are not directly involved in the day-to-day policy dialogue, but who have sufficient insight into policy dialogues at national level. The list of key informants is presented in Annex G.

We asked SCOs in the countries selected to provide the team with names of potential interlocutors and to facilitate the contact with these (through a formal letter/introductory email). Where possible, we drew on the team's existing relevant contacts.

The guiding questions for the interviews were the questions outlined in the evaluation matrix and the indicators therein. Notes were taken for all interviews, but not shared with the CLP; they served solely as record keeping and sources for analysis which informed the evaluation report.

- Surveys

To obtain a wider and representative response, a survey involving all active SCOs was conducted. The survey was sent to the Heads of Cooperation, with a request to ensure that at least one member of staff responds to it and, if possible, more, so that all the sectors are represented. The survey was electronic and took no longer than 20 minutes to fill out. The questions were closely related to the indicators so that they shed light on the main evaluation questions. Multiple choice, rating and open-ended responses were called up. The survey results are presented in Annex C.

Validation - The country findings were validated by staff involved in the evaluation from the SCOs. This allowed us to clarify outstanding issues; flag potentially problematic findings and solicit additional feedback on these. We also presented and discussed the preliminary findings of the draft evaluation report to the CLP.

Triangulation and synthesis - The findings from the document review, the in-depth interviews and the questionnaires were triangulated and synthesised for the draft and final evaluation reports. The triangulation was, where possible, carried out through obtaining at least 3 sources of evidence and preferably a mix of survey, interview and documentary review.

Contribution analysis - We carried out a small number of contribution analyses in different sectors/thematic areas to pin-point particularly important types of change achieved, as well as the Swiss contribution and added value. We have further refined the contribution/plausibility analysis into a four-step methodology: 1) Describing the challenge that the Swiss support sought to address; 2) describing the significant change achieved; 3) analysing the Swiss support's role and added value in achieving the change; and 4) identifying other significant factors influencing the change (contributing or inhibiting/limiting). This effective four-step contribution analysis served to document what worked, what did not, and why – thereby providing learnings that can be translated into implementable recommendations for current and future cooperation.

Selection of case study countries and dialogue activities - The unit of analysis for assessment of SDC performance in national policy dialogues were naturally partner countries. The country focus allowed for assessing the full range of Swiss activities in a country to see national policy dialogue processes and outcomes in the context of Swiss cooperation with various countries. The annual reports for all SDC cooperation countries and regions underscore that all Embassies/SCOs engage in some form of policy dialogue in the context of project and programme preparation and implementation, and for many countries, additional topics outside the project and programme context, e.g., with regards to the on-going political situation, human rights and gender equality, migration and, in the current situation, issues related to Covid-19.

During discussions with SDC staff in the inception phase, views were sought on, *inter alia*, criteria for selection of country case studies as well as positive and negative examples of policy dialogue activities that can provide insights into the outcomes of policy dialogue and factors that positively and negatively impacted these outcomes. The interviews revealed many diverse examples of policy dialogue experiences and activities that can support evidence gathering for answering the evaluation questions and provide useful learning.

Based on the ToR, document reviews, and the interviews the following selection criteria for country case studies were relevant:

- All domains: South/East Europe/Humanitarian and Global: This criterion follows from the ToR
- Geographic spread with emphasis Africa/East Europe and Middle East: Swiss development cooperation is gradually shifting towards these geographical locations – this is reflected in the selection of cases
- Diverse country situations as they offer different opportunities for policy dialogue: Fragile countries/stable countries/autocratic countries; different opportunities related to shifts in geopolitical environment
- WOGA experiences with a view to assessing the extent to which institutional and organisational factors play a role in success of policy dialogue
- Swiss engagement in policy dialogue at various levels, including beyond projects and programmes
- Substantial, long-term cooperation programme and engagement
- Donor-collaboration: Either exemplary or the opposite – to assess the extent to which this has an impact on policy dialogue outcomes
- Global programme activities: linkages between global programme activities and national policy dialogues
- Documentation of policy dialogue incl. plans, reviews/evaluations
- Successful and unsuccessful policy dialogues examples

In accordance with the ToR, the team suggested 5 case study countries. For these countries, there was an analysis of Swiss national policy dialogue with the country (government and non-government actors), its role in aid and donor coordination and linkages to wider political dialogues and dialogues in the context of global programmes. For each country, one or two dialogue processes with one specific aim were singled out for in-depth analysis of the process, the factors that contributed to success/failure, and the contribution of Switzerland. As we did not expect to travel to all countries due to the Covid-19 situation, the team suggested supplementing the country case studies with 5-7 interesting examples of policy dialogue activities in other countries that can shed light on the vast variety of SDC experiences.

Table 1 gives an overview of the country case study selection, and the selection of interesting examples beyond the country case studies. The first column contains a list of countries which stood out in the document review and were mentioned repeatedly in interviews as representing interesting country cases for further study. The list is divided into countries considered but not selected, countries selected at issue/project level and finally countries selected for full analysis. The second column indicates which of the selection criteria are met by selecting each of these countries/specific projects on the long list. And the third column provides additional notes on the selection. With the countries and specific projects/issues selected, we find that we covered the criteria as well as ensured that we have a wide selection of cases that can support a broad analysis of Swiss experiences in national policy dialogue. The table was updated based on CLP comments and suggestions.

Table 1: Selection of country case studies and selection of policy dialogues outside the case countries

Countries		Criteria	
Countries considered but not selected	Ethiopia	Fragile (humanitarian/development); Dialogue at many levels: country/African Union/IGAD; Global programmes; Integrated embassy	
	Mozambique	Stable government; Global programmes; Long-standing cooperation; Varied experiences with policy dialogues	
	Benin	Long standing cooperation ; Global programmes	
	Mali	Long-standing cooperation; Fragile state/nexus humanitarian-development; SCO – link to PHRD	
	Somalia	Fragile – peace-humanitarian-development nexus; HPIC process linked to political process	
	Laos	Fragile context/authoritarian regime; Long-term programme; Donor coordination experiences.	
Countries		Criteria	Notes on selection at issue/ project level
Countries selected at issue and project level	Great Lakes: Burundi and Rwanda	Burundi: Fragile – peace-humanitarian development Burundi: Dialogue at various levels: global UN/PBC and national level government/ civil society; WOGA Rwanda: autocratic government with a strong development vision and leadership; Long-standing cooperation, Engagement in national dialogue processes; SCO – link to PHRD	Swiss engagement in the political process for peace in Burundi is selected to provide an example of policy dialogues in the context of fragility. Switzerland is active at national level with national policy dialogue also involving civil society at the same time as leading UN Peace Building Commission work related to Burundi. Rwanda: Long term engagement with a country with a development vision
	Chad	Fragile environment. Long term partnership and SDC one of the few donors.	Selected as an example of a country that is difficult to work in i.a. due to a government that is reluctant to reform, and a divided donor community
	Mongolia	Stable country; Long-standing partnership – exit 2024; Examples of policy dialogue successes (agriculture) and failures(governance); Donor coordination	There are some interesting cases in Mongolia with regards to successful and less successful approaches. Long-term partnership and examples of donor cooperation.
	Syria and around	Fragile context; Peace-humanitarian nexus Humanitarian ; WOGA-Plan of Action	The Swiss engagement in the peace humanitarian situation in and around Syria is selected. Plan of Action for ensuring Swiss coherent engagement being developed. Context politicised – role of Switzerland in this specific context
	Albania	Donor coordination; WOGA; Strong role of Switzerland on decentralisation; Documentation available	Similar to other countries in the Western Balkans. Role of Switzerland as donor in country with strong ties through diaspora and at migration routes, and dense donor landscape. Focus on decentralisation
	Serbia	Donor coordination (Swiss chair of Sector WG on Human Resources and Social	Cooperation in the context of EU accession agenda and strong donor

		Development); WOGA; Migration partnership	presence, cooperation in increasingly authoritarian environment
	Central Asia	Regional policy dialogue on water (water as a security issue); Global programme-link to country programmes; Fragile countries Authoritarian contexts; WOGA	Swiss engagement in water and Blue Peace. Dialogues with governments and actors – engaging in regional solutions regarding water
	Latin America	Regional and country-based policy dialogue on water;); Global programme-link to country programme	Coordination with capitalisation study For example, on the Suiza Agua projects and on the policy, dialogue effected at municipality level – moving from country to regional level – low investment in hardware.
Countries		Criteria	Notes on selection at country level
Countries selected for full country level analysis	Tanzania	Stable but increasingly authoritarian government; Global programmes Longstanding cooperation (e.g., health sector); Governance; Integrated embassy	Tanzania is the example of a more traditional donor partner country where the focus is on policy dialogues related to the preparation and implementation of development activities. Even this is now challenged. The case can provide insights into how to respond to changes in country-donor relationships
	Burkina Faso	Long-standing cooperation; Broad engagement; Governance; Fragile state/nexus humanitarian-development SCO link to SECO	Long-term and very broad engagement, incl. budget support. Fragile context and humanitarian-development nexus; WOGA
	Nepal	Relatively stable country; Long-standing cooperation programme; Political and policy dialogue interlinkages; Integrated embassy; Global programmes	Selected as an example of a country coming out of fragility but still in a difficult political process. Link between political and policy dialogues in particular with regards to political development of Nepal. Dialogue on safe migration. (note: country evaluation is ongoing)
	Moldova	Relatively stable country; Frozen conflict Example of changing geopolitical relations in the region, including armed conflict and shifting EU aspiration agendas; Donor coordination; Documentation available	Moldova is selected as it features similar parameters to other countries in the region, but due to its seize, is more manageable than Ukraine There will be a specific focus on health Role of Switzerland against background of bigger players with more leverage, i.e., EU
	Ukraine	Ongoing armed conflict/war; Example of changing geopolitical relations in the region, including armed conflict and shifting EU aspiration agendas; Donor coordination Documentation available; WOGA; Broad engagement	Strategic importance of Ukraine Role of Switzerland against background of bigger players with more leverage, i.e., EU Considerable engagement in digitalisation, where Switzerland is in the lead for policy dialogue within the donor community

The following countries were chosen for country case studies: Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Nepal, Moldova, and Ukraine. Based on discussions at the CLP meeting in September 2021 and subsequent consultation, Ukraine, Tanzania and Moldova were selected for an in-country visit.

At a project and issue level, consideration was given to examining insightful examples in the Great Lakes region; Chad; Mongolia; Syria; Egypt; Albania; Serbia, and Central Asia. Our selection regarding interesting project case studies were as follows:

- **Burundi**, the role of Switzerland in preventing violence after the 2020 elections and supporting the subsequent reengagement of the international community in Burundi;
- **Mongolia**, Governance and decentralisation;
- **Syria,** the Humanitarian Advocacy Action Plan;
- **Serbia,** SDC in Governance sector in Serbia;

- **Albania,** decentralisation;
- **Central Asia** regional dialogues related to Blue Peace and Swiss water diplomacy in Central Asia.
- **Latin America:** Regional and country-based policy dialogue on water;

With regards to themes: Two or more sectors/themes were chosen in cooperation with the Embassy/SCO for an in-depth analysis of the Swiss national policy dialogue with the country (government and non-government actors); its role in aid and donor coordination; and linkages to wider political dialogues and dialogues in the context of global programmes. In most cases, interventions in the governance and the health sectors were chosen, supplemented, in some case-study countries, with additional examples.

Selection of peers with whom to compare Swiss experience

The ToR requested a comparison of SDC performance in national policy dialogue with peers. All donors engage in policy dialogues at the country level – often as part of the aid coordination/donor coordination processes that Switzerland itself engages in. Few donors have carried out specific evaluations of their experiences in policy dialogues, Sweden and Australia being the only ones.[1] Both evaluations seek to understand better what constitutes policy dialogue; what contributions/outcomes did arise form policy dialogue under varying circumstances; and what factors that are likely to be important for successful policy dialogue. Recommendations are targeted towards better understanding of context, strengthening dialogue processes, and improving staff capacities for planning and conducting policy dialogues.

During the interviews held in the inception phase, the team solicited views on criteria for selection of peers with whom to compare the Swiss experience in policy dialogue. Important criteria mentioned were donors of similar aid volume; donors that, like Switzerland, promoted internationally accepted and evidence-based policies, e.g., based on SDGs, international conventions (e.g., gender, biodiversity); and had long term cooperation arrangements and engagements with countries.

As a result of these criteria, the Nordic countries and in particular Sweden, Norway and Denmark were most often singled out as donors with whom Switzerland closely cooperates and would like to be compared to. The Netherlands – when it comes to water-related issues – was another donor that Switzerland found relevant, as was Ireland. BMZ/GIZ was also mentioned as Switzerland in many contexts works closely with Germany.

As context matters, the team suggested that the primary source of information for peer experiences are sought in the case study countries with a view to identifying lessons learned from peers with regards to factors and practices that supported/hindered outcomes from their policy dialogues. Hence, evidence for EQ4 was sought at the country level through in-depth interviews with the peer donors identified above.

To complement the information gathered at the case country level, more in-depth learning on the role of policy dialogues as a tool for development we sought from Sweden and Denmark. In the countries visited, the team reached out to a broad range of development partners – multilateral and bilateral - that Switzerland collaborated with to get insights.

[1] https://www.oecd.org/derec/sweden/Evaluation-Policy-Dialogue-Instrument-Swedish-Development.pdf https://www.dfat.gov.au/development/performance-assessment/aid-evaluation/program-evaluations/policy-dialogue

Annex B Executive summaries of country case studies

Country case study Burkina Faso

Summary of findings

Outcomes

There have been numerous results highlighted by reports and stakeholders of policy dialogues across the various domains.

Fiscal decentralisation

Swiss policy dialogue has contributed to the inclusion, in the Mining Code, of a contribution of 1% of mining companies' revenues to the budgets of the local communities in which the operations take place. Switzerland has supported decentralisation in Burkina Faso for several decades. Interventions have been multidimensional, including the empowerment and development of local actors in the three geographic pilot regions. Fiscal decentralisation has been one vector of support and an opportunity was identified by Switzerland and other development partners in the early 2010s, to support local revenues through the reform of the 2003 Mining Code that was under review at the time. SDC engaged in policy dialogue directly with the government, as well as through facilitating multiple government-civil society dialogue platforms, to include a provision in the revised law that would see substantial income from extraction licenses to citizens in the locations where mining takes place. The inclusion of such a provision in the 2015 version of the Mining Code was a considerable success—although one that was considerably leveraged by the complementarity of instruments, and specifically, the macroeconomic budget support, where it was a disbursement indicator for the variable tranche (see also below). However, there is a persistent problem with implementation, as at present, companies do not pay up. Once implementation happens, the local communities would see an unprecedented rise in income, as revenue would be a multi-fold of the resources currently available for social services etc.

