



HUMANITARIAN AID OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR MULTILATERAL COMMITMENT

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITARIAN AID
AND SWISS HUMANITARIAN AID UNIT
SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

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In an increasingly uncertain and complex world, the humanitarian aid of the Swiss Confederation continues a long tradition – helping to reduce risks, save lives, alleviate suffering and support people in reconstruction for a safer future. But Switzerland does not act in isolation; a major part of our humanitarian commitment is made in the multilateral context, through partnership with international organizations well placed to respond to the scale and complexity of many of today's crises.

More than ever, a cohesive concept and a focused and efficient use of resources are vital if we are to have a real impact on those we seek to assist – populations affected by wars, natural disasters like earthquakes and floods, failing State structures and other crises around the world. At the same time, we must look to the future, reviewing and adapting our ways of working to be able to respond to the challenges ahead and help ensure a strong and effective multilateral system.

This document has been prepared as a source of reference for those working in the Department of Humanitarian Aid and Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit, for the Department's partner organizations, for professionals in other departments of SDC and government offices and for interested outside experts. It summarizes the strategic directions guiding the Department's multilateral activities, its priorities for the next few years and the way it works. It also provides a framework for developing specific operational objectives, elaborating institutional concepts for individual partner organizations and allocating resources.

We can fulfil our mandate only with the close cooperation of our partners. It is our hope that this document will not only serve as a practical tool but contribute to a wider visibility and better understanding of Switzerland's multilateral commitment to humanitarian aid.

Toni Frisch
Head of the Humanitarian Aid Department



Introduction

Humanitarian Aid of the Swiss Confederation

Switzerland has a long tradition in humanitarian aid, reflecting the strong sense of solidarity and responsibility of the Swiss people towards those affected by conflicts, crises and disasters. SDC's active and worldwide engagement in humanitarian aid was mandated by federal law in 1976, an international commitment that continues to be strongly supported by the Swiss people and authorities.

SDC's Humanitarian Aid Department (SDC-HA), within the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, fulfils this mandate in close collaboration with partners. Its increasingly important multilateral cooperation accounts for about two thirds of its budget, the other third being used bilaterally to finance the Department's direct humanitarian activities and those of Swiss and foreign non-governmental organizations abroad.

Global context and challenges

The changing global context of humanitarian aid, growing complexity of the multilateral system and limited availability of financial resources mean that clear strategies and operational priorities are vital to the effectiveness and relevance of Switzerland's multilateral commitment to humanitarian aid.

Among the challenges to be met are those posed by the increasing number of players participating in humanitarian aid, including non-governmental organizations, civil society and armed forces (in a "subsidiary" role). Effective coordination is crucial for efficient action, as is intensified promotion of humanitarian principles, which may be neglected by those competing for visibility and resources or seeking to impose political conditions on aid.

New types of conflicts characterized by increased violence against the civilian population and humanitarian personnel, more frequent natural disasters and international migration are creating greater demands on humanitarian actors. At the same time, older conflicts may lose the attention of the international community in supporting the local partners in their search for transition from emergency to sustainable development.

"The aim of humanitarian aid is to help preserve the lives of human beings who are in danger and to alleviate suffering through preventive and emergency aid measures; such aid is intended for victims of natural disasters and armed conflict."

Federal law on international development cooperation and humanitarian aid, 19 March 1976 ⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ For references see page 21



Growing importance of multilateral aid

Within this changing context, multilateral humanitarian aid is growing in importance. Recent conflicts have highlighted the need for solutions by the international community as a whole – by their nature, bilateral actions cannot suffice to prevent or relieve the consequences of the major conflicts, crises and disasters witnessed in the Great Lakes region in Africa or in Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia or Iraq.

Often the scale and complexity of needs mean that only the multilateral system can provide the financial resources, capacities and expertise required; effective multilateral intervention can ensure a rapid, focused and coordinated response. Multilateral fora and institutions also play a key role in establishing norms and principles for international intervention, in devising solutions to address new problems and in promoting dialogue between all actors at both international and local levels.

The multilateral system, though, has only partially succeeded in responding to the challenges of humanitarian aid. SDC is committed to contributing actively to its increased effectiveness and development by strengthening its multilateral humanitarian cooperation. This commitment will both reinforce the key role assigned to the Swiss Confederation's multilateral activities in the Swiss Foreign policy report 2000 ⁽²⁾ and exploit the synergies between SDC-HA's bilateral and multilateral programmes.

