

# Vocational Skills Development for Inclusion

Vocational Skills Development (VSD) has been one of the **cornerstones of Swiss development cooperation** for over six decades and has gained more importance as a foreign policy intervention.

VSD applies a **holistic perspective** with a broader range of outcomes beyond training, such as personal development, occupational competence and educational mobility.

## SDC engagement

### SDC Strengths

SDC has applied its experience, best practices, and lessons learned to **shape international development cooperation in VSD and contribute to policy dialogue**.

**Private sector cooperation.** SDC helps partner governments understand the importance of a private employer-led approach and has piloted new private sector-driven approaches in VSD.

VSD systems development. SDC's **support for national systems reform** seeks scale and sustainability.

Preparedness to pursue and pilot new approaches to VSD.

Strong **focus on marginalised and disadvantaged** target groups (e.g., women and young people) as expressed in the Leave No One Behind principle.

## 58 countries

VSD projects from 2017 to 2023 were active across 58 countries.

## 32 million

In recent years, the resources allocated to VSD have increased. On average, SDC funding for VSD activities from 2017 to 2023 amounted to more than CHF 32 million annually.

## 131 projects

The assessed portfolio of SDC's VSD projects from 2017 to 2023 spans 131 relevant projects.

## Recommendations

### → Employment opportunities

Conduct more detailed assessments of the **employment opportunities** for project target groups and identify mechanisms to **improve linkages between informal and formal** education and labour markets.

### → National policy dialogue

Provide technical guidance and advice to Country Offices to lead **national policy dialogue on VSD**, especially in countries where SDC investments support VSD systems development. This should be accompanied by high-level, independent Swiss technical advice.

### → More impact evaluations

Conduct more frequent **impact evaluations** to assess the longer-term effects of VSD project outcomes and impacts (e.g., long-term employment outcomes and effects on private sector profitability, productivity and competitiveness).

### → Stronger synergies

Create **stronger synergies** between VSD, Private Sector Development and Private Sector Engagement projects by piloting and building more sustainable models for private sector-led VSD.