Education

Through its participation in the multi-donor fund for education (CAST), Switzerland influenced national policy-making to improve access to and quality of primary formal and non-formal/alternative education as well as overall financial management of resources in the education sector. This includes the support to the elaboration of a national strategy for non-formal education, as well as a pledge to support its implementation upon the strategy's adoption; the World Bank, too, has pledged support. Swiss policy dialogue has resulted in the introduction of minimum quality standards for providers of non-formal educational offers (requirement of providers to have certain educational qualifications etc.). The fund provides a continuous, structured framework for donors to influence government policy making, through frequent, regular meetings in sub-thematic working groups chaired in rotation by various donors; these meetings include the discussion of the results of audit reports and priority setting. It ensures that the funds directly benefit students. The format also serves as a course correction when the government suggests expenditure that contradicts the spirit of the fund. For example, according to stakeholders, the government has in recent years started to prioritise the paying of civil servants' salaries from the CAST, something that is not in line with the objectives of the fund. Also, the government has suggested the procurement of infrastructure from the CAST, something that eventually was renegotiated in policy dialogue, as development partners were concerned that buildings might not comply with safety standards and pose a risk to students. It was argued that the funds are better spent elsewhere to directly benefit students, and that school infrastructure should be specifically commissioned so as to comply with health and safety standards.

In 2017, Switzerland was timely in highlighting the need to respond to a deterioration in the security context and the anticipated impact of this on primary education. As a result, UNICEF, along with other donors (Danida, Norad, Japan) pledged funding for the programme "Education in an Emergency Context", targeting primarily border regions; this programme continues to exist and is supported by a Technical Secretariat of the government of Burkina Faso. UNICEF is piloting approaches to make schools more resilient to crises. National stakeholders whose capacities had been built in previous phases of support (see previous paragraph) are now empowered to participate in policy dialogue and implementation of actions in the context of the humanitarian fund.

At the interface between education, decentralisation and rural development, Switzerland, together with other development partners, was able to influence policies with regards to school canteens (see also following paragraph on Investment Code). A requirement exists, since 2012, for pre-schools and schools to provide at least one nutritionally balanced meal in the school canteen. Many local communities receive government subsidies, however, in many places, these subsidies are insufficient, and prone to corruption, and tend not to favour local producers and markets. Policy dialogue supported by Switzerland and other development actors resulted in a national strategy to support local supply chains for produce for school canteens and a greater role of local communities in running them.

Rural Development

Swiss support facilitated dialogue around the 2018 Code on Agro-Pastoral Investments and helped to reconcile and reflect stakeholder interests in this sector. Swiss policy dialogue contributed to the adoption of law, which reflects the interests of family farms and decentralised communities. Provisions include the tax exemption for importing agricultural equipment. The Code also foresees stimulation of public procurement of produce from local producers, thus stimulating the local economy.

As a result of Swiss policy dialogue engagement, including concerns around food security, animal food is now included in the national food reserve. In its role of chair of the rural development donor coordination group, Switzerland was able to raise the importance of animal food to ensure livestock breeding and to prevent food security crises and famines. Animal food had not been part of the national food reserve until 2017 but is now part of it.

Factors

Switzerland is a long-term development partner in Burkina Faso, with support in all domains using consistently a multi-level approach, which results in evidence from the ground that feeds into policy dialogue at the national level. In particular, in the areas of support to decentralisation and education, Switzerland is looking back at several decades of support in three geographical regions. This long-term support has generated a credible track record of evidence from pilot activities that are being used as the basis to inform policy dialogue at local, regional and central levels.

Continuity has been one of Switzerland's key characteristics as a development partner in Burkina Faso. Regardless of political regime changes, Switzerland operated under the "staying engaged" principle. This has reinforced Switzerland's legitimacy vis-à-vis and gained the confidence of the authorities and population.

Swiss support has been consistent in supporting domestic actors, including at the local level. Switzerland has created a network of national partner organisations that are able to conduct advocacy and policy dialogue at various levels. Switzerland facilitates domestic actors' participation in policy dialogues but is careful not to assume their role. For

example, in the education field, Switzerland has supported the growth of several indigenous NGOs that have become leading advocates in the reform of the non-formal education sector, and whose experiences have facilitated the inclusion of non-formal educational approaches in national policy discussions, including the need for a national non-formal education policy. The pursuance of a national strategy for non-formal education is a direct reflection of the experience gained on the ground with piloting models of non-formal education and the importance of these in advancing literacy levels. Other examples include the empowerment of farmers' associations in the policy dialogue around the 2018 Code on Agro-Pastoral Investments (see below).

The network of non-governmental partners has allowed Switzerland to mobilise and facilitate their participation in national-level policy dialogue. This was the case, for example, in the discussions around the 2015 Mining Code, where NGOs that had been supported by Switzerland, participated in protracted government-civil society dialogue processes to demand that local communities benefit from extraction licenses. As the ensuing legal provisions remain, thus far, largely unimplemented, these civil society organisations continue to be involved in urging the government to insist that companies comply with the law.

The complementarity of modalities provided good entry points for policy dialogue. Switzerland contributes to a multi-donor pooled fund on education and is providing macro-economic support through SECO. Both modalities could be leveraged in policy dialogues.

The Swiss ability to engage in policy dialogue is more limited than that of other development partners. Due to the hierarchical nature of donor-government dialogue in Burkina Faso, an accreditation of the head of cooperation at Chargé d'Affaires level would be beneficial to gain access to senior government decision-makers/officials as well as to high-level donor coordination mechanisms involving the government. Currently, the SCO has only limited access to these high-level for a, with a knock-on effect on the Swiss ability to influence policy dialogue.

Policy dialogue—and consensus-building—as part of donor coordination has proven crucial to maintain focus on aid money reaching the most vulnerable. Stakeholders reported a tendency, over the past years, of the government to spend funds from the multi-donor central education fund on civil servants' salaries instead on educational expenses for school-aged children. Donor coordination and joined up dialogue with the government has been able to push back on these developments.

Direct budgetary support through SECO has been an important instrument to leverage policy dialogue. Even though the Swiss share of direct budget support to the government is relatively small compared with that of other donors, it has proven an important entry and leverage point for policy dialogue in Burkina Faso, complementing the SDC portfolio of assistance. For example, in 2015, disbursement was put on hold due to delays in the work to revise the Mining Code (see above); once this restarted, the tranche was released. The SCO considers that this instrument should not be discontinued; while an extension until 2025 has been negotiated with SECO, an agreement on longer-term continuation has not been reached.

Lessons learned

The resources needed to successfully engage in and maintain policy dialogue are considerable. As in other contexts, staff is engaged in formal policy dialogue, including such conducted as part of international development partners' coordination with governmental institutions, as well as informal policy dialogue, conducted as part of long-

standing professional relations with individuals in the institutions. Stakeholders suggest that this engagement takes up around 40% of their working time.

The time horizon for successful policy dialogue can be significant. Examples of successful policy reforms (Mining Code) point to multi-annual efforts to negotiate consensus and eventually, anchorage and ownership of legislation and reforms. Even where ostensibly, policy dialogue led to faster results, the ground for these have been prepared in regional cooperation contexts and policy dialogues conducted there, for example ECOWAS.

Integrating fragility into policy dialogue with the government requires sensitivity and nimbleness in approaches. Stakeholders suggested that it has been a challenge to have the government consistently acknowledge how the different vectors of fragility affect sectorial policies, and how these have to be incorporated into policy approaches, planning, and responses. However, Swiss policy dialogue with the government was able to take into account the potential wide-ranging implications thematising fragility. For example, in terms of public opinion and perception, it could have been highly detrimental to publicly suggest a food security crisis or famine. However, Swiss policy dialogue in the rural development domain was instrumental in integrating food security concerns into its discussion with the government, and livestock feed has, as a result, been included in the national food reserve.

While Switzerland has contributed to shaping sectorial policies, stakeholders point out that the subsequent implementation of these policies does not always meet expectations. For example, while the adoption of the Code Minier with provisions to benefit local communities was a success, it remains unimplemented. Similar is the case with policies affecting the education sector.

Programming over a timeframe of 12 to 15 years and the consistent involvement of stakeholders at the local level works in favour of sustainable change. This approach favours the development of know-how as well as behavioural change, including that of local authorities vis-à-vis citizens, and creates a level of ownership of reforms by key stakeholders who, in turn, can then bring their weight to bear on national-level policies. Experience from the local level then also informs Swiss policy at the national level.

Peers

The interviews did not include such with peers. However, some anecdotal insight has been gained, as follows.

Switzerland pursues consensus-building with a group of like-minded donors, and in particular Danida, GIZ, and Luxemburg were mentioned in this context. These donors share a common priority agenda framed by the SDGs. Other donors have a more focused policy agenda (f.e. security and migration, etc.) There is also an acknowledgement that donor approaches differ significantly in the country, and that bigger players have relatively greater influence due to bigger financial envelopes as well as easier access to high-level donor coordination platforms.

Switzerland opts, where possible, for soft pressure with the government where other donors might take more drastic steps. As an example, the response to audit reports was mentioned by stakeholders. Where other development partners might opt for the freezing of payments, Switzerland will choose to pursue a parallel track—insisting on ineligible expenditures to be reimbursed to the pooled fund, while continuing operations the suspension of which would, eventually, have a negative impact on the prime beneficiaries.

Country case study Moldova

Summary of findings

Outcomes

Although some policy dialogue results were achieved in water, overall, the results were disappointing. The projects supported by SDC have left a series of projects implemented at the local level that have built local capacity, and that potentially serve as a demonstration of appropriate design and alternative management models. A compendium of options and solutions has been developed and widely disseminated. Some systemic results were achieved, for example in Law 303, which does allow for a degree of recognition on a case-by-case basis for local-level management of water services. A notable result in advancing domestic policy dialogue was the support provided to the Congress of Local Public Administrations of Moldova, which is now the first structure in Moldova that provides demand-based assistance and capacity-building for small operators and Local Public Administrations. However, systemic change in the approach to investment decisions such as choice of technology and regionalisation of service operators in the water sector has not, yet, occurred. Partly as a result, SDC decided to pull out from direct support to the sector to, instead, deepen ownership at the centre through a nationally implemented project on the Strengthening the Institutional Framework in the Water and Sanitation Sector (IFSP). The policy aims of this project to create systemic change also fell short of expectations. Support has not, yet, succeeded in establishing a sustainable source of finance for the river basin management organisations – although there are some cases of municipalities providing skeleton budgets which, although insufficient, is encouraging.

The results achieved in the support of policy reform in the health sector reform in Moldova are considerable. Project have consistently adopted an approach of working, on the one hand, at the legislative, regulatory and normative levels to assist Moldova in achieving systemic reforms it has committed to as part of existing national health policies. On the other hand, SDC supported the roll-out of the implementation of reforms through technical and other assistance at the local and regional levels. For example, the ongoing project on mental health. MENSANA, has provided policy dialogue in support of the National Mental Health Action Plan, as well as a comprehensive package of capacity building and trainings across Moldovan stakeholders and institutions in charge of implementing these reforms. Policy dialogue at the systemic level and technical assistance at the local levels have also resulted in the Mental Health Centres now being part of the state budget, and thus, having secured the sustainability of the project, including policy dialogue, results. The Healthy Generation project, a ten-year effort across all 41 Moldovan communities, too, has resulted in the financial sustainability of Youth Centres, which are, after generating evidence of the usefulness of these centres and resulting policy dialogue on financial models between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finances now being funded by the National Health Insurance.

Evidence provided by SDC has informed policies at central as well as at regional and local levels. For example, Swiss support is credited as being influential in the design and adoption of key legislation on the use of tobacco; salt and sugar; and alcohol use. Expertise provided in these areas formed the part of policy dialogue between the donor community led by WHO and the Moldovan government as well as the parliamentary committee on Health, Social Protection, and Family, which was instrumental in facilitating the passage of this legislation. A current NGO-led project on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD), Healthy Living, funded with Swiss support and working at local and regional levels incorporates actions on the implementation of this new legislation, and, in turn, feeds evidence back to WHO, the Ministry of Health, and the parliamentary committee that can inform necessary further policy reforms.

Not all topics pursued in health sector policy dialogues have resulted in change. For example, while SDC, along with other donors, such as the World Bank, have stressed in the dialogue with national counterparts, for many years, the need for hospital reform—a dense, yet severely underfunded and thus, financially unsustainable, network of facilities left over from the Soviet Union for a population size that has halved, since—such a reform has not, yet, been tackled, as it is considered politically too sensitive, given the amount of expected local backlash. And the Healthy Youth project, implemented in collaboration with of a Swiss-funded local NGO, UNFPA, and UNICEF (?) have worked on making education on sexual and reproductive health and rights a compulsory part of the educational curriculum for all secondary school age students in Moldova; however, thus far, the policy dialogue by these actors and SDC have, despite evidence generated by the project (on decreased teenage pregnancy rates etc.) not resulted in systemic changes, owing to entrenched political agendas in the Ministry of Education. Both issues point to the long-term nature of policy issues and the need to persevere until windows of opportunity might arise to advance these policy changes. With respect to hospital reform, a number of local level projects, such as the Healthy Living project, work on paving the way for a decreased demand on hospitals (through the promotion of healthy lifestyle and disease prevention); while some way in the future, this should provide additional evidence for the consolidation of the hospital sector.

Swiss policy dialogue combined with technical assistance has advanced the existing domestic reform framework on topics that might otherwise not have made progress towards implementation. For example, while a Moldovan policy framework on mental health has existed for almost 15 years, no resources were available to implement reforms. There is considerable stigma surrounding mental health issues, but the MENSANA project, by conducting policy dialogue on the local and regional levels and in cooperation and coordination with other Swiss-funded projects (Healthy Living, and Healthy Generation), and by participating in policy dialogue, with other actors, at the national level (including WHO and the Parliamentary Committee on Health, Social Protection, and the Family), has improved the situation of people with mental health issues.

The practice of Swiss policy dialogue in the health sector, while not explicitly referring to this framework, follows a human rights-based approach, involving duty bearers (Ministry of Health and other line ministries; the relevant parliamentary committee; the donor community) and rights-holders (service users, students/young people, patients etc.). SDC is credited with empowering and capacitating local organisations to conduct policy dialogue at local, regional and national levels, thereby strengthening indigenous actors to engage in policy dialogue without outside intervention. The approach crucially enables ownership of reforms by those who will be tasked with implementing them on the ground.

Given the reputation of Swiss cooperation in Moldova, the SCO might want to consider to be more assertive on a number of issues in policy dialogue. For example, while there is evidence of the harmful effects of corruption on health sector reforms at the SCO health domain level, the policy messages and influencing strategies that are well documented do not explicitly mention of corruption in all its forms as a hindering factor for policy reforms at the systemic level. Although the informal policy dialogue taking place outside documented structures and processes might well feature these themes, there is scope to consider whether they might not have a more prominent use in policy dialogues in which the cooperation team itself is involved, as well as in that of implementing partners, and where it might be useful to be included in implementers' policy influencing strategies.

Factors

The policy influencing tool was instrumental in leading to a more strategic and systematic approach, at SCO level and across domains and implementers to policy dialogue. The health sector portfolio historically pursued policy dialogue as an integral part of its projects and therefore, whilst still useful for most involved in this sector, the tool did not bring as many new insights as it did for the water sector. The policy influencing tool requires a more explicit, thought-through approach to policy dialogue.