What does "multilateral" mean?

SDC-HA uses the term "multilateral" in a broad sense to encompass all types of cooperation with its international partners. These comprise not only organizations of the United Nations system but others like the ICRC that are not intergovernmental or multilateral in the strict sense. In this context, multilateral cooperation includes so-called "multi-bi" assistance, when funds are allocated to specific humanitarian projects of partner organizations, as well as the general financial contributions made annually to partners' core programmes.

How SDC-HA works with partner organizations

SDC-HA works within the multilateral system by building close relationships with its partner organizations at three complementary levels (Fig. 1, next page), contributing funds, skills and experience (through multilateral dialogue and secondments of personnel and external experts), food and other types of assistance.

As a shareholder making financial contributions, the Department assumes Switzerland's responsibility as a member State of humanitarian partner organizations, participating in governing bodies and influencing strategy and policy. As a stakeholder it takes a position on specific issues and represents both Swiss and recipient countries' concerns. And at the operational level, it makes personnel and materials available and contributes conceptually to operational approaches.

⁽²⁾ For references see page 21



Fig. 1 The three types of SDC-HA's relationship with partner organizations



What this document contains

As part of its strengthened multilateral commitment, the Department has prepared this reference document to summarize and clarify its conceptual directions and main areas of multilateral work for the next three years.

The annex provides a summary of SDC-HA's objectives on page 19 and an overview of its main multilateral partner organizations on page 22.

The following sections explain

- the structure and organization of SDC-HA,
- the Department's strategic orientation for multilateral cooperation, including priority themes for collaboration with partners,
- the specific objectives within each priority area, and
- the guidance for putting the conceptual framework into action by working effectively with partner organizations and making the best use of available resources.



Structure and organization of SDC-HA

SWISS MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



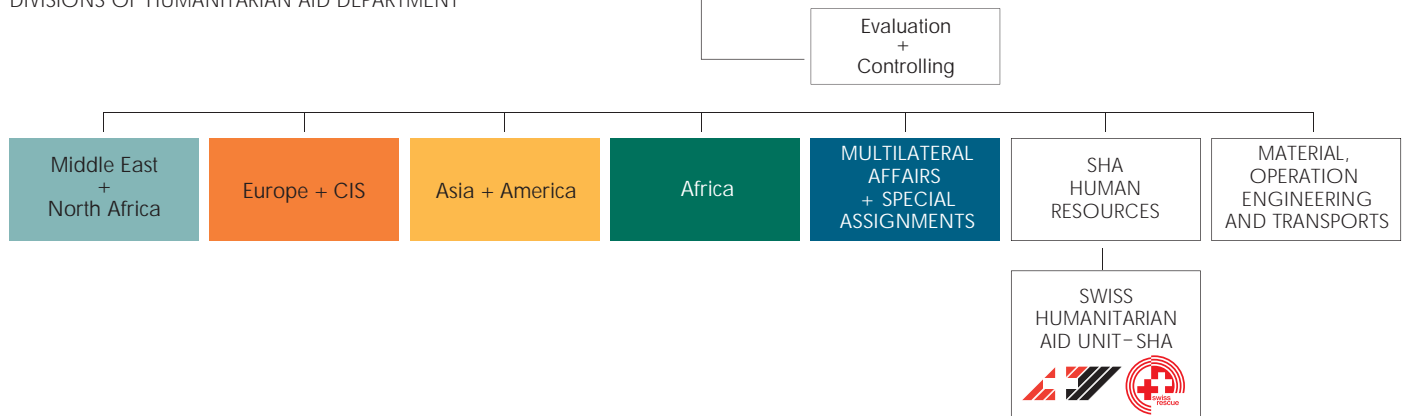
DIRECTORATES OF THE MINISTRY



SDC DEPARTMENTS



DIVISIONS OF HUMANITARIAN AID DEPARTMENT



Structure and personnel

SDC-HA accomplishes its work through seven specialized divisions, Cooperation Offices in countries of operation and the deployment of members of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA), Rapid Response Teams and Swiss Rescue.

Headquarters

SDC-HA Headquarters in Bern, with its divisions and just under 100 staff, is responsible for strategic management and for planning, implementing and administering all programmes and projects.



