



International  
Labour  
Organization



# Switzerland ILO Cooperation

March 2021

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 60 Conventions, including the eight Fundamental and three Governance Conventions.

## Switzerland's strong support for Decent Work

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 represents Switzerland in the ILO Governing Body from 2017 to 2021, as deputy government member. As such, it actively participates in the decision-making of ILO policy, programming and budgeting. Development cooperation activities supported by SECO aim to accelerate sustainable and inclusive growth by supporting the integration of middle-income

countries in the world economy. Activities focus on entrepreneurship and competitiveness, labour standards, sustainable enterprises, SMEs development and global supply chains.

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](#).

## Switzerland's international cooperation priorities

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, under the current plan, has earmarked more than US\$ 12.3 billion for the implementation of international cooperation work for the 2021-24 period

In 2019, Switzerland spent US\$ 3 billion on ODA, amounting to 0.44% of the country's gross national income (GNI).

## SWITZERLAND'S FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

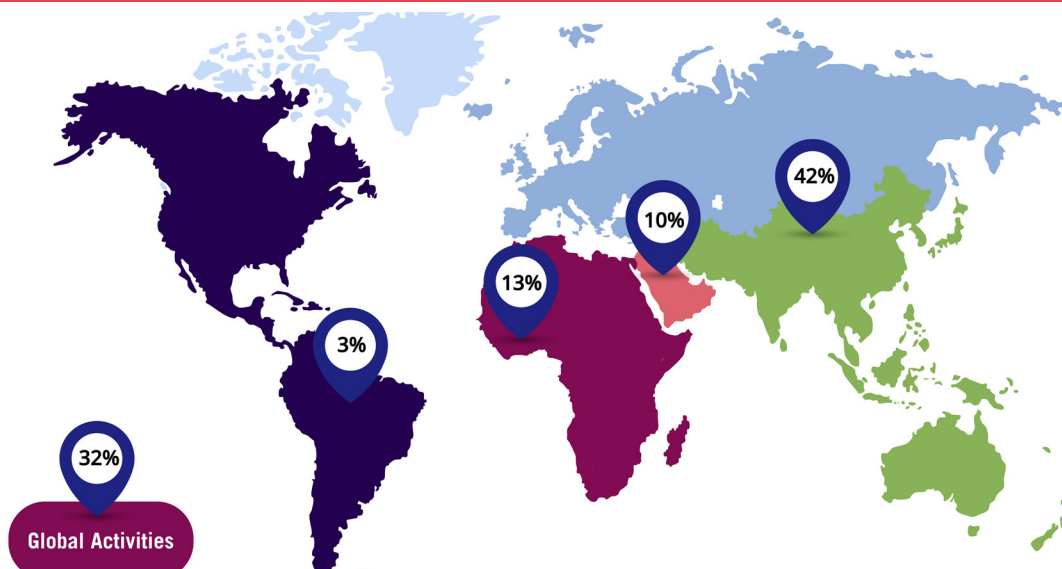
Switzerland financially supports the ILO by contributing to both its core budget and its development cooperation programmes:

- **Assessed contributions**, paid by all ILO Member States by virtue of their membership. Between 2017 and 2020 Switzerland contributed US\$ 18.1 million and was the ILO's sixteenth largest regular budget contributor.
- **Voluntary contributions** earmarked to priority programmes and projects. Between 2017 and 2020, Switzerland contributed US\$ 57.3 million and was the ILO's 11<sup>th</sup> largest member State contributor of voluntary funds.

### Switzerland's Overall Contributions to the ILO



### Switzerland-ILO portfolio by region (February 2021)



## SELECTED PROGRAMMES SUPPORTED BY SWITZERLAND

### Better Work



A Vietnamese woman at work in a Better Work factory.

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 nine countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Haiti, Indonesia, Jordan, Nicaragua and Viet Nam. Better Work partners with brands and retailers, governments, factory owners, development partners, workers and unions to achieve its objectives. SECO has provided more than US\$ 12.5 million in support to Better Work and is represented on the programme's Advisory Committee.



## ► 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 works in 11 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, with seven additional countries having undertaken pilots. Between 2009 and 2020, more than 3,100 SMEs directly benefited from SCORE Training, for 570,000 workers. To date, 56 public and private institutions have joined the programme, providing SCORE Training to over 92,600 managers and workers (of which 35 per cent female). Additionally, more than 12,500 new jobs have been created by participating SMEs.