The tool has raised demands on the implementers and the SCO. On the one hand, the SCO has raised the bar in terms of what the SCO requires from its implementing partners; these have now to present a considered approach to policy dialogue, the elaboration of which is a stimulating, if challenging, exercise and useful in and of itself. The requirement to develop such a tools has increased awareness of implementers about the need for projects to deliver beyond outputs, and that the ultimate objective of any project is to affect changes at the systemic level. At the same time, implementers can now, based on the tool, call on SCO support in a more structured and predictable way. In this sense, the tool sharpens and strengthens the dialogue between implementers and the SCO, and implementers can signal bottlenecks or the need for SCO intervention in a more systematic way.

In the water sector, the rationale of piloting projects at the local level that could serve to provide convincing evidence of the need for policy change did not work in practice. A core factor was the absence of an effective and influential partner at central level. Other factors include insufficient awareness and means of dealing with:

- Vested interest in maintaining current approaches
- Technical bias favouring outdated standards among government
- Instability and low capacity among government staff
- An over-reliance of the SCO on policy dialogue being delivered by others
- Overly complex project design
- Inadequate donor coordination

A well-meaning attempt to deepen ownership through national implementation was, in hindsight, naïve and did not work as intended – the government institutional set-up changed too often, staff were not able to deal with the complexity and for international standards on procurement and program management.

The legacy of the Soviet Union has a long-lasting influence on the direction of reforms. While in the water sector, conditions in particular in rural areas of Moldova had always been challenging, in the health sector, citizens were used to a dense network of health care facilities, including hospitals. Any policy dialogue for reform, including the reduction and consolidation of hospitals, needs to take into account the high expectations Moldovans have as a result from what was a previously high standard. Ongoing project supporting the reform of community health care are paving the way for new models the evidence from which can be used to inform further policy dialogue.

The Swiss approach is marked by the provision of specific technical evidence around a reform area as the convening point for policy dialogue. This approach permeates all support in the health sector and allows for a de-politicisation of often difficult and loaded topics. The Policy Dialogue project funded by Switzerland, and which was implemented through the WHO produced numerous pieces of evidence (including international, regional and such generated by projects on the ground) to influence legislation on tobacco, alcohol, and salt and sugar contents of food.

The relatively small size of Moldova is a factor positively influencing policy dialogue. Geographically, distances are reasonably short, allowing for frequent presence on the ground. Also, access to senior stakeholders/interlocutors is easier than in a bigger country.

The relative stability or volatility at the technical level has been a factor for the success of the policy dialogue in the health sector and the water sector, respectively. While the Ministry of Health has seen frequent change in leadership, at the technical level, there was some stability, allowing most of the projects to continue when senior positions changed. In the water sector, political changes including changes in terms of which ministry had the mandate translated into significant changes also at the technical level, therefore leaving the IFSP project, among others, without strong leadership from the top, thereby contributing to its failure.

Health sector reform projects are long-term, often spanning 3 phases. SDC acknowledges that systemic reforms are difficult and protracted. Policy dialogues in the sector take time, and so that reforms can take root.

Lessons learned

The shift towards an overall (at SCO level), domain, and project-level systematic policy influencing approach in itself represents the results of lessons learned, specifically from the limited impact on systemic reform that became clear in the long-term APASAN (WASH) project, and the relative lack of success from the successor effort at central government level, which was also premature.

The integration of water—which had, for a long time, been treated in isolation—into a wider local governance programme, too, is the result of lessons learned from the APASAN and IFSP project.

An explicit policy influencing tool is useful for deepening insight into existing and emerging opportunities for policy dialogue. It also raises implementers' capacities and awareness of where their programme or project fits into a systemic reform context.

However, while the policy influencing tool is useful, care should be taken for it to remain nimble, in accordance with the project's or programme's implementers' needs and capacities. The tool works best, when used as a non-rigid framework for assessing and continuously reassessing the context and parameters in which policy dialogue can take place. It can also serve as an informing factor about the continuation or discontinuation of programmes and projects.

The SCO's policy influencing tool is explicitly going beyond policy dialogue, thereby sharpening the focus on actual reforms.

Donor coordination platforms provide systematic and legitimate entry points for coordinated policy dialogue.
SDC policy dialogue cannot address all policy-related issues: there are areas where progress will need to await a national shift in opinion or expectations that is not open to external influence.

Support to the provision of in-depth evidenced-based assessments and analyses has contributed considerably to influencing policy change.

Working through international bodies in the health sector has proven to be effective as they are able to provide global legitimacy to difficult policy messages.

Country case study Nepal

Summary of findings

Outcomes

SDC's contribution to peace, the constitution, transitional justice, and federalization stems in large part from the Swiss 'political engagement' in Nepal supporting the peace process and the ensuring constitutions. Whilst the Swiss Embassy uses its development projects to reinforce its political engagement – by, for example, restructuring all projects according to the federal structure of government – the development projects themselves do not really feature in SDC's contribution to peace, the constitution, transitional justice, and federalization. Examples of SDC contributions within the field of implementation of the Peace Accord, the Constitution (2015) and transitional justice:

- Support for the constitutional process – the Constituent Assemblies – through dialogue with political parties and other stakeholders, provision of technical expertise on federalization.
- The holistic approach to transitional justice (four pillars of truth, justice, reparation, and non-recurrence) which was facilitated through mediation and providing expertise on transitional justice.
- Engagements with political parties and development partners to support the implementation of the Constitution, including the new federal structure. Notable examples are the promotion of the Civil Service Act, and the dialogues with the development partners to forego their traditional inclination to deal with the federal ministries.
- Project support for capacity building and awareness raising for the executive branches of provincial level of their new roles, powers, and responsibilities as well as building capacity for planning and budgeting.
- Reorganizing the SDC cooperation to fit the new federal structure – this required substantial dialogue to change the projects and place the responsibility and funding of three spheres of government.

Outside the realm of the peace/ constitution processes there are examples of systemic changes that SDC policy dialogue contributed to:

- The introduction of the dual TVET system in Nepal whereby the federal system sets standards and certifies; provincial levels offer higher-level skills and local governments often in collaboration lower levels skills training options (TVET schools.) and the apprenticeships model. Policy dialogue with parties to federalize the TVET sector through law, and support for provincial level to understand their new role. Ensuring a coherent federal approach by other development partners in the sector.
- Shift towards a more realistic and pro-migrant understanding of migration in the government and administration. SDC and GoN now collaborates on issues related to safe migration including through joint support for Migrant Resources Centers offering support for migrants prior and after migration. An example of proof of concept that is then taken over by the GoN.
- Full adaptation of the implementation of Trail bridge Sector and Motorable Bridge Sector according to the new Constitution.

Factors

Understanding the context based on having accompanied the peace and constitutional processes over the past 25 years. Switzerland was well plugged into the political fabric of Nepal – something that is unique for Nepal, as donors traditionally have

had very good access to political parties, members of parliament etc. However, this now seems to be more controlled.

Switzerland has an integrated Embassy that combines diplomacy, development, trade and investment promotion. The WOGA cooperation works well. Also, SECO activities contribute to the implementation of the constitution through its support for the World Bank in the MoF (PMF).

Long-term engagement. The Evaluation to a large extent ascribes the Swiss accompaniment and contribution to the peace and constitutional processes as based on the long-term engagement such as community forestry, rural road and bridges, TVET etc of Switzerland in Nepal, gaining Switzerland a reputation as a respected, appreciated, credible, impartial, thorough, patient, and consistent partner. The Swiss way of working based on sharing expertise and knowledge rather than dictating course of action is appreciated as is its ability to identify partners and processes for engagement where there are good entry points and realistic prospects for success.

Political/ policy dialogue informed by SDC cooperation programmes/ projects. There is a clear delineation of responsibilities in cooperation with Nepal. The experiences and knowledge obtained and produced at the technical/ programmatic level feed into political and policy dialogues that the Embassy conducts, inter-alia to protect the cooperation projects and implementers from often sensitive political engagements.

Lessons learned

Defining the Swiss engagement as support for the overall implementation of the Nepali Constitution and actively supporting this politically while reframing the development cooperation to explicitly support this political goal. Initially this meant strong focus on federalization. As the structures of the federal state is taking form it is now time to focus on the broader aspects of the Constitution: inclusion, equality, and participation.

In the process of contracting implementing partners, the Embassy now use the two-tier process to ensure that the partner understands the political aspects of the project and that this is well reflected in the project description and results framework.

Peers

Switzerland invested heavily in aid coordination through the International Development Partners Group. The Embassy used the platform to promote support for the understanding amongst development partners as to the importance of delivering development support in accordance with and in respect for the constitutional structure, not least the federal structure. A notable example is the SDC cooperation with FCDO and WB which resulted in the Asian Development Bank (ADB) revisiting the project design and implementation modalities of its road programme which were also found to be unconstitutional. Following this, the WB and ADB have negotiated with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General administration that all rural road and infrastructure programs are implemented according to the Constitution, which means on provincial and local levels. This is seen as an important breakthrough in Nepal against huge resistance from the respective Federal office. SDC has been the driver behind in alignment with FCDO and WB.

Country case study Tanzania

Summary of findings

These findings are based on a desk assessment of available documents, interviews with SDC, Government of Tanzania, Civil society organisations, international organisation and other donors conducted remotely and in a field work in Tanzania that took place from November 1-3.

Outcomes

The structured dialogue mechanism in the health sector between GoT and DPs should allow for strategic long-term dialogue about development of the health sector. The structured dialogue constitutes a mechanism for dialogue that is well organised and well understood by all parties. According to development partners, these dialogues have in the past years grown increasingly technical, due to the GoT reluctance to engage in more strategic dialogues. When the recent Health Sector Strategic Plan 2021-2026 was published it was felt by some development partners that this was too unrealistic and ambitious and hence not a basis for serious dialogue.[2] At the recent high-level meeting between the Minister of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children with the Heads of Missions Development Partners in the HBF, some of the wider issues related to future financing of the heath sector, quality issues and, etc. was brought up, and it is now up to the government to produce papers for further dialogue. [3]

This development partner structured dialogue is complemented with bilateral political level dialogue, which can be used to raise issues extending beyond the more technical dialogues. The Swiss ambassador engages in dialogue at the ministerial level in Tanzania to complement the dialogues that takes place at civil servants' level. These dialogues are used to present the full scale of Swiss engagement in Tanzania, as well as raising issues of concern directly with the responsible minister in this case, the Minister for Health. Follow-up will take place in the DPG technical working groups and bilaterally Tanzania/Embassy.

Dialogue at that level can be useful to discuss issues that does not fit naturally into the technical working group structure. At a recent meeting between the ambassador and the Minister of Health, etc. the issue of dwindling funding for the HBF was discussed, and Switzerland agreed to continue advocating in global funds for support through the HBF. Also, cooperation on approaching new donors incl. non-traditional donors were discussed. The meeting was also used to amplify issues raised in technical working groups. Switzerland on that occasion did not raise the overall political issues related to sustainable financing of the heath sector, and the establishment of the universal health insurance in light of increased demand and decreased donor funding but focused on the narrower issue of delay by the government in providing matching funds for the Community Health Fund. [4]

Finally, such meetings can be used to raise issues that are politically sensitive. In the case of Tanzania this could be issues related to long term financing of the health sector related to demographics, policies on family planning, rights of pregnant teenagers, access of LGBT+ etc. According to the resume this did not happen on that occasion. It appears that Switzerland finds sensitive issues best dealt with by global multilateral institutions. [5]

---

[2] Interview
[3] Draft Minutes for the meeting between the Minister for health etc. Dr. Dorothy Gwajima and the Ambassadors and HoCs supporting the HBF June 9, 2021, Dodoma.
[4] Minutes meeting Minister for Health etc Dr. Dorothy Gwajima and the Ambassador, October 10, 2021.
[5] Annual Report 2019 – referring to the situation about pregnant girls barred for attending school

SDC policy inputs for systemic changes in the health sector are well recognised by the GoT and partners. SDC is widely recognised for its policy and technical input into systemic changes in the health sector, such as the development of a private sector-based procurement system that has led to better availability of medicines and supplies at district level across Tanzania. Another area where there is wide agreement as to the important policy and technical input is the standardisation of procedures for good financial management and introduction of IT based management information systems – to enhance resource management, monitoring and promote health quality and equal access. SDC in collaboration with other donors also played an important role in the establishment of the District Health Facility Financing drawing on the experience of a similar facility in the health sector in Kenya. This would not have been possible without the development of the accompanying IT systems for financial management procedures promoted by SDC through the HPSS project and the establishment of the community governance structures.

SDC did not engage in direct policy dialogue with the government about governance issues but supported well-established national actors in advocacy and policymaking at the national and sub-national levels. SDC has centred its approach to policy influencing in governance on support to national actors such as PCCB, CSOs, and media. Support to CSOs aimed at enhancing accountability and transparency in service delivery, primarily in health and agriculture at the local level, that in turn could open the door for policy dialogues at subnational and national levels. The SDC-funded SAP programme is the best example of this. The programme seeks to promote good governance (transparency, accountability) through collection of evidence at the local level that can form the basis for influencing at the national level by engaging civil society organisations which work directly with the smaller organisations at the local level. Local evidence collected by local CSOs, and related success stories are expected to underpin policy dialogues, influencing and advocacy at higher instances carried out by national CSOs. Yet, the MTR of the SAP programme (2021) revealed that upstreaming the local level work in broader policy changes has not been much successful, despite enhanced CSO influence on national policy discussions, especially around natural resource governance and agriculture.

In the media field, SDC has been supporting activities to contribute to increased social accountability and improved enabling environment for freedom of expression. The support, channelled through the TMF (up to 2019) and MCT (until 2015) and international organisations, targeted individual journalists, mass media houses, community media, government, parliament, and citizens In 2018, SDC supported the launch of a pilot "Yearbook of Media Quality" which was well received by media stakeholders and sparked an evidence-based public discussion about the quality of media in Tanzania. Dialogue with the government was facilitated by the University of Dar es Salaam through the Yearbook report and UNESCO who through the joint steering committee of the rural radios project, implemented by UNESCO, engaged in dialogue with a government representative. SDC did not engage in policy dialogue itself. Especially in the Magufuli years, government was not welcoming of donor assistance in media as it was regarded as foreign interference.
Dialogue in civil society and media sub-sectors has primarily been through the project management process.

Swiss support to civil society and media contributed to improved accountability in service delivery. Continuous support to civil society in Tanzania contributed to strengthening their capacities, networks and overall collaboration to report on challenges in service delivery. Between 2015 and 2020, SDC partners reported improved service delivery at local government levels on more than 50 instances in health, agriculture, education, and WASH. CSO engagement led to enhanced gender awareness and understanding of gender issues: In 2019, SDC partners sensitised more than 600,000 people on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). That contributed to reporting of 1372 SGBV cases in 2019 and about 2190 in 2020. Potentially due to the activities of SDC partners, the share of citizens

who perceive that they influence allocation and spending of public funds increased from 10% in 2016 to 38% in 2020.