The division for **Multilateral Affairs and Special Assignments:**

- represents SDC in the governing bodies and donor support groups of all its major humanitarian partner organizations, and
- takes the lead role in multilateral humanitarian aid, including conceptual clarification and coordination, working closely both with the four geographical divisions in the Department and with other parts of SDC.

The four geographical divisions (**Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States, Middle East and North Africa, Asia and America, Africa**) have operational responsibility for their respective regions, with involvement in both bilateral and multilateral programmes.

Cooperation Offices

Where the situation requires, SDC will be present, dealing with humanitarian and development issues. SHA specialists may be assigned to strengthen the SDC Cooperation Offices.

Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA)

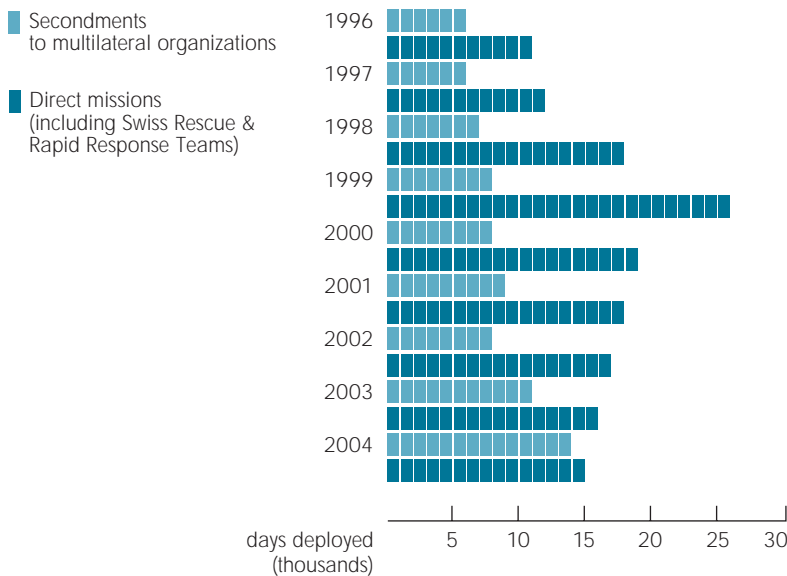
The SHA is a "reserve" unit comprising about 750 professionals who can be mobilised for humanitarian assignments and are integrated into specialized groups on the basis of their experience and skills. Nine expert groups currently exist: Logistics, Construction, WATSAN (Water and Sanitation) and community hygiene, Prevention and Preparedness, Medical, Environment / CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear), Information, Telecommunications and Rescue.

SHA members are recruited from the public and private sectors for their professional expertise, social competencies and management experience. They are deployed for assignments of variable duration to the Department's direct actions and, increasingly, seconded to operations and programmes of our partner organizations (Fig.2). In recent years, SHA members have logged over 25 000 operation days each year, equivalent to 70 or more full-time deployments.

Rapid Response Teams (RRT)

In case of emergencies SDC-HA can deploy highly specialized Rapid Response Teams, ready within hours. These teams serve in both bilateral and multilateral contexts, working closely with partner organizations and the governmental institutions of the affected country to assess priority needs and to pro-actively contribute to coordinated on-site emergency relief.

Fig. 2 SHA deployment days, 1996–2004



Swiss Rescue

Under the Department's leadership, Swiss Rescue (composed of about 100 people, plus search dogs and related equipment) can be deployed at short notice to locate and rescue people trapped in collapsed buildings, for example after an earthquake. The team draws on experts and resources from several Swiss governmental, non-governmental, civil and military partner organizations.

External experts and local staff

The Department engages external experts from both public and private sectors for specialized projects. Whenever possible, responsibilities for field activities are transferred to local partners and staff.

Central warehouse

SDC-HA maintains in Switzerland a central warehouse as its own logistics base for emergency supplies and the equipment required for personnel deployment. Among the items stored ready for immediate use are tents and shelters, emergency medical supplies, WATSAN equipment and other material essential for survival.