*A SCORE expert trainer visits a factory floor in China to engage with workers and make suggestions for productivity improvement*

The programme, currently in its third phase, is jointly supported by SECO and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) with contributions of approximately US\$ 12 million each.

## ► Inclusive Market Development for Decent Work - the Lab



*The Lab provided an analysis of micro-scale tea processors in Myanmar*

[The Lab](#) is a knowledge-generation project on how to create more and better jobs in supply chains. Since its launch in 2014, the Lab has developed several guidance [briefs](#) and two flagship documents as well as [project impact](#) and [market analyses](#) to guide practitioners in

addressing employment challenges in supply chains. The 2021 guide on [Value Chain Development for Decent Work](#) demonstrates how the ILO's innovative "systems approach" can produce better employment outcomes with higher cost-efficiency.

Thanks to US\$ 5.2 million in support from SECO, the Lab has supported partner projects in 20 countries, both within the ILO – for example, the SCORE project – and with partner organisations such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Mastercard Foundation. The Lab has supported measurement at the global level and worked with SECO-funded projects in Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Viet Nam, Ghana, and Bolivia to enhance their analytical or measurement capacity. Projects supported by the Lab have created or improved over 50,000 jobs.

## ► The Integrated Programme on Fair Recruitment (FAIR)

In its second phase, the SDC-funded Integrated Programme on Fair Recruitment ([FAIR](#)) has made significant progress in promoting fair recruitment of migrant workers. With more than US\$ 4 million in support from SDC, FAIR works in several migration corridors to defend migrant workers' human rights, especially labour rights.

FAIR supports both countries of origin and destination to implement, monitor and regulate the recruitment

of migrant workers, enabling access to reliable information, migratory services and justice. The project also disseminates evidence-based policy advice on fair recruitment through trainings and practical guidance for employers, labour inspectors and recruitment agencies. FAIR also uses chat-bot technologies to facilitate access to services and information and behavioural insights to advocate for fair recruitment.

## ► The FAIRWAY programme

The [FAIRWAY programme](#) contributes US\$ 11 million to improving labour conditions across migration pathways from Africa to the Arab States and to enhancing protections for migrants. The programme supports the provision of essential services through Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs), both for potential migrant workers and for those returning.

In the Arab states, FAIRWAY has supported the review of key legislation and regulatory reforms that lay the foundation for dismantling the *kafala* system in Lebanon and Kuwait. In Africa, the programme is disseminating information and building partnerships to support governments, employers, Worker organisations, civil society, migrant workers, and recruitment agencies.



*African workers queuing to process their documents for repatriation under Kuwait's amnesty programme in April 2020 (Photo: Sandigan)*

## ► The Migrant Rights and Decent Work Project (MiRiDew)



*Nepali workers in the Embassy of Nepal in Malaysia awaiting services*

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, for instance by supporting the strengthening of consular services for migrant workers in distress.

## ► COVID-19 response

With the support of Switzerland, the ILO has redirected the resources of on-going projects to support COVID-19 response activities to reach the most affected during the uncertain times.

- Following the COVID-19 [call to action](#), the ILO, social partners and development partners have catalysed collective action from the global garment industry to support manufacturers to survive economic disruptions. **Better Work** also mobilized to support factories and workers on crucial occupational safety and health (OSH) and industrial relations issues, coordinate information campaigns and training for national partners, provide policy advice and develop joint national responses with local stakeholders.
- **FAIR II** and the Tunisian trade union UGTT set up an awareness raising programme promoting good practices in OSH that included distributing safety kits to around 5,000 migrant workers; producing short videos for four different job sectors; and providing referrals for COVID-19 related medical services through MRCs. ILO and UGTT also collaborated on a rapid assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on migrant workers.
- **FAIRWAY** is supporting information campaigns on COVID-19 in the Arab States and providing humanitarian assistance to migrants most affected by the pandemic. In Ethiopia the programme is supporting the reintegration of returning migrants, through cash-transfers and longer-term social and economic interventions. In Kenya and Uganda, the response focuses on strengthening existing MRCs as well as developing new ones.
- **MIRIDEW** has adapted its activities to support stranded migrants in the destination countries. The project has reached more than 3,000 Nepali migrant workers and facilitated the return of more than 660 to Nepal. It linked more than 500 migrant workers with relief support and supported negotiations with employers to settle unpaid compensation claims. More than 1,000 workers received counselling on a possible return to Nepal, new employment opportunities and the settlement of occupation-related grievances.

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