Swiss support to community radios has increased awareness on governance, health, and employment topics, among youth especially. In 2017, 61.5% of SDC supported media reported direct benefits of their engagement at the local level, i.e., improved health services; solutions to land disputes; or discovery of corruption cases. As one of the interviewees put it: *"SDC's support to local media allowed stories that otherwise would not have been told"*. SDC-financed Niambie radio program reaches 3.8m people aged 18-35 (51% women) weekly. 81% of listeners reported that the program improved their understanding of governance issues. Another local radio supported by SDC in 2014 reported on the potential misspending of public funds through its 'be accountable' programme that follows on government promises.

Swiss support to key national accountability CSOs contributed to improvements in policy, rules, and regulations at the national level. In the period between 2018 and 2020, SDC's key partners jointly carried out many policy dialogue engagement which influenced laws and bills. In 2018, Policy Forum member organisations successfully introduced various policy proposals on the Finance Bill. Further, in 2018, Policy Forum signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government Tanzania (PO-RALG) regarding their role in improving public resource management at local level. SAP partners provided inputs to the government's Regional and Local Governance Strengthening Program (RLGSP) draft and the new decentralization policy, which awaits approval by parliament. In 2019, 33% of changes to Political Act amendments proposed by CSOs were accepted and the most contentious sections in the Statistics Act were removed which slowed down the erosion of political and civic space.

The financial sustainability of supported CSOs and media outlets needs increased attention in SDC dialogue with the supported organisations, to decrease donor dependency and to ensure long-term sustainability. While it is laudable also from a vantage point of future sustainability to build the capacity of CSOs and media to pursue national policy changes, SDC in its dialogue with partners in the CSO sector will have to address issues related to financial sustainability. CSOs are heavily dependent on donor-funded projects that are sporadic, therefore, often leaving CSOs without funds especially in light of increased demands for regulatory compliance by the government. For example, SDC contributed the highest share to the Tanzania Media Foundation and its grant-making programme. In the absence of sufficient internal capacities and Swiss support, the organisation struggles to deliver on its plans. SDC mainly relies on expertise of intermediary organisations such as UNESCO, IMS and BBC MA to support media houses on profitability issues. However, the report on the SDC media programme assessment noted that both SDC's implementing partners and media houses face sustainability issues.

Factors

Important factors for policy success in Tanzania were understanding of the development challenges in the health sector, willingness to support research and pilot projects when there was a need for additional understanding of contexts and issues, and strong technical capacity. Swiss knowledge acquired over many years about challenges in the health sector is well recognised by government actors, some of whom have worked with Swiss partners at the district level before meeting up again at national level. The Swiss and SDC engagement is lauded for the long-term commitment and the strong people relationships over many years which is described as a unique basis for cooperation. Complementing the on-budget support for the Health Basket Fund with substantial technical assistance through the Health Promotion and Systems Strengthening (HPSS) with the stated aim of providing research for evidence-based policy decisions by the government was instrumental for supporting systemic changes with regards to

introduction of IT into the health systems architecture and the changes to the procurement system. According to an ongoing MTR of the HPSS final phase, the technical capacity provided by the HPSS for evidence-based policy dialogue has not been used to the full potential. Progress on evidence generation lag and needs to be expedited.[6]

SDC is also commended for the seriousness with which to approach new issues, including using pilots to test approaches before rolling out across the country. As an example, government interlocutors pointed to a policy debate over whether health needs and issues differed between cities and rural areas. As no development partners were active in cities, SDC piloted a project in Dar es Salaam to learn about potential differences. It turned out that differences were small, but there was a need to be aware that complexities in district health in cities were larger, related to many different cultures coming together in one district and the wide variety in income leading to very different expectations as to what the PHC facilities should deliver. These learnings was then adapted into procedures for urban cliniques.[7]

SDC support for a health system financed by insurance offers insight into the limitation of Swiss policy influence based on technical input. SDC is acknowledged for its long-term engagement in the development of insurance-based financing for universal health care coverage in Tanzania. Tanzania quite early opted for insurance as the long-term financing modality for the health sector rather than a tax-based system. SDC from the start saw themselves as well placed to support such a system based on Switzerland's national experience. Despite contributing to developing and testing the improved Community Health Fund (iCHF) since 2010 initially through pilot projects that has now been rolled out across the country through a Government Circular in 2018, as well as developing and testing information management systems to support the scheme, HPSS and SDC do not appear to have tried to influence development of the overall insurance scheme as such. GoT interlocutors described the role for HPSS and SDC with regards to the insurance scheme as problem solvers rather that policy drivers leaving it to the GoT to develop the insurance system and address issues related to coverage, prices, financing of poor people's participation, minimum benefit packages etc. Some interlocutors described this as the result of GoT reluctance to engage donors in these national political discussions and infighting between departments as to where the insurance scheme should be housed.[8] The Embassy gradually came to the conclusion, that the expert input from the implementing partner organisation did not always provide the most useful technical input at the right time. The Universal Health Insurance Bill now underway through Parliament contains many unresolved issues related to access and cost coverage for the poor that requires considerable policy inputs going forward. So far it appears that policy evidence for solutions is lagging and policy dialogues between SDC/HPSS/GoT and potentially wider in the DPG health is not taking place. The MTR points to the need for the HPSS in the context of support to the iCHF to put more efforts into advocacy and technical support for the government to finalise policies and support operationalisation, and also recommends for HPSS to be more active in providing evidence for advocacy and popularization of the iCHF as success of insurance-based system hinges on broad participation.[9]

Important factors for success were evidence-based dialogue, continuous context analysis, flexible and adaptable programming and trust. SDC support for CSOs and media to pursue evidence-based dialogue was recognised as key success factors. Together with internal structures, it contributed to the legitimacy and credibility of SDC partners both at the local and national levels. Another important factor was adaptable and flexible programming based on continuous context analysis to inter-alia, recognise policy dialogue

[6] MTR HPSS phase 3 20211010 – draft
[7] Interview Dar es Salaam November 3rd, 2021
[8] Interviews November 3rd and November 8th.
[9] MTR HPSS phase 3 20211010 – draft

allies and what to advocate for. In the words of one of the interviewees: *"We need to be deliberate about outcome mapping; Policy dialogue need to be fluid: pull back, reassess, always understand the context to react properly and timely"*. The core-funding modality employed by SDC allows CSOs to respond rapidly to fast-changing circumstances and follow their strategic directions. It contributes to the longer-term stability of their staff, facilitates the development of internal systems and structures and allows funding costs that would otherwise not be covered by project funding. Other important factors include trust, long-term partnerships, inter-personal relations, persistent, professional, capacitated and organised CSOs. SDC is commended for being responsive and providing strategic and intellectual direction to its partners, fostering collaboration, harmonising CSOs work and linking them to media houses.

Lessons learned

Once the Universal Health Insurance Bill eventually passes there is a need for further policy evidence and policy advocacy to ensure its success in supporting health sector development with equitable access, gender focus, and continued transparency in the use for health facilities and funds in accordance with the overall objectives of health sector support. There may be a need to step back and revisit the results so far from the iCHF and the NHIF as a backdrop for further developing the system. SDC can play a role but probably should engage the wider DPG Health and larger more capacitated multilateral entities that have experiences from rolling out insurance-based health financing in other developing countries. [10]At a minimum, continued engagement of the SDC in long term financing of the health sector will require a more structured approach allowing for better understanding of the obstacles to reforms, stakeholder mapping and design of various technical – which are also very political – solutions for further discussion.

There is awareness in the Embassy of the need to strengthen dialogue in the health sector beyond technical issues to also discuss wider development trends in Tanzania that has implications for the health sector including long term sustainable pro-poor health financing. The GoT opening up for dialogue with development partners also increases opportunities for further policy dialogue on broader strategic issues as well as sensitive issues. Swiss engagement will have to be done in the Swiss way that is based on thorough evidence and respect dialogue, possibly in close coordination with development partners from the HBF.

SDC links engagement and knowledge about health sector development globally with activities in Tanzania and vice versa. SDC has a long history of support to the health sector based on Swiss national capacities and strengths in the academic and scientific areas offering strong technical support for SDC engagements in many countries including Tanzania, e.g., through the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute. SDC through its support for vertical health funds such as the Global Fund and GAVI that are also active in Tanzania seeks to promote stronger coherence between activities of global funds and policies pursued at the country level. In the context of Tanzania, SDC advocates for the Global Fund and Gavi to channel their funding through the DHFF to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in the use of funds and systems by having just one funding channel for funding PHC at the district level.

Sensitive and highly politicised development agendas, such as Human Rights, are more effectively addressed through multilateral policy channels. At the hight of the Magufuli era, The Annual Report 2019 states that some agendas such as human rights and LGBTI are more effectively addressed by global multilateral institutions rather than through bilateral dialogue. In the period of Magufuli, SDC recognised that real dialogue on sensitive issues was unlikely and that close coordination with other Development Partners (DPs) and

[10] Interview

Multilateral Partners (World Bank, WHO, UN) needs to be exacerbated. A good example is a joint and continued initiative of DPs led by World Bank against the expulsion of pregnant girls from school where a solution was found through the intervention of the WB.

Country case study Ukraine

Summary of findings

The below findings are based on a desk assessment of available documents; interviews with SDC; Government of Ukraine (albeit with a rather limited number); implementers, including multi-lateral organisations; and other donors, conducted mainly remotely from the premises of the Swiss Embassy in Ukraine between 22-25 November 2021.

Outcomes

For most of the time covered by the scope of the evaluation (2013-2020), there has been a favourable environment for policy reforms. SDC's contribution has been to support policy implementation through technical cooperation and finance. The main direction was not to adjust or re-direct policy reforms, but to ensure their credibility and legitimacy through supporting implementation. Thus, SDC has provided flexible and timely support to the policy reforms in health, decentralisation and digital transformation. SDC supported pilot projects at the local level for later national replication. The practical support for service delivery within water and waste management, for example, served to increase local commitment to the reform process. In combination with intensive and professional support to communication of the reforms, these efforts strengthened both the demand and expectations for reforms, and the delivery of reform outcomes.

Policy dialogue results are evident especially in the sense of protecting, legitimising, and supporting government reforms. SDC supported the government at difficult times when the reform process was threatened by opposition and vested interests.

Results within decentralisation and digital transformation where SDC actions led to a harmonised and strongly supportive international response that contributed to desired outcomes include:

- Supporting the government approach to amalgamation of local authorities though issuing joint donor statements and endorsing the approach when it was being undermined by vested interests. This built on earlier policy dialogue where the policy messages were to continue amalgamation, adopt the European charter standards and improve the communication and information exchange between central and local government. SDC provided political support to facilitate access by the government representatives to the Council of Europe expertise.
- Launching a social media and twitter storm to signal international support for fiscal decentralisation
- Encouraging government to seek Council of Europe opinion on whether the government preferred approach on the legal personality at local government was compatible with the European charter.
- Reducing misinformation among donors and others on the nature of leakage of personal data that threatened to undermine confidence in the digital platforms.
- Supporting a platform and ecosystem that led to new legislation on regulation of virtual assets (e.g., bitcoin, vouchers, etc.). The legislation was submitted to parliament and now awaits a second round of voting. The platform has been converted into an internally Ukrainian driven policy dialogue and exchange mechanism.
- Harnessing the convening power of the Lugano reform conference to reinforce the importance of digital transformation in advancing policy reforms and providing an opportunity for showcasing Ukrainian advances on digital technologies.

Examples where Switzerland contributed to results in the health domain include:

- Supporting the implementation of the first National Health Sector Reform Strategy 2015-2020 by providing technical support, via WHO and the WB, to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine to assume the political and technical lead to drive the reform process, including through effective donor coordination.
- Supporting the Ministry of Health to institutionalise inclusive policy dialogue practices around key policy changes that are part of the Health Sector Reform. These practices include extensive consultations of stakeholders at all levels affected by the new policies, and who are expected to implement these on the ground, thereby strengthening ownership and outcomes of these reforms.
- Policy dialogue led by the MoH was accompanied by technical expertise to provide expertise for evidence-based policy making on a variety of policies (including health financing; public health system strengthening; primary healthcare etc.); it also contained important communications/visibility actions to support the policy messages.
- Although the momentum for health sector reform has considerably slowed, there is evidence that these practices have remained as the guiding, best practices approach to policy-making, even though the MoH might not themselves be able to conduct these processes (a recent example includes the adoption of the Mental Health Action Plan, which was supported by the Swiss-funded mental health project).
- Even though clear attribution is difficult, Switzerland has been an early champion of inclusion of difficult topics into the health reform agenda, for example on mental health reform, which has been included into the National Health Sector Reform Strategy, and where Switzerland now is helping to advance this agenda by providing specific technical support to implement the Action Plan, by piloting policies and new practices at the level of three pilot regions.

SDC was instrumental in fostering a systematic platform for policy dialogue at different levels of government that ensured a harmonised donor voice. SDC helped to establish the donor board for decentralisation, and, more recently, was a key actor in initiating the three-tier coordination structure. As well as ensuring a harmonised donor response and to reduce the burden on government, the new structures have also at least in some sectors enabled government to take an increasingly active role in coordinating external support. SDC and fellow donors have benefitted from having systematic and multi-level entry points for policy dialogue. SDC working through the WHO project created capacity within the Ministry of Health to build up evidence-based approaches and engage in policy dialogue internally within Ukraine and also with external development partners. The degree of government leadership varies among the sectors and the platforms are generally still dependent on external financial support.

In the long term, there is some anecdotal evidence that the capacity built at individual and even institutional level could lead to a critical mass of local expertise for domestic policy dialogue. SDC has engaged with many local experts and partners in government and civil society. Over the years, these experts and partners have been exposed to international practice in critical, transparent and evidence-based policy dialogue. Some have then gone to influential positions within and outside government and are already contributing to a healthy domestic process of policy dialogue. A critical mass has not yet been established, and there is always the threat of reversal. Nevertheless, there are prospects, in the longer term, that Ukraine will have developed the routines and sufficient internal capacity for effective domestic policy dialogue.

Factors

There are several success factors that can be isolated. The most important ones can be grouped as:

Long-term, persistent and flexible support that was in service rather than opposition to government reforms and continued in both favourable and adverse environments. Support to key reforms such as decentralisation and in the health, sector has been provided over more than 15 years, both during periods of high and low government priority. The support was flexible and opportunistic enough to respond to new and unexpected demands such as the need for legislation of virtual assets. It was also flexible enough to find relevant partners and activities in periods when the central government exhibited lower priority for genuine reform, for example developing awareness and readiness for reforms and supporting practical service delivery projects at the local level.

Working at multiple levels with a mix of policy, capacity and investment - the on-the-ground support at local level and especially the practical support to service delivery was a factor that ensured good intelligence on the ground. It also served to enhance the credibility of SDC, because messages and approaches were tested at local level. Working at multiple levels and with a variety of stakeholders also ensured that SDC remained neutral and despite its long presence and frequent changes in the Ukraine government, was sufficiently distant to not take ownership away from the government.