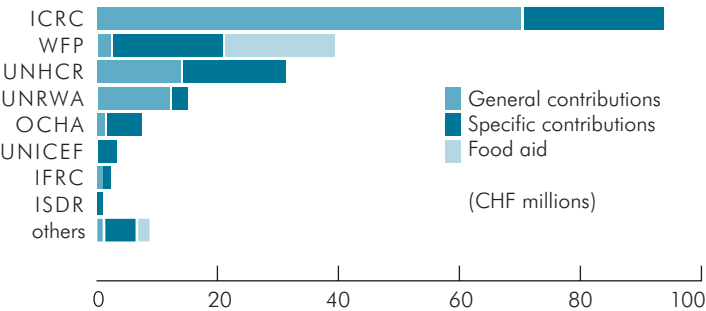
Budget

A global budget for humanitarian aid is approved every 4–5 years by the Federal Assembly to finance the continued provision of international humanitarian aid. The humanitarian aid budget (CHF 276 million in 2004, CHF 300 million in 2005) amounts to about one fifth of the total SDC budget. SDC-HA uses about two thirds of the total for multilateral cooperation and the remainder to finance its own direct activities and those of Swiss and foreign non-governmental organizations (Table 1, Fig. 3)

Table 1 SDC humanitarian aid budget 2004 (CHF millions)

	General contributions	Specific contributions	Food aid	Total
UN International organizations	29.1	50.4	19.7	99.2
ICRC and IFRC	70.5	23.5	—	94.0
Swiss non-governmental organizations	—	20.0	12.2	32.2
Direct action by the SHA	—	37.8	—	37.8
Other humanitarian aid action	—	11.8	1.4	13.2
Total humanitarian aid 2004	99.6	143.5	33.3	276.4

Fig. 3 SDC-HA contributions to multilateral partners, 2004



Strategic orientation

Global humanitarian challenges, SDC's mandate and core strategies as well as the demands and expectations of SDC's numerous stakeholders provide the basis for SDC-HA's framework for multilateral cooperation.

SDC-HA framework for multilateral cooperation (Fig. 4, next page)

The Humanitarian Aid Strategy ⁽³⁾ clearly identifies four key tasks for the coming years: **prevention** and **preparedness**, **emergency relief** (rescue and survival), **reconstruction** and **advocacy**, requiring a strategic orientation and commitments, and defines priority themes and main tasks.

⁽³⁾ For references see page 21

Accomplishment of all four of these tasks depends on a combination of both bilateral activities and multilateral cooperation. For the latter, SDC-HA has agreed upon a number of priority themes to guide its collaboration with partner organizations and facilitate focused and efficient use of limited resources (see box, page 9). It has also established five general goals as strategic commitments to give a consistent orientation to all its work (page 10). The choice of priority themes and specific objectives within them is influenced by several factors:

Key tasks for SDC-Humanitarian Aid

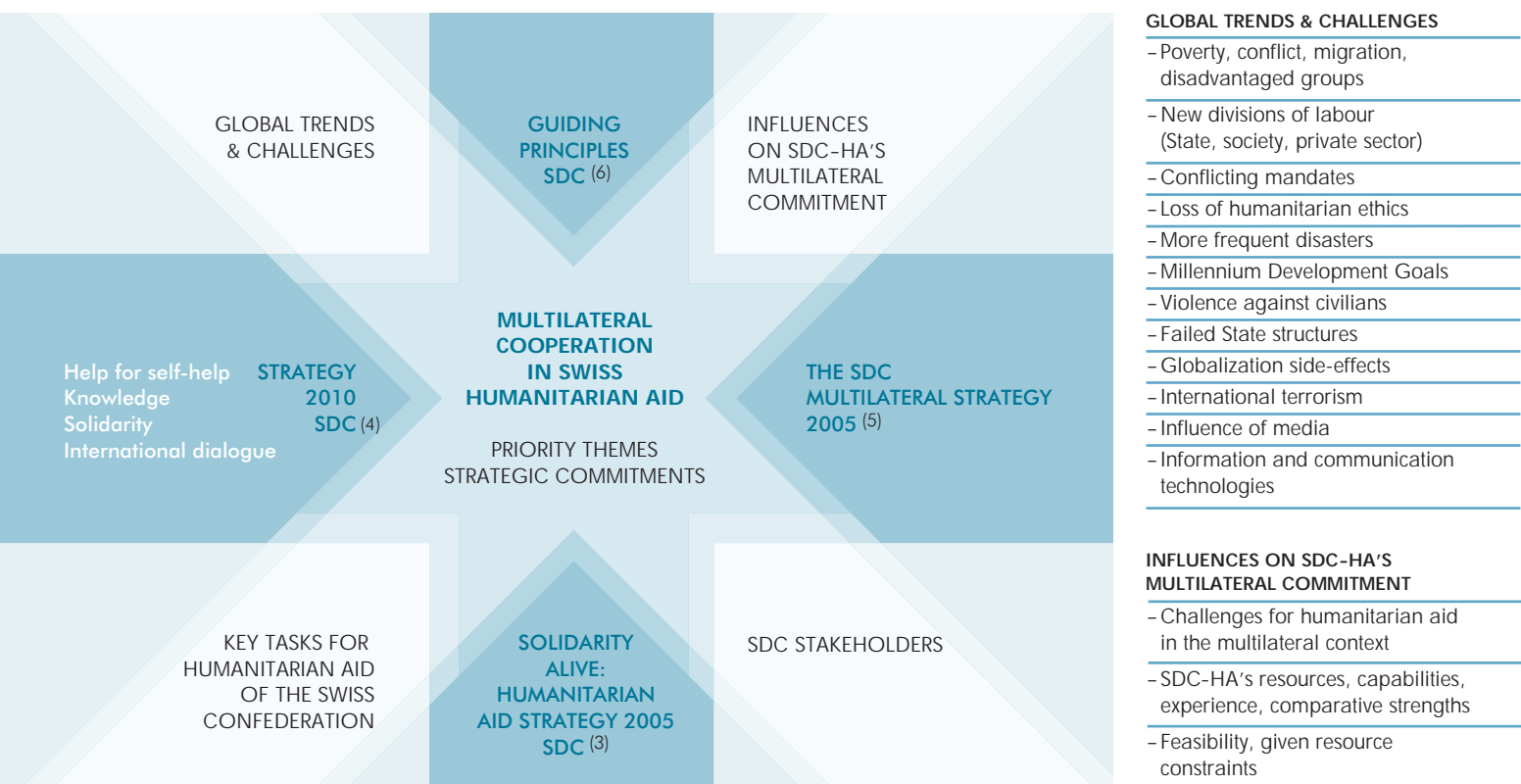
Prevention and Preparedness
Ensure safe life, reduce risks, limit damage and destruction and prepare for disasters
Emergency relief (rescue and survival)
Save lives and cover the basic needs of affected populations
Reconstruction
Initiate measures for a safer future
– Return and reintegration of refugees, displaced persons and the homeless
– Strengthen social nets as well as basic social and economic foundations
Advocacy
Strengthen responsibility for and commitment to the cause of affected populations
– Passive protection through presence
– Protection through testimony
– Create international awareness of the cause of affected populations

Specific challenges for multilateral humanitarian aid. The ever more complex environment of humanitarian action creates pressing needs:

- for more effective strategic planning and coordination of diverse humanitarian actors;
- for increased international commitment to the cause of affected populations, to humanitarian principles and to managing the complex transition from aid to long-term development; and
- for more systematic sharing of knowledge, experience and innovative problem-solving approaches among all those engaged in humanitarian action.



Fig. 4 SDC-HA framework for multilateral cooperation in humanitarian aid



The Department's core capabilities and comparative advantages.

These include:

- the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA) as a unique, flexible tool for humanitarian action, permitting rapid needs-oriented deployment of specialists with field experience in such areas as logistics, construction, WATSAN, protection, rapid assessment and project management,
- long-standing productive collaboration with partners built on close relationships with a strategic focus,
- facilitation of and participation in multilateral dialogue – drawing on skills in negotiation and diplomacy to bring together humanitarian actors, and taking advantage of Switzerland's position as an international meeting point and Geneva as centre for humanitarian affairs.

Likely impact and effectiveness in supporting affected populations

Acceptability to the Department's stakeholders, including the Swiss people and authorities

The priority themes and objectives selected for the coming three years are elaborated in further detail in the next section of the document.

(4,5,6) For references see page 21

Priority Themes
- Humanitarian coordination/effectiveness
- Civil-military relations
- Disaster reduction
- From emergency relief to sustainable development
- Advocacy in the multilateral context
- Visibility

Strategic commitments

All of SDC-HA's multilateral activities within these themes have a consistent orientation based on five strategic commitments.

Strengthen the multilateral system

SDC-HA aims to help improve coordination and division of labour within the multilateral system. It supports its partner organizations through selective and results-oriented cooperation and by encouraging resource deployment that focuses on each partner's particular strengths in the humanitarian arena. The Department also builds alliances with countries and institutions who share its goals and values and through these promotes its position on specific issues.

