Switzerland is a founding member State of the ILO, its headquarters’ host country and an important contributor to the ILO’s development cooperation programme. Switzerland has ratified 62 Conventions, including the eight Fundamental and three Governance Conventions.

A key partner in the promotion of social justice and decent work, Switzerland supports the ILO’s mandate both at policy-making level and by contributing to its development cooperation work. The main development partners of the ILO in Switzerland are the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). SECO is the agency responsible for ILO within the Swiss Confederation. SECO supports the ILO through contributions to its flagship programmes such the Better Work programme, which promotes more and better jobs in the garment industry; the Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises programme, which improves productivity and working conditions in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as well as through a new initiative, the Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work Programme, which addresses constraints to productivity growth and decent job creation.

The ILO’s cooperation with SDC focuses mainly on labour migration. The shared goal of SDC and ILO is to transform migratory and displacement challenges into developmental opportunities for hosting and sending countries alike. They also work to ensure that the fundamental rights of labour migrants are respected throughout the entire migration cycle, while also supporting socioeconomic inclusion.

A Framework Agreement, renewed in 2021, guides and reinforces the cooperation between Switzerland and the ILO. The document aims to strengthen collaboration in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work.

For the 2021-24 period, alleviating need and poverty in the world and promoting sustainable development are at the heart of Switzerland’s international cooperation mandate. The thematic priorities are:

► creating decent local jobs
► addressing climate change
► reducing the causes of forced and irregular migration
► promoting the rule of law

Switzerland has earmarked more than US$ 12.3 billion for the implementation of international cooperation work for the 2021-24 period.

In 2021, Switzerland spent US$ 3.85 billion on ODA, amounting to 0.51% of the country’s gross national income (GNI).
Switzerland’s Overall Contributions to the ILO

Switzerland financially supports the ILO by contributing to both its core budget and its development cooperation programmes:

- **Assessed contributions**, paid by all ILO Member States by virtue of their membership. Between 2017 and 2021 Switzerland contributed US$ 20.1 million and was the ILO’s 18th largest regular budget contributor.

- **Voluntary contributions** earmarked to priority programmes and projects. Between 2017 and 2021, Switzerland contributed US$ 78.7 million and was the ILO’s eighth largest member State contributor of voluntary funds.

Switzerland-ILO portfolio by region (May 2022)

SELECTED PROGRAMMES SUPPORTED BY SWITZERLAND

**Better Work**

As a partnership between the ILO and the International Finance Corporation, **Better Work** brings together governments, global brands, factory owners, unions and workers to improve working conditions in the garment industry and make the sector more competitive.

Driven by a model that combines factory assessments, training, advisory, advocacy and research, the programme is active in more than 1,700 factories employing nearly 2.4 million workers across twelve countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Haiti, Indonesia, Jordan, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam. Better Work partners with brands and retailers, governments, factory owners, development partners, workers and unions to achieve its objectives. SECO is supporting the new 2022-2027 phase of the programme with US$ 12.5 million and is represented on the programme’s Advisory Committee.

A Vietnamese woman at work in a Better Work factory.
Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work

The Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work Programme, endorsed by the ILO’s Governing Body in March 2021, addresses productivity and decent work deficits at the policy, sector and enterprise levels for win-win solutions that improve productivity and ensure, through social dialogue and workplace cooperation, that gains are distributed equitably. The Programme supports lasting improvements of productivity and working conditions by addressing the root causes of low productivity and promoting the capacity and ownership of local and national actors. It is being piloted in South Africa, Ghana and Viet Nam from 2022 to 2025 with US$ 10 Million from SECO alongside US$ 6.4 Million from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD).

Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE)

ILO’s Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) Programme is designed to improve productivity and working conditions in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The key intervention of the programme is the SCORE Training, which combines practical classroom learning with in-factory consulting. The training demonstrates best international practices in the manufacturing and service sectors and helps SMEs participate in global supply chains.