Assumption of niche roles that supported reforms on communication, liaison and information exchange. SDC is a small player compared to other donors. Perhaps because of this, SDC was able to find a niche as an interlocutor between vertical and horizontal levels of government and across civil society. A number of evaluations and stakeholders consulted during this evaluation testify to the value of this liaison and information exchange role. Intensive and professional support to communication of the reforms and their benefits was an important niche that served to reinforce wider support for reforms.

Recruitment and empowerment of national programme officers, as well as support to studies that provided strong evidence based on on-the-ground intelligence, and access to high-level personnel. Due to language, continuity of service and personal connection, the national programme officers were highly involved in policy level engagement. SDC recruited and developed programme officers who had the aptitude and skill-set to be effective interlocutors. This, combined with financing studies such as the health assessment study, meant that SDC and the cooperation team as a whole was well equipped with evidence for knowing how to respond to new situations as they arose. For example, based on the experience, at local level, combined with an ability to anticipate and gauge trends, and the strong personal relationships established by national programme staff, SDC was able to seize the opportunity to support, in a timely manner, the digitisation reform in the aftermath of the 2014 revolution. Likewise, SDC's support for increasing the Ministry of Health's capacity in driving the Health Sector Reform was the result of a track record of project results on the ground and the cooperation team's realisation for the need to support the Ministry's health team to be the driver and champion of the reforms.

Recognition and support to setting up of systematic and collective donor policy dialogue entry points. The presence of a functioning mechanism to ensure a collective donor voice with systematic entry points a different levels allowed SDC and the cooperation team to engage using an appropriate mix of high and operational level staff and at the policy level, as well as the political level.

Lessons learned

Lessons that arise from the experience in Ukraine include:

- Where policies and reforms are sound, the main emphasis of policy dialogue will be on implementation of reforms and providing international solidarity in times of internal and external opposition to the reforms.
- Long-term, predicable and flexible support that mixes bottom-up investment and capacity development with interventions at higher policy level is effective.
- Support to both the demand and supply side of reforms and policy is relevant as part of the policy dialogue.
- Building up and facilitating domestic capacity for internal policy dialogue is important as is ensuring that development partners keep a distance and do not inadvertently substitute local actors.
- Donor coordination mechanisms, when combined with systematic entry points, increase the effectiveness of policy dialogue
- Recruitment and empowerment of local SDC staff has proven to be effective – training and experience exchange more widely within SDC would be beneficial.

Annex C Survey results

The survey was completed by a total of 69 respondents from SDC headquarters and 34 SCOs, including integrated Embassies. The survey was sent to 42 SCOs, meaning a country (SCO) response rate was 80%. The majority of respondents work either in an SCO or an Integrated Embassy – 69% in total, based in fragile states (46%), followed by open democratic (29%) and closed authoritarian (25%) states (figure 1). (34%). They are mainly engaged in management activities (61%) or are SCO/ Embassy staff primarily working with development cooperation (figure 2).

Figure 1

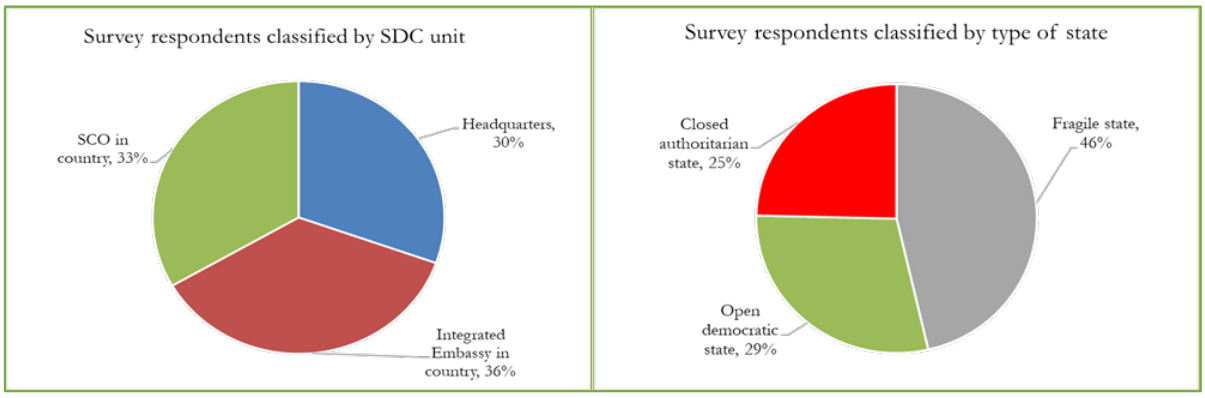
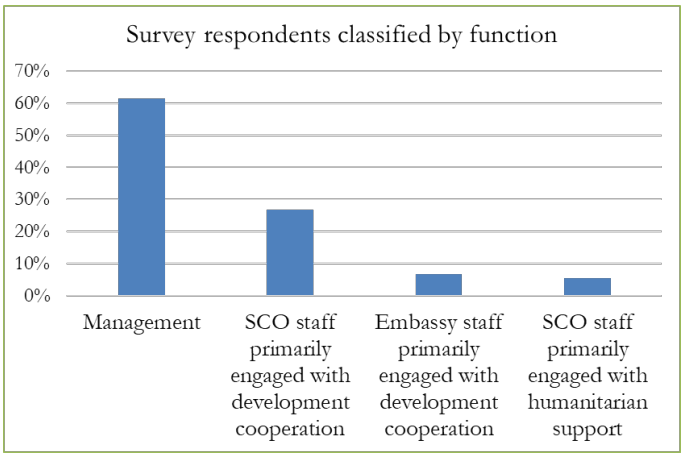


Figure 2



The vast majority - 81% - of those who responded to the survey reported being to a large, or some extent involved in policy dialogue. However, this is with a relatively low weekly engagement for preparing and conducting policy dialogue, 1-3 h, for most (64%) of the respondents (figure 3).

Primary interlocutors for policy dialogue preparation are, in decreasing order: management and colleagues, development partners, implementing partners, CSOs etc. Policy dialogue is, for the most part, conducted with national, local and regional governments, followed by civil society, private sector, parliament, and others (figure 4).

Figure 3

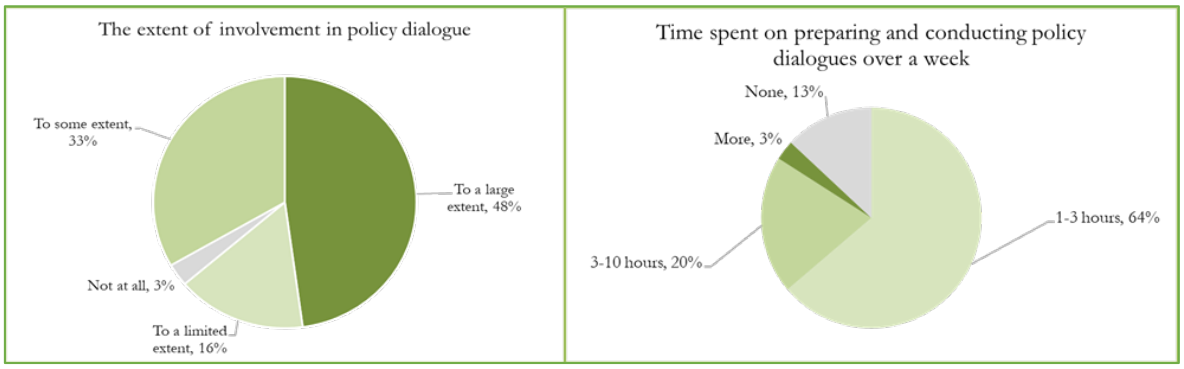


Figure 4

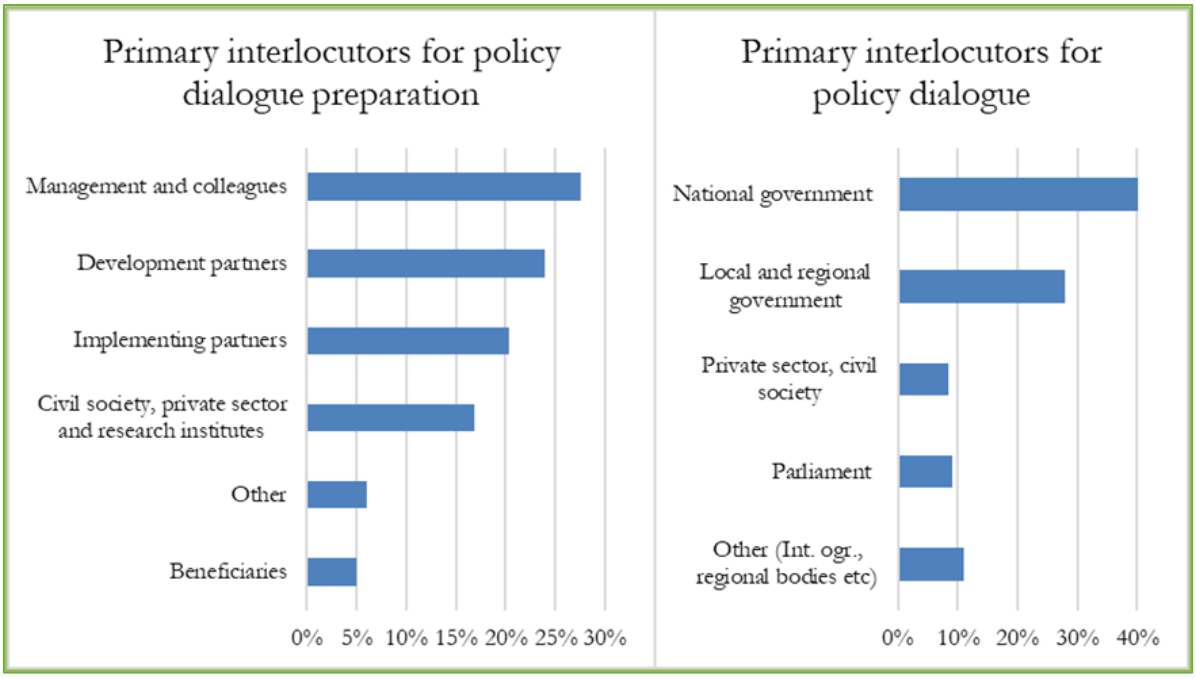


Figure 5 below indicates that policy dialogue is seen as contributing to a large extent to cooperation success by 41% of the respondents and to the underachievement of objectives by 19% of the respondents. Almost all respondents (96%) reported that policy dialogue contributed either to a large, or to some extent to cooperation success. As regards capacities of policy dialogue actors, just under 90% of the respondents answered that SDC works on improving them to some (60%), or large extent (28%) (figure 6).

Figure 5

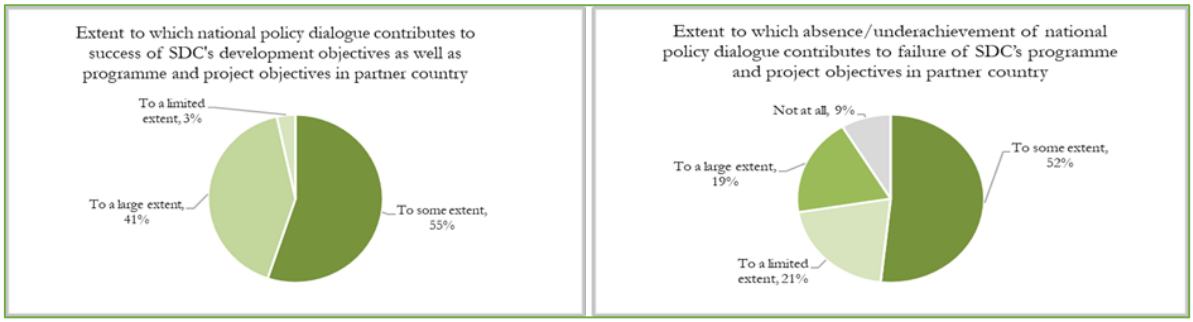
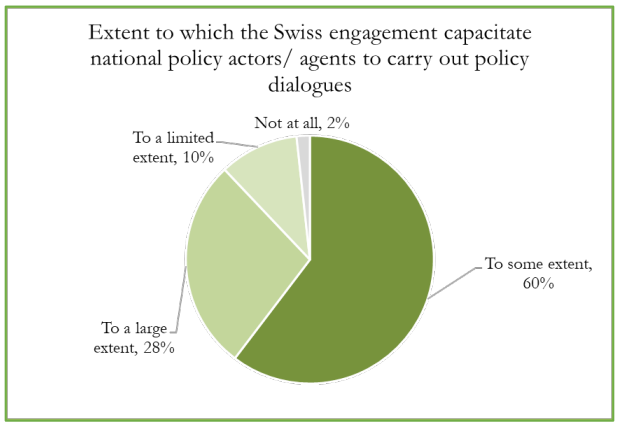


Figure 6



Policy dialogue results that emerged from the survey:

Bolivia	Through a sustained technical-political dialogue, SDC contributed to implementing the conciliation policy in the judicial sector, with the hiring of 157 conciliators with State funds, which guarantees sustainability. More than 50,000 conciliation agreements have been reached between 2016 and 2021, avoiding trials with high costs for the State and citizens. In the area of gender-based violence, networks have been formed among public actors, civil society, and universities, that by working with community promoters have contributed to the prevention of and attention to gender-based violence. This good practice is now recognized and promoted for replication by the Ministry of Justice. However, due to a change of government and authorities, the scaling up has yet to materialize.
Cambodia	Over the past eight years, SDC has supported the Royal Government of Cambodia in developing and implementing decentralisation reform. Several positive results of this ongoing policy dialogue can be observed: 1) approval of new National Programme on Decentralisation (developed with technical assistance by SDC); 2) full integration of Social Accountability mechanism in decentralisation policy framework; 3) piloting and future scaling of multi-stakeholder dialogue mechanism at the district level and continuous multi-stakeholder dialogues at the national level. An example of less well-functioning dialogue is the support for early warning systems (floods/drought) that failed to properly be taken over by the respective ministries due to the lack of national policy dialogue between SDC implementing partners and the GoC.
Cuba	SDC contributed to the development of national programmes: National Programme for Territorial development; National Programme against discrimination and racism; new National programmes of employment and services for vulnerable groups; National Plan (strategy) for food sovereignty and nutritional education; State Plan to face climate change "tarea vida"; National Programme for Women's advancement; New legal Code for Families.
Tajikistan	Establishment of the state free legal aid system for all people living in Tajikistan. As a result of the long-standing dialogue with the Government under the UPR model and other policy discussion platforms, the state started the reform of the legal aid system in the country.
Peru	Significant increase in public funding for WASH in Peru thanks to 20 years of continued policy dialogue combined with Swiss programs. Long-term and continuous support to regional work on corporate water management led to the inclusion of water management in over 50 private sector companies and corporate water stewardship as a crucial issue in the final declaration of the presidential Declaration of the Pacific Alliance in 2019. Swiss funded climate change mitigation and adaptation programs contributed to national climate change law. General difficulties in cooperation are related to policy implementation.