Strategic Commitments
– Strengthen the multilateral system
– Exploit synergies
– Better involvement of the private sector, civil society
– Promote understanding of multilateral cooperation in humanitarian aid
– Reinforce Geneva's role as world capital for humanitarian affairs

Exploit synergies between multilateral and bilateral work, within the Federal Government and with partners

SDC-HA strives to ensure that the collective knowledge, experience and lessons learned in different domains are harnessed to maximize the effectiveness of humanitarian aid. Potential for synergies can be recognized and exploited through improved information exchange and consultation (within and outside SDC, between humanitarian and development sectors, at multilateral-bilateral and operational-strategic levels), as well as through more systematic knowledge management, opportunities for learning, and strategic secondments and rotation of staff.

Promote the involvement of civil society and the private sector in the multilateral system

SDC-HA promotes closer involvement of all relevant and potential actors as stakeholders in multilateral humanitarian aid.

Increase understanding of, and support for, multilateral cooperation in the area of humanitarian aid

SDC-HA is taking active steps both in the Swiss political community and among the public to raise understanding of its multilateral humanitarian commitment.

Reinforce the role of Geneva as world capital for humanitarian affairs

Geneva has a long tradition as centre for humanitarian affairs, offering advantages not only as an international meeting point but as the headquarters of many humanitarian organizations. SDC-HA promotes this role, working to increase Geneva's value and relevance as an environment conducive to humanitarian dialogue and exchange, training, policy-making and coordination between multilateral partners.





Objectives 2005–2007

Within each of its six priority themes, SDC-HA has determined specific objectives for its multilateral cooperation and the constitution of the annual work programmes. Additions and modifications are anticipated as needs change in the multilateral context of humanitarian aid.

Humanitarian coordination, strategic planning and efficiency

SDC-HA is committed to strengthening coordination between humanitarian actors in the field and between donors. Building on experience in such areas as emergency relief (including in INSARAG and NATO/EAPC civil emergency planning), it promotes strategic planning that takes advantage of potential synergies between partners. It also seeks to avoid duplication and overlap between the different assistance systems operating through United Nations bodies, NATO, the European Union and the organizations of the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Specific objectives are to:

- Continue strong support for the coordination mandate of OCHA and the IASC as a coordinating and decision-making body.
- Contribute to the further development and application of the United Nations Consolidated Appeals Process and Common Humanitarian Action Plans as tools for strategic and operational planning, coordination and unified communication in complex emergencies.

- Through participation in donor groups, including the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative, develop coordination guidelines to promote a harmonized flow of funds to areas of greatest needs.
- Contribute to standard-setting and the establishment of international humanitarian policies through active participation in formal and informal committees, networks and think-tanks.

At the same time the Department wants to increase the efficiency of the multilateral system by mobilizing all relevant players and by promoting dialogue between them.

In this context, it aims to:

- Promote inclusion of civil society, the private sector and the research community in the multilateral system and clarification of their roles, whether in dialogue, as sources of information and innovative solutions, or in the implementation of specific activities.
- Encourage dialogue, conferences and coordination initiatives in Geneva, supporting its role as centre for humanitarian affairs.



Civil–military cooperation

Humanitarian organizations often find themselves working in contexts where armed forces are also active. While relationships can be cooperative, there is also potential for conflict and action that compromises the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian aid. The complexity of this juxtaposition has been well exemplified in context such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Province of Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq.

SDC-HA is already closely involved in international efforts to promote constructive cooperation. It advocates a subsidiary role of the military in the humanitarian area, with involvement only as a last resort when alternative civilian support is lacking. These principles are embodied in the 1994 Guidelines on the use of military and civil defence assets in disaster relief (the Oslo guidelines)⁽⁷⁾ and the 2003 Guidelines on the use of military and civil defence assets to support United Nations humanitarian activities in complex emergencies (known as the MCDA guidelines)⁽⁸⁾.

SDC-HA's specific objectives in this context are to:

- Contribute to the wide dissemination and further development of the Oslo and MCDA guidelines; encourage all partner organizations to respect and promote them.
- Promote application of the guidelines in the field, for example through support for partner organizations' activities in awareness-raising and training of civilian and military personnel.
- Further shape doctrine on civil-military cooperation through active participation in the international debate on integrated missions.

(7, 8, 9, 10) For references see page 21

Disaster reduction

Natural disasters are continuing to strike many regions, affecting many tens of thousands of people each year. Prevention of rapid-onset disasters such as earthquakes, floods and cyclones and their devastating effects has taken on increasing priority with the growing vulnerability of populations at risk.

