



December 2025

# Management Response

to the Evaluation Report on the Diplomatic Initiative Missing Persons

## Introduction / the process of the evaluation

- The Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD) of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) commissioned an external evaluation of its diplomatic initiative on missing persons, completed at the end of 2025, as part of its periodic review of how well its efforts align with Switzerland's foreign policy priorities.
- The evaluation examined the initiative's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and sustainability, with particular attention to collaboration with the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC, especially the Missing Persons Center, and Switzerland's role as permanent co-chair of the Global Alliance for the Missing.
- Designed for both accountability and learning, it assessed past performance while providing insights to guide Switzerland's future engagement on missing persons and related diplomatic partnerships. Its objectives included analyzing the relevance of PHRD's multilateral activities, assessing outcomes and performance, and reviewing the interplay of PHRD's efforts at local, regional, and international levels to identify good practices and areas for improvement.
- The PHRD welcomes the submission of the evaluation report and would like to express its appreciation and thanks for the work done by Ms. Gudrun Van Pottelbergh (GVP Consulting), who conducted the evaluation as mandated. The PHRD highly values the evaluation process and appreciates the regular, frank and open dialogue and interaction with the evaluator.

## Overall appreciation of the evaluation report

- The PHRD confirms that the evaluation report on the Diplomatic Initiative Missing Persons addresses all the issues and questions as agreed in the Terms of Reference dated 13.05.2025 and that the methodology applied is based on both the ToRs and regular exchanges between the evaluator and the PHRD.
- It is noted with appreciation that the evaluation report assesses five out of six criteria as either highly satisfactory or satisfactory and that Switzerland's approach in addressing the topic of Missing Persons is assessed as sound.
- In particular, the PHRD welcomes the fact that the evaluation confirms that the Diplomatic Initiative Missing Persons has played a key role in increasing visibility and awareness of missing persons issues and has driven progress across the international system. The Global Alliance for the Missing (GAM) filled an important gap by providing a dedicated multilateral platform. Since 2018, the Diplomatic Initiative Missing Persons has delivered concrete results, strengthened trust and cooperation among stakeholders, and supported the exchange of good practices.
- The PHRD values the clear and relevant recommendations made by the evaluator for improving connections between multilateral, regional, and national efforts.



**Annex: Management Response regarding the recommendations made to the PHRD**

Topic	Recommended Action	Management Response Agree / Disagree; Measure taken
Multilateral engagement	<p><b>2. Reconfirm Diplomatic Initiative objective</b></p>	<p><b>Partially agree</b> Measure: Already ongoing; reinforce the conceptual clarity of the diplomatic initiative among different units and objectives (DWP, peace processes, humanitarian focus).</p>
8. Improve GAM modalities	<p>Enhance the working modalities of the GAM to anticipate future discussions with clear decision-making structures. Maintain balance in GAM membership and clarify decision-making processes before issues arise.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> Measure: Gradually refine the working modalities of the GAM to ensure it remains effective, representative, and capable of addressing future developments.</p>
9. Strengthen dialogue on Missing Migrants	<p>Enhance structured dialogue and exchange with the diplomatic initiative on Missing Migrants, considering prioritization and sensitivities around the topic.</p>	<p><b>Partially agree</b> Measure: Already ongoing, regular exchanges between the two diplomatic initiatives taking place.</p>
Swiss foreign policy coherence and strategic positioning	<p><b>3. Improve coherence within PHRD</b></p> <p>Enhance alignment between thematic and geographical units and ensure coordination across all departments. Avoid politicization and institutionalization to keep the initiative agile and effective but continue to invest at country level in line with</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> Measure: Promote greater internal coherence within PHRD and across relevant FDFA units to ensure that Switzerland's engagement on Missing Persons is harmonized and guided by shared priorities.</p>

		overall global commitments and policies.		
	<b>4. Increase impact</b>	Strengthen the linkages within the multitrack approach of the diplomatic initiative to maximize its impact. Leverage synergies between different streams of the initiative and focus on concrete overlaps.		<b>Agree</b> <u>Measure:</u> The creation of the diplomatic initiative between the various stakeholders across different levels. Synergies need to be further enhanced so that political, technical, and operational elements reinforce each other and contribute to greater overall impact.
<b>Regional, national, and local engagement</b>	<b>5. Advance regional support</b>	Explore ways to support regional champions and foster peer-to-peer exchanges under the GAM. Strengthen regional efforts to avoid country-specific limitations and enhance visibility and diplomatic reach.		<b>Agree</b> <u>Measure:</u> Deepen regional / context-specific engagement by member states or other interested states for sharing of expertise on the topic of missing persons. Assess opportunities to use funding for peer-to-peer exchanges among GAM members.
	<b>6. Build bottom-up capacities</b>	Continue to develop capacities at the grassroots level, particularly focusing on families and family associations to demonstrate the outcomes when translating high-level political commitments into concrete progress.		<b>Agree</b> <u>Measure:</u> Support the strengthening of national and community-level capacities in PHRD-supported programming, particularly those of families and local organizations, to reinforce ownership and responsiveness.
	<b>10. Act as a bridge for domestic actors</b>	Serve as a bridge for domestic actors to learn from international best practices on mechanisms for the missing and showcase Switzerland as a model in this regard. Ensure information sharing internally and externally to work towards the same goal.		<b>Partially agree</b> <u>Measure:</u> Where needed, PHRD will continue to facilitate connections between Swiss domestic actors and international stakeholders and contribute to showcase Switzerland's expertise in international fora. However, it is not within PHRD's purview to ensure that Switzerland is adequately prepared to deal with internal missing crises.
<b>Sustainability, resources, and future needs</b>	<b>1. Continue financial support</b>	Ensure ongoing financial support to maintain the current level of operations and services. This is		<b>Agree</b> <u>Measure:</u> In the mid-term, ensure that PHRD's financial support remains sufficiently stable to

		crucial to consolidate and protect achievements, avoiding the risk of over-ambition. The marginal returns at multilateral level are not likely to originate from additional financial resources.	preserve existing achievements and avoid unnecessary fluctuations in capacity or ambition. On the longer term, seek other sources of funding.
	<b>7. Maintain flexible budgeting</b>	Keep a flexible and risk-friendly approach to budgeting and project management, especially to promote innovation and new technologies. This is even more important in the current financial restrictive environment.	<b>Agree</b> Measure: Maintain flexibility in resource allocation to allow for adaptation, innovation, and responsiveness to evolving needs or opportunities

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