Cambodia Georgia Mali Rwanda	SDC policy dialogue contributed to improvements in education sectors: **Cambodia** – SDC's policy dialogue contributed to introduction of a dual training model; to the strengthened engagement of private sector in TVET policies and practices; Increased inclusion of disadvantaged groups in skills development; Strengthened monitoring system in TVET; Establishment of an online TVET learning platform improving access of TVET student to training. **Georgia** – Adoption of law on the modernization of VET in agriculture which was seen as an essential piece of legislation that set the basis for coordination of actors and involvement of the private sector. **Mali** – Integration of educational alternatives in the national education policy for basic education: Vocational training and recognition of the dual-type vocational training system. **Rwanda** – Contributions to the process of adapting a model of dual training, with an apprenticeship contract with private sector companies and up to 80% practical apprenticeship in business.

As for the factors that contributed to the success in national policy dialogue, it is clear from figure 7 that various factors - contextual, capacity and actor-related - all to varying degrees, contributed to the outcomes of national policy dialogues.

The further analysis, though, reveals that a few factors stand out as contributing to a large extent to policy dialogue success. These factors, presented in figure 7, point to the importance of context analysis, Swiss credibility, cooperation with other development partners and policy dialogues linked to SDC policy goals and programme/ project objectives.

Figure 7

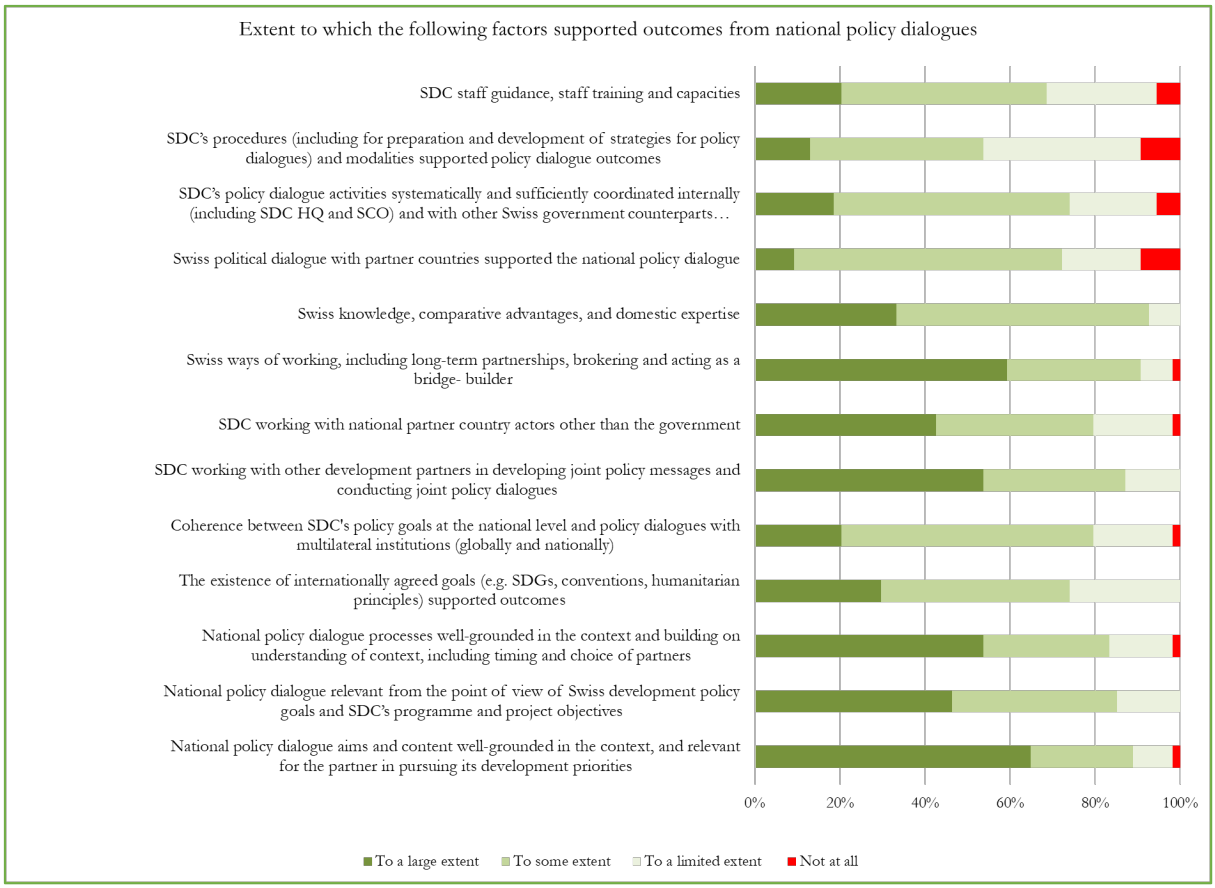
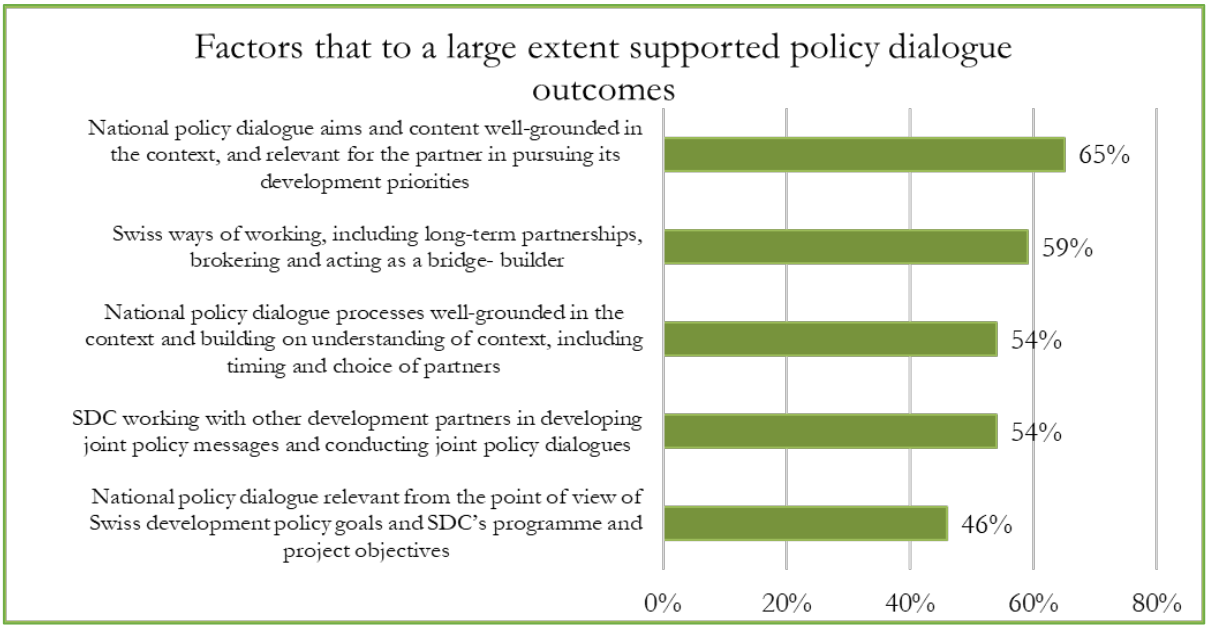
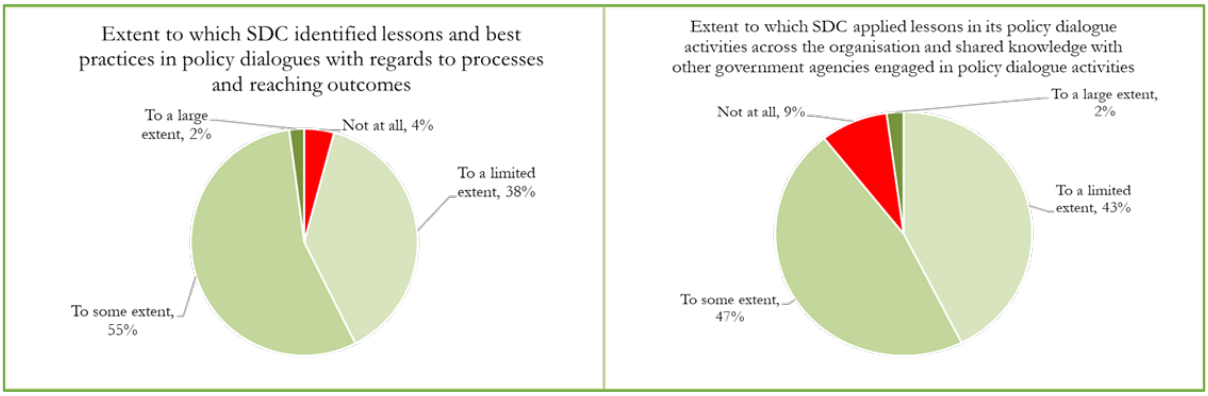


Figure 8



The figure 9 below indicates that SDC has been successful in identifying lessons and best practices in policy dialogue but less so in applying them across the organisation and sharing knowledge with other government agencies.

Figure 9



Most of the respondents (60%) think that positive policy dialogue processes and outcomes, to some extent, contributed to SDC ways of conducting policy dialogues (figure 10). In line with this, the majority (66%) think that SDC, to some or large extent, collaborated with other donors in exchanging good/ bad policy dialogue practices. For the vast majority (91%), being an honest broker engaged in the long run was what made the Swiss approach to a large or some extent more effective than the approach of others (figure 11).

Figure 10

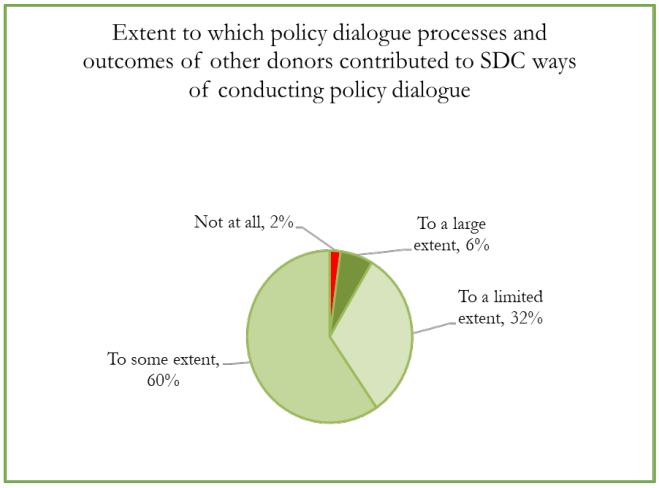
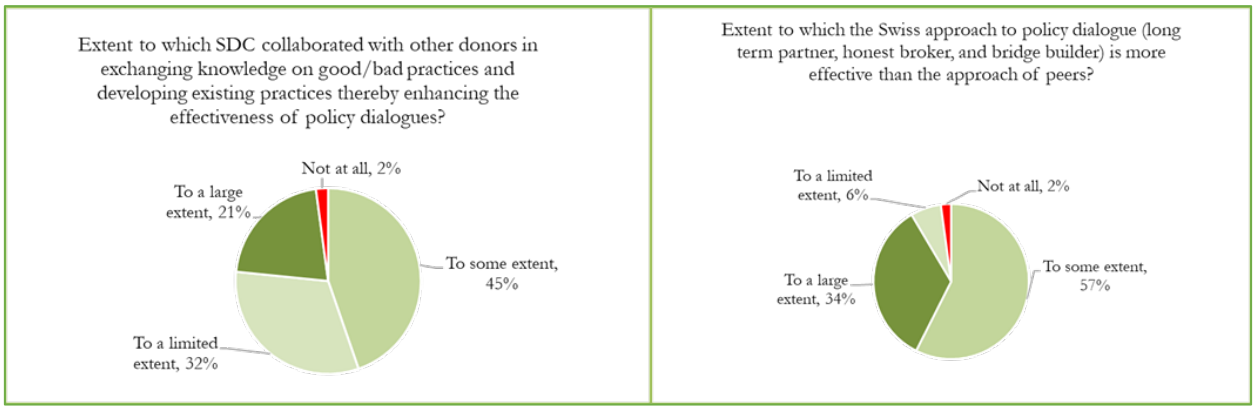


Figure 11



Annex D Bibliography

A1 Normative and other documents

SDC documents/ resources

SDC (2017) How-to Note on Results-Oriented Policy Dialogue. February 2017

SDC (2021) Fact sheet on Policy Dialogue dated 20210106

SDC (2020) Annual Reports East Cooperation countries

SDC (2020) Annual Reports South Cooperation countries

SDC (2020) Annual Reports Global Cooperation

SDC (2020) Annual Reports Humanitarian Aid regional reports

SDC Evaluations/ Reviews + E+C Management Response Tracking Tables

Conoir, Y., Gerrits, A., Schranz, B. (2018). Cooperation Strategy Evaluation. Afghanistan 2015 – 2018.

Ecorys. (2018). Policy Dialogue for better Health Governance in Ukraine Project. External evaluation of the project – Final Report.

Engelhardt, A., Fischlin, A., Kick-busch, I., Siegel, M., Walther , P. (2015). Evaluation of SDC's Global Programmes Climate Change; Water Initiatives; Food Security; Migration and Development and Health.

Felber, H. R., Kaijage, P., Fernandez Santos, D. K. C., Lindegger M. E., Randin, N. (2014). Country Evaluation. Cooperation strategy Tanzania 2011 – 2014.

Helvetas, Dldp and SDC, Changing Policies beyond policy dialogue, (2018)

Jackson, E. T., Jackson E., Saxby J., Nicholls L. (2014). Evaluation of SDC's Performance in Governance Programming and Mainstreaming.

KEK-CDC Consultants. (2019). Cooperation Strategy Ukraine 2015 – 2019. Evaluation Report.

Morinière, L., Wiinblad, M., Oxley, M., Socha, D., Smail, T. (2020). Independent Evaluation of SDC's Performance in Disaster Risk Reduction 2010-2017.

Oljelund, A., Korsgren, E. (2017). Independent Peer Review of the Integration of Swiss Representations Abroad.

Reichmuth, M., Bourquin, V., Widmer, A. (2020). Evaluation de la Stratégie de Coopération au Burkina Faso 2017 – 2020

SDC. (2018). Report on Effectiveness. Swiss Development Cooperation in the Water Sector.

SDC. (2018). Report on Effectiveness. Swiss international cooperation in the field of gender equality 2007–2016.

Van der Velde, M., Gracin, S., Leibundgut-Schneeberger, I., Ruder N. (2018). Regional Evaluation. Cooperation Strategy Middle East 2015-2018.

Wyes, H., De Picciotto, G., Frey, B. (2016). Country Evaluation. Cooperation Strategy Central Asia 2012 – 2015.

Webb S., Marchand, M., Wiederkehr., F. (2017). Country Strategy Evaluation: Cooperation Strategy Moldova 2014-2017.