As part of its response to this need, SDC-HA has developed a strategy for natural disaster reduction⁽⁹⁾, incorporating operational frameworks for prevention and preparedness⁽¹⁰⁾. Given their applicability beyond the context of bilateral assistance, the Department would like to see the frameworks promoted and used within the multilateral system.

SDC-HA also played a prominent role in the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan in January 2005. The Deputy Head of the Department chaired the Conference's Main Committee, which elaborated the "Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015". This framework will serve as a reference document for global disaster reduction activities.

As a contributor to international disaster reduction efforts, SDC-HA intends to:

- Support relevant partner organizations and multilateral initiatives with strategic and organizational input and by making specialist expertise available through secondments.
- Disseminate its prevention and preparedness frameworks widely among partners and promote their application as working instruments.
- Promote greater strategic and financial commitment by the multilateral community to planning for natural and technological disasters and mitigating their effects.
- Promote the "Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015" as the reference for global disaster reduction efforts.



From emergency relief to sustainable development

The complex transition from emergency relief to sustainable development requires highly effective coordination between those involved in humanitarian aid and in development assistance, donors and local partners. In many parts of the world, such coordination is still poor. Short- and longer-term interventions may be only weakly linked and political, economic and social aspects of the transition even neglected.

To help address these weaknesses, SDC-HA aims to:

- Promote consistent collaboration between multilateral humanitarian and development organizations and coordinated deployment of people and materials in the field.
- Bridge the policy gap between different sectors, while acknowledging the political elements and conditionality inherent in certain foreign policy instruments.

Advocacy in the multilateral context

Advocacy, as one of SDC-HA's four strategic tasks, cuts across all areas of its humanitarian involvement. In the multilateral context, the Department's objectives are to:

- Ensure that the Advocacy Guidelines ⁽¹¹⁾ are followed in all cooperation with multilateral partner organizations.
- Pro-actively initiate advocacy activities and events and selectively support advocacy projects of partner organizations.
- In multilateral fora, continue to raise awareness of and commitment to the cause of populations affected by current and forgotten conflicts and by disasters, and promote the respect of International Humanitarian Law, Refugee Law and humanitarian principles.

Visibility

A further cross-cutting theme is visibility – as a means of enhancing both SDC-HA's accountability and its effectiveness. As part of its responsibility to stakeholders, including the Government and tax-payers, the Department pro-actively exploits various communication channels to raise awareness of its principles, programmes, working methods and achievements as an effective actor in global humanitarian aid. Although two thirds of the Department's budget is devoted to multilateral cooperation, this aspect of its work is by its nature much less visible and easy to understand than are its bilateral projects.

SDC-HA therefore aims to:

- Intensify efforts within Switzerland to ensure regular and transparent communication about SDC's multilateral humanitarian aid and to reinforce support among the Swiss population, cantons and political community.
- Raise SDC-HA's visibility within the multilateral system, for example by seconding more personnel to partner organizations and by ensuring public acknowledgement of its donor role.

⁽¹¹⁾ For references see page 21

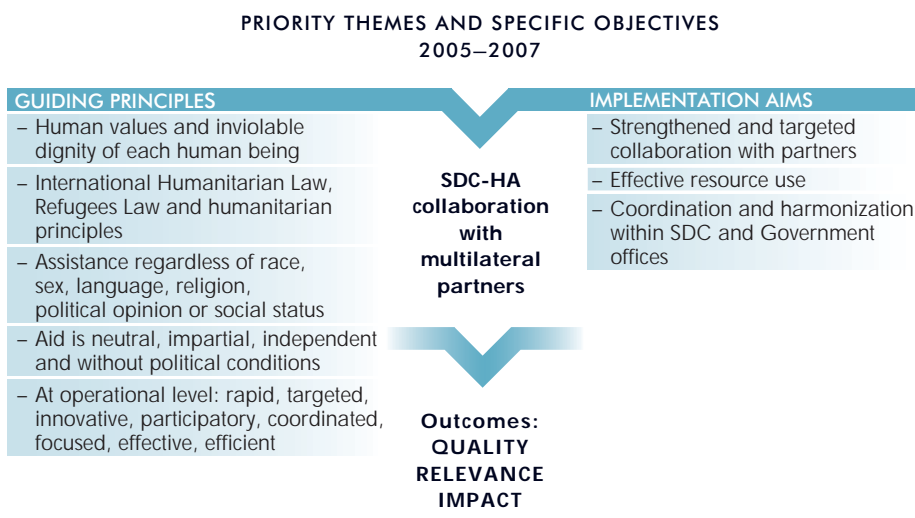
A detailed summary of SDC-HA objectives 2005–2007 is located on pages 19 and 20.