The SCORE Programme is active in different sectors in four countries (Bolivia, Ethiopia, Myanmar, and Tunisia). In addition, SCORE Training is used in other countries such as China, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Peru, Turkey, Egypt, India, and Pakistan to support ILO private sector development projects. As of April 2022, nearly 4,000 SMEs and more than 46,000 enterprise staff had received SCORE Training, representing a total workforce of more than 643,000 people that benefitted from enterprise improvements.

Over 100 lead buyers have so far promoted SCORE Training and 54 have sponsored delivery of the training to their suppliers. As a result, SMEs recorded growth and created more than 15,000 new jobs. Currently in its fourth and final phase, the programme is jointly supported by SECO and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) with contributions of approximately US$ 3.3 million each.

PROMISE IMPACT

Bundling financial and non-financial services is an innovative approach whereby financial service providers (FSPs) differentiate themselves from their competitors, improve market penetration, and contribute to enterprise development. With support from SECO, the ILO promoted and tested the bundled approach in Indonesia. Under the first phase of PROMISE IMPACT, a US$ 3 million project, the ILO worked with 13 financial services providers, including rural banks, development banks, and credit and savings cooperatives, to test a “finance-plus approach”. The project has enabled the FSPs to offer business development support to their small enterprise clients, alongside the financial services they were already offering, to support their growth and productivity. The documented positive impact of the initiative, encouraged the FSPs to make bundled services one of their core products. For the regulator, learnings from this phase triggered a request to SECO and ILO to continue supporting the financial sector through a second phase of the project to help FSPs embrace the digital transformation, while sharpening their service delivery to productive SMEs. SECO has allocated an additional US$ 4.7 million to the next, four-year phase, PROMISE II IMPACT.

Alliance 8.7

In 2021, Switzerland became a partner of Alliance 8.7, the global partnership for eradicating forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour towards achieving SDG target 8.7. To date, the Alliance includes 26 Path-finder Countries and over 400 partners. SECO participates, as an observer, in the meetings of the Alliance’s Global Coordinating Group, a group of active partners across sectors that meet regularly to set goals and assess progress.
The FAIRWAY programme contributes US$ 11 million to improving labour conditions across migration pathways from Africa to the Arab States and to protecting all vulnerable migrant workers in the Arab States. In countries of origin in Africa, the programme works with governments and social partners to ensure legislation and policy is conducive to facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration. To reach migrant workers directly, the programme supports the provision of essential services through government-run Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) and information and support services by social partners, both for potential migrant workers and for those returning.

In the Arab states, FAIRWAY has supported the evidence-based review of legislation and regulatory reforms that lay the foundation for dismantling the kafala system and improved representation and organization of migrant workers. By harnessing behavioural change strategies and working with the media, the Programme addresses discriminatory policies, practices and attitudes against migrant workers. The programme also supported a tripartite inter-regional exchange to identify areas of shared interest and set groundwork for greater collaboration.

The Migrant Rights and Decent Work Project (MiRiDew)

With US$ 1.4 million in support from SDC, the Migrant Rights and Decent Work (MiRiDew) project is working to enhance and strengthen the Government of Nepal’s mechanisms to protect the rights of Nepali migrant workers at home and abroad, including strengthening consular services for migrant workers in distress.

ILO standards under the overall framework of the Sustainable Development Agenda. Under the second phase of the programme, the ILO will provide in-depth, in-country support to 50 countries to strengthen their social protection systems; encourage knowledge development and exchange on 16 specific areas of social protection; and engage in strategic partnerships with tripartite partners, the UN family and beyond.

SDC has been supporting the Programme since 2021, providing US$ 1.3 million to two of the Programme’s thematic areas. On social health protection, the SDC contributes to strengthening strategic partnerships by supporting the ILO’s participation in the Providing for Health network’s coordination desk. It is further contributing to the thematic area on ensuring social protection for migrants through research and social dialogue on social protection for migrants in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.