Zürcher, D., Bruchez, G., Keller, O. (2017). Country Strategy Evaluation: Cooperation Strategy Mongolia 2013 – 2016/2017.

Other documents / resources

FDFA. (2020). Foreign Policy Strategy 2020-23. https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/eda/en/documents/publications/SchweizerischeAussenpolitik/Aussenpolitische-Strategie-2020-23_EN.pdf

FDFA. (2020). Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021-24.

Country documents

Burkina Faso

2014-2020 Annual Reports (internal documents)

2017 – 2020 Swiss Country Cooperation Strategy (in French)

2021 – 2025 Swiss Country Cooperation Strategy (in French)

External evaluation Stratégie de Coopération suisse Burkina Faso (2017-2020)

J. Boureima et al. Mandat de l'étude bilan et l'analyse prospective de l'appui de la Suisse au secteur de l'éducation de base au Burkina Faso pour la période de 2010 à 2020, published 2021

Other sources

BBC "Burkina Faso Attack: At Least 160 Killed in Village Raid", 6 June 2021

burkinafaso_sectoralpolicyofeducation_2013_fr.pdf (africanchildforum.org)

Campbell, John: The Confluence of Conflict, Corruption, and Coronavirus in Burkina Faso, Council for Foreign Relations, 16 April 2020

Campell, John: What's Next For Burkina Faso? Council for Foreigh Relations, November 2014

Gavin, Michelle: The Roots of Burkina Faso's Crisis. Council for Foreign Relations, 9 November 2019

International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) "Learning Stream: Navigating the Nexus. Topic 1: The nexus explained. What is the 'Triple Nexus?'" Briefing Paper, no date

Rapport statistique des donnees d'education en situation d'urgence au 28 mai 2021 – Burkina Faso, ReliefWeb

Reliefweb citing Norwegian Refugee Council, Covid-19 and conflict forced over 12 million children from school across Africa's Central Sahel region; 19 October 2020

Summary leaflet: Forum multi-acteurs sur l'approvisionnement et la distribution des aliments bétails au Burkina Faso, 2017

UNHCR "Record numbers forced to flee ongoing violence in Burkina Faso", Summary of 23 July 2021 Press Briefing

World Bank Africa's Pulse: Assessing the economic impact of Covid-19 and policy responses in Sub-Saharan Africa, Volume 21, Spring 2020

World Bank Country Data Burkina Faso at https://data.worldbank.org/country/BF (accessed 5 October 2021)

World Bank, Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate)

Tanzania

Swiss Cooperation Strategy Tanzania 2011 – 2014

Swiss Cooperation Strategy Tanzania 2015-2018

Swiss Cooperation Strategy Tanzania 2021-2024

Health

Centennial Group International and UONGOZI Institute (2017). Development Cooperation for an Emerging Tanzania.

Credit Proposal: Direct Health Facility Financing, Phase 1, 2021-2025: Summary table on evolution of health sector policy, financing, flows of funds, architecture (2000-2020)

Draft minutes for the meeting between Hon. Minister for Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children and Hon. Ambassadors and Head of Corporation supporting the Health Basket Fund, June 2021

Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (2021). Draft Template: Concept Note for an impactful Action Dialogue

HPSS – Health Promotion and System Strengthening Project in Dodoma, Morogoro and Shinyanga Regions. External Mid-term review (2017)

HPSS – Health Promotion and System Strengthening Project in Dodoma, Morogoro and Shinyanga Regions. Fact Sheet

Memorandum of Understanding between GoT and DPs contributing to the Health Basket Fund (2021)

Minutes of Meeting between Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Hon. Dr. Dorothy Gwajima and Ambassador Didier Chassot

SDC (2015). Performance-based Health Basket Fund. Phase 7 Credit Proposal

SDC (2019). Health Promotion and System Strengthening Project (HPSS). Phase 3 Credit Proposal

SDC (2020). Global Programme Health. Programme Framework 2021-24

SDC (2021). Direct Health Facility Financing. Phase 1 Credit Proposal

SDC (2021). Mid-term review of the phase 3 of the Health Promotion and System Strengthening Project (HPSS).

SDC (2021). Performance oriented Health Basket Fund. End of Project Report

Tanzanian Ministry of Finance (2017). Development Cooperation Framework (DFC)

Tanzanian Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDEC) (2019). Documentation of Lessons Learned from Partnerships through Health Sector Wider Approach in Tanzania.

Tanzanian Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDEC) (2020). Mid-term review of the Health Basket Fund functionality at all levels

Governance

SDC (2012). Tanzania Media Fund. Phase 3 Credit Proposal

SDC (2011). Media Council of Tanzania. Phas3 2 Credit Proposal

SDC (2015). Empowering Media in Tanzania. Credit Proposal

SDC (2020). Empowering Media in Tanzania. End of Phase Report

SDC (2020). SDC Media Programme Self-assessment

SDC (2020). Empowering Media in Tanzania. Phase 2 Credit Proposal

SDC Policy Note. Governance in Authoritarian Contexts

SDC (2020). Responding to the contested space for civil society

Harrison, T. (2018). Political economy analysis of the relationship between civil society organisations and local government in Tanzania

Other

BBC web page https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54777226, accessed 21.10.2021

Britannica web page https://www.britannica.com/place/Tanzania/Economy#ref37574, accessed 21.10.2021

Human Development Index web page

Freedom House web page https://freedomhouse.org/country/tanzania/freedom-world/2017, accessed 21.10.2021

Reuters web page https://www.reuters.com/article/us-tanzania-rights-idUSKCN1UV1FX, accessed 21.10.2021

Reuters web page https://www.reuters.com/article/us-tanzania-rights-idUSKCN1UV1FX, accessed 21.10.2021

Reporters Without Borders web page https://rsf.org/en/ranking, accessed 21.10.2021

World Bank web page https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tanzania/overview#1, accessed 21.10.2021

World Bank web page https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tanzania, accessed 17 October 2021

World Bank (2021). Raising the Bar: Achieving Tanzania's Development Vision. Tanzania Economic Update.

World Bank (2020). Tanzania Economic Update: Adressing the impact of Covid-19.

World Bank web page https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IC.BUS.EASE.XQ?locations=TZ&most_recent_year_desc=false, accessed 21.10. 2021

Nepal

Nepal Country Strategy Nepal 2018-2021

Annual Reports on Nepal 2018, 2019, 2020

PPT presentation by the Embassy to IDPG on constitutional issues related to TVET dated 18.06.2021

PPT presentation by the Embassy to IDPG on Administrative restructuring and civil service bill 13.08.2021 incl. advocacy points vis-à-vis IDPG and GoN

Moldova

Swiss Cooperation Strategies with Moldova 2010-2013; 2014-2017; 2018-2021

SCO – Moldova Policy Influencing Concept

SDC Health Program in a Nutshell (SCO Publication, no year)

Overview Swiss-Moldovan Cooperation: The Health Life Project to Reduce the Burden of Non-Communicate Diseases (no year)

Policy Influencing Tool Healthy Life project (2017) and update (November 2021)

Policy Influencing Tool MENSANA project (no year)

Factsheet Results Healthy Generation Project (2020)

Policy Brief Economic Analysis Reimbursement of Anti-Hypertensive Medicines (2018)

Melikyan, L, et al External Evaluation of the IFPS project, January 2020

Leclert, L. Evaluation of Support to the Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova for the Development of a Service Centre for Small Water Operators, April 2019

SDC, ApaSan Policy influencing strategy, 23.03.2016

SDC, End of Project Report – "Strengthening the institutional framework in the water and sanitation sector in Moldova" Project (IFSP) in Moldova, 2021

SDC, management response on Evaluation of the project for implementation of targets under the protocol for water and health, 2016

Earnst Basler + partner: Evaluation of the project for implementation of targets under the protocol for water and health, November 2015

Ukraine

SDC. (2011). Swiss Cooperation Strategy Ukraine 2011-2014

SDC. (2015). Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Ukraine 2015-2018

SDC. (2020). Swiss Cooperation Programme Ukraine 2020-23.

SDC. (2020). Digital Foreign Policy Strategy 2021-24.

SDC. (2016). Ukraine Annual Report 2016 and management response.

SDC. (2017). Ukraine Annual Report 2017 and management response.

SDC. (2018). Ukraine Annual Report 2018 and management response.

SDC. (2019). Ukraine Annual Report 2019 and management response.

SDC. (2020). Ukraine Annual Report 2020 and management response.

SDC. (2020). The SDC's Guidance on Governance.

SDC, SECO. (2019). Cooperation Strategy Evaluation Ukraine 2015-2019.

SDC. (2019). Management Response of the evaluation report of the "Swiss Cooperation Strategy Ukraine 2015-2019", Bern.

SDC. (2015). Policy Dialogue for Better Health Governance in Ukraine, phase 1 (single phase). Credit Proposal.

SCD. (2017). Support to Decentralization in Ukraine (phase IV (final)). Credit Proposal.

SDC. (2019). E-Governance for Accountability and Participation (EGAP) Phase II. Credit Proposal.

SDC. (2021). E-Governance for Accountability and Participation (EGAP) Phase II. Additional Credit.

SDC, DESPRO, skat., (2021). Supporting Ukraine's Decentralisation Process through DESPRO: Focus on Communications. Webinar.

SDC. (2020). Greater transparency and less corruption thanks to E-Governance. Project Factsheet.

Ecorys. (2018). Policy Dialogue for better Health Governance in Ukraine Project. External evaluation of the project – Final Report.

SDC. (2018). Management Response to the external evaluation report of the Policy Dialogue for better Health Governance in Ukraine Project carried out by Ecorys and School of Public Health, Kyiv.

Rahman, N., Bachevsky, E. (2018). External Review of the Programme E-Governance for Accountability and Participation (EGAP) in Ukraine – Final report.

Pavignani E., Profeta, B. (2020). Ukraine Health Scoping Review: An issue-oriented exploration of the healthcare arena, in view of a fully-fledged health systems assessment.

Engelsman, G., Maksymenko S. (2021). SDC Support to Decentralization in Ukraine - Impact Assessment with Governance Network Peer Review and Knowledge Sharing. Main Report.

Development Partners (2017). Joint Statement by Bilateral Donor Agencies, Embassies and Multilateral Organisations supporting Decentralization and Local Self-Government reform in Ukraine - 9 November 2017.

Development Partnership Forum. (2020). Development Partners Talking Points at Prime Minister Development Forum on 8 October 2020.

Development Partnership Forum. (2021). Joint Statement of 8 October 2021

Development Partnership Forum. (2021). Joint Statement of 19 November 2021

Development Forum. (2021). Tier 1 ITA Coordination Meeting between Prime Minister D.Shmygal and Development Partners. Draft Agenda (October 2021).

Strategic Platform (2021). Tier 2 Meeting (online). Development Partners' Talking Points - 14 May 2021.

Other

2020 Capitalisation Exercise: Swiss-Albanian Partnership in Support to Decentralisation and Local Governance

Council of Europe "Strengthening Local Government Structures and Co-operation of Local Elected Representatives in Albania", Project Factsheet

Decentralisation and Local Development Programme (DLDP) Albania – Overview on Helvetas website

El Agua nos Une – SuizAgua Latin America 2016 – 2021 Processes, success factors and challenges of the SDC's water management project in Latin America,

End of phase 2 report for Parliament project; Credit proposals for Parliament project

End of project report – governance and decentralisation programme 7F-08183.02 (April 2019)

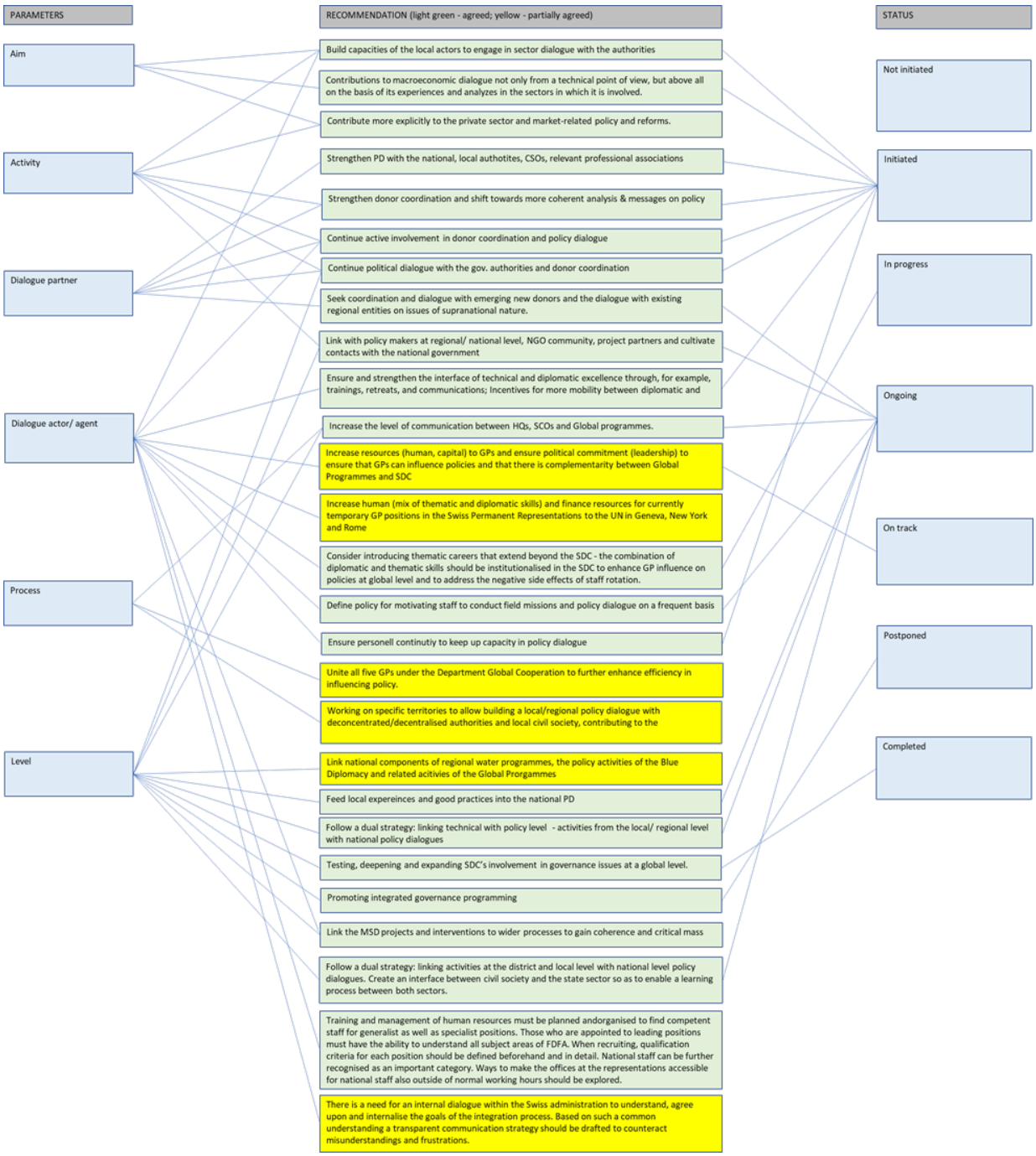
External Evaluation El Agua nos Une – SuizAgua LidaPatty International Consulting

http://www.bluepeace-centralasia.ch/ (accessed 13.10.2021), 4)

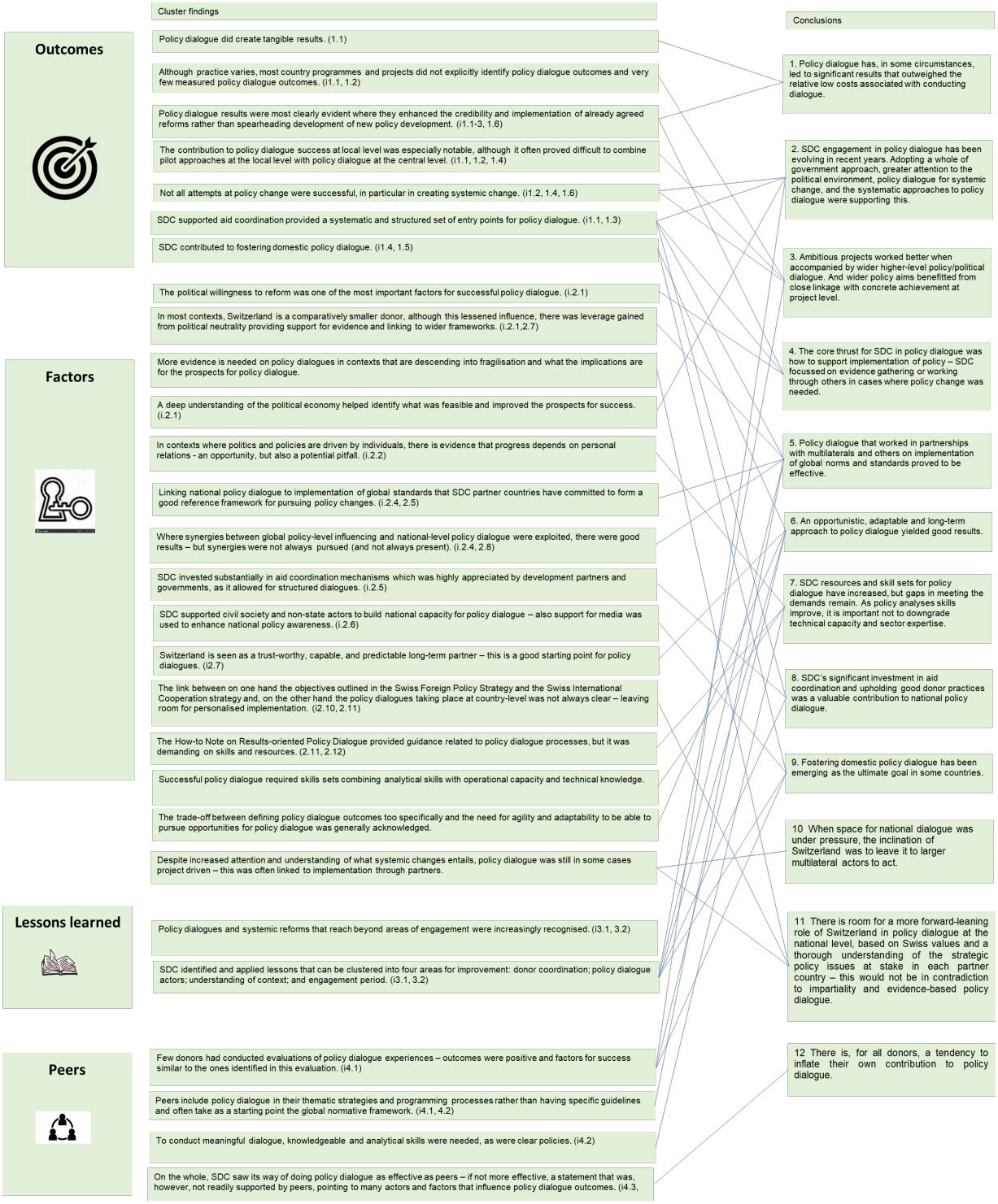
https://carececo.org/en/main/activity/projects/sekretariat-platformy-dialoga-vysokogo-urovnya-shveytsarskoy-initsiativy-blue-peace-central-asia/ accessed 13.10.2021. 5)

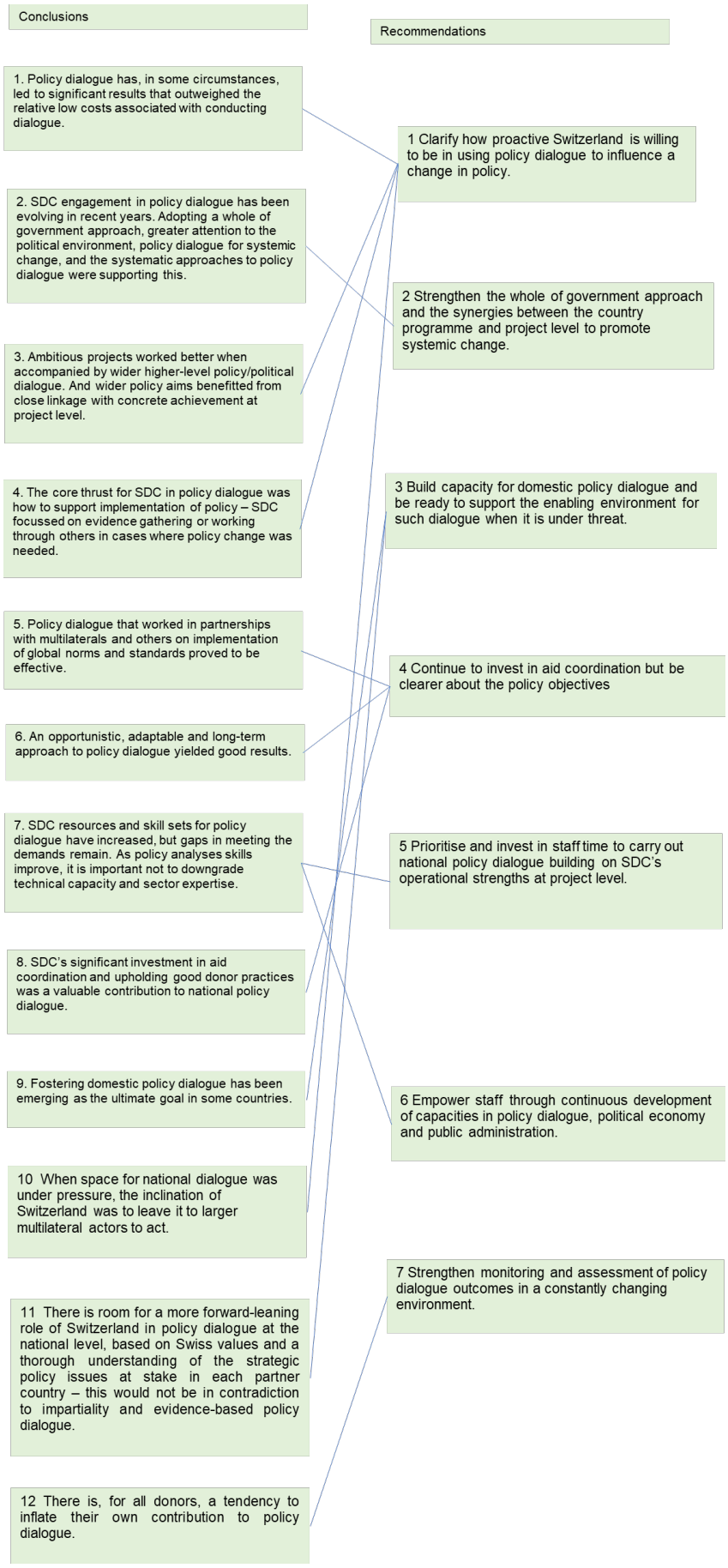
https://cdd.stanford.edu/what-is-deliberative-polling/
Humanitarian Advocacy Plan – internal summer 2021
Hydrological assessment, IDEAM http://www.ideam.gov.co/web/agua/evalucacion-recurso-hidrico.
SDC Annual reports for cooperation with Serbia 2013-2020
Sthlm Policy Group, Capitalisation of 7 years of Blue Peace Central Asia Initiative, 2014-2020, June 2021
Swiss Cooperation strategy Serbia 2018-2021
UN Humanitarian Response Plan Syrian Arab Republic December 2020
UNDP STAR website overview
UNDP STAR2 website overview

Annex E NPD recommendations from earlier SDC evaluations



Annex F Linking findings, conclusions and recommendations




Conclusions
Recommendations
1. Policy dialogue has, in some circumstances, led to significant results that outweighed the relative low costs associated with conducting dialogue.
2. SDC engagement in policy dialogue has been evolving in recent years. Adopting a whole of government approach, greater attention to the political environment, policy dialogue for systemic change, and the systematic approaches to policy dialogue were supporting this.
3. Ambitious projects worked better when accompanied by wider higher-level policy/political dialogue. And wider policy aims benefitted from close linkage with concrete achievement at project level.
4. The core thrust for SDC in policy dialogue was how to support implementation of policy – SDC focussed on evidence gathering or working through others in cases where policy change was needed.
5. Policy dialogue that worked in partnerships with multilaterals and others on implementation of global norms and standards proved to be effective.
6. An opportunistic, adaptable and long-term approach to policy dialogue yielded good results.
7. SDC resources and skill sets for policy dialogue have increased, but gaps in meeting the demands remain. As policy analyses skills improve, it is important not to downgrade technical capacity and sector expertise.
8. SDC's significant investment in aid coordination and upholding good donor practices was a valuable contribution to national policy dialogue.
9. Fostering domestic policy dialogue has been emerging as the ultimate goal in some countries.
10 When space for national dialogue was under pressure, the inclination of Switzerland was to leave it to larger multilateral actors to act.
11 There is room for a more forward-leaning role of Switzerland in policy dialogue at the national level, based on Swiss values and a thorough understanding of the strategic policy issues at stake in each partner country – this would not be in contradiction to impartiality and evidence-based policy dialogue.
12 There is, for all donors, a tendency to inflate their own contribution to policy dialogue.
1 Clarify how proactive Switzerland is willing to be in using policy dialogue to influence a change in policy.
2 Strengthen the whole of government approach and the synergies between the country programme and project level to promote systemic change.
3 Build capacity for domestic policy dialogue and be ready to support the enabling environment for such dialogue when it is under threat.
4 Continue to invest in aid coordination but be clearer about the policy objectives
5 Prioritise and invest in staff time to carry out national policy dialogue building on SDC's operational strengths at project level.
6 Empower staff through continuous development of capacities in policy dialogue, political economy and public administration.
7 Strengthen monitoring and assessment of policy dialogue outcomes in a constantly changing environment.

Recommendations	Operational measures
1 Clarify how proactive Switzerland is willing to be in using policy dialogue to influence a change in policy.	• Initiate an internal process for providing guidance on whether and when to be more proactive in influencing and changing policies in situations where national partner policies are dysfunctional. • Strengthen synergies between global policy dialogues on improving norms and standards and policy dialogues at national level across more fields using the learning networks more actively and by ensuring institutional structures which facilitate these synergies. • Further enhance a WOGA approach and make use of both policy and political dialogue in striving for the same objectives.
2 Strengthen the whole of government approach and the synergies between the country programme and project level to promote systemic change.	• Design the country programmes/regional programmes with clear policy objectives and possible outcomes to be pursued through political/policy dialogues interacting with funding of projects and programmes to achieve the country programme objectives; and be realistic about what can be achieved bilaterally and when to work in partnerships with others, not least multilaterals that often(but not always) have the skills and resources to back policy changes. • Systematically apply the guidance in the How-to Note on Results-oriented Policy Dialogue starting with a deeper understanding of the context (e.g., on winning alliances) as the basis for designing iterative flexible policy dialogue processes and objectives supported by Swiss development and humanitarian cooperation as well as diplomacy, monitor progress and be ready to adapt. • Work closely with all partners to define from the outset the roles, level of intervention and synergies between the strategic level policy requirements for systemic change and the project activities - in the process also defining the roles and responsibilities for different types of dialogue.
3 Build capacity for domestic policy dialogue and be ready to support the enabling environment for such dialogue when it is under threat.	• Continue to support domestic actors through grants and technical assistance to enhance their capacity for national policy dialogue. • Give recognition to national actor contributions to policy reforms and systemic changes. • When the situation requires it, be ready to support, through political and policy dialogues, with the governments the space for national policy dialogue and inclusive participatory processes for policy reforms.
4 Continue to invest in aid coordination but be clearer about the policy objectives	• When investing in aid coordination mechanisms, be clear about the outcomes that are pursued including the policy objectives that the aid coordination can help promote. • Use the credibility of Switzerland in aid coordination to support improved effectiveness of aid coordination structures including by in some cases simplifying them.
5 Prioritise and invest in staff time to carry out national policy dialogue building on SDC's operational strengths at project level.	• Prioritise and recognise the need for staff time (both international and national) on policy dialogue and clarify the roles of different actors (SDC, project implementors, international organisations etc) • Consider reporting on staff time spent on policy dialogue as well as progress made in the annual reports and continue to measure policy dialogue efforts in the staff appraisal system. • Ensure that SDC continues to invest in the strong technical and sectoral knowledge at project level so that policy dialogue is well founded and credible.
6 Empower staff through continuous development of capacities in policy dialogue, political economy and public administration.	• Review current capacity development and training on policy dialogue and risk management skills of SDC staff and implementing partners. If relevant, plan an intensification for example by enhancing this topic in induction training and peer to peer exchange. • Encourage SCO to SCO experience exchange on policy dialogue, especially for SCOs in similar contexts – taking advantage of new skills in remote communication. • Provide staff with continued professional development in policy dialogue and the underlying skills and knowledge of political economy and public administration.
7 Strengthen monitoring and assessment of policy dialogue outcomes in a constantly changing environment.	• Monitor policy dialogue processes, consider using an advocacy progressive index approach and be ready to adapt to changes in circumstances. • Assess and analyse policy dialogue outcomes in the Annual report, including factors and contributions from others in particular national actors. Use this assessment for possible changes to the policy process and the focus. • Promote institutionalised learning by firmly rooting learning from policy dialogue processes, objectives, and outcomes in the existing thematic learning networks.

Annex G List of informants (disponible seulement sur demande)

Imprint

Publisher:
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
3003 Bern
www.sdc.admin.ch

Pictures (coversheet):
© SDC

Orders:
E-mail: info.deza@eda.admin.ch

Specialist contact:
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Evaluation and Corporate Controlling
Freiburgstrasse 130, 3003 Bern
sektion.evaluation-controlling@eda.admin.ch

This publication can be downloaded from the website
https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/wirkung/berichte/evaluationsberichte.html

Bern, October 2022