Putting strategy into action

Putting strategy into action to achieve the objectives SDC-HA requires highly focused cooperation with multilateral partners and efficient use of limited resources. The Department is committed to strengthening its multilateral activities within the allocated budget.

Fig. 5 Putting strategy into action



The overall aim must therefore be to increase efficiency, directing efforts to actions that deliver the greatest quality, relevance and impact in favour of affected populations. In implementing its multilateral strategy, SDC-HA is guided by the fundamental principles that underpin every aspect of the Department's commitment to humanitarian aid (Fig. 5). In the complex global context where increasing numbers of players are acting with diverse mandates, SDC-HA continues to strive to ensure respect for internationally recognized humanitarian principles and provision of aid on a neutral and impartial basis without political conditions.

Working efficiently with multilateral partners
SDC-HA aims to work more efficiently in multi-lateral partnerships by:

- selecting partner organizations according to specific criteria,
- focusing its commitment by classifying partners into three priority categories,
- concentrating cooperation on specific objectives linked to its priority themes with a planned allocation of financial and human resources.

It also retains flexibility to participate in different forms of cooperation, such as ad hoc alliances and special initiatives, and to take on the role of implementing partner when appropriate.



Selection criteria

Four criteria have been developed for selecting and working with partner organizations to determine the benchmarks for evaluation.

Three categories of partnership

SDC-HA currently collaborates with 15 to 20 different partner organizations (for summary information on main partners, see Annex). To facilitate resource allocation, these organizations are classified into three categories (Table 2), a classification that may be modified with time as new priority themes are established for cooperation.

Category I: Organizations with whom SDC-HA has cultivated a close, long-term relationship and to whom it contributes significant financial, human and/or material assistance. For these partners, the Department assumes institutional responsibility for representing the Swiss Confederation and for coordinating operational aspects of cooperation.

Category II: Organizations whose mandate and activities fall only in part within the sphere of humanitarian aid, but with whom SDC-HA collaborates closely in specific areas.

Category III: Partners with whom SDC-HA works on specific projects and themes, without substantial long-term financial commitments. The lead role for coordinating relationships with these organizations may lie with another federal office.

Making the best use of resources

SDC-HA continually reviews how best to deploy resources in the multilateral context for increased impact and efficiency and to facilitate constructive interaction with and learning from its bilateral programmes. It is also looking forward, taking steps to assure its ability to respond to future challenges.

Criteria for cooperation between SDC-HA and partners

Mandate includes at least one of the four strategic tasks of SDC-HA
- Specific expertise in prevention, emergency relief, reconstruction, advocacy
- Comparative advantages with respect to other institutions
Respects humanitarian principles
- Aid is neutral and impartial
- Organization is accepted in the field
Uses resources efficiently
- Clear operational arrangements
- Focus on core tasks
- Well developed needs assessment, monitoring and evaluation systems
Allows participation in decision-making
- Involvement in governing bodies and donor support groups
- Opportunities for direct dialogue, "multi-bi" cooperation and joint planning in the field

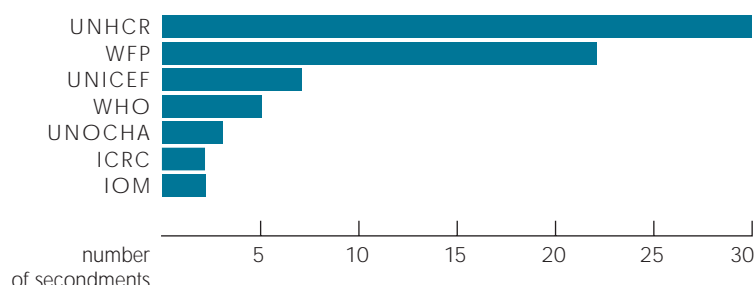
Table 2 Categories of partnerships for SDC-HA

I (with key areas of collaboration)	II	III
ICRC Protection Emergency relief Advocacy	IFRC	Council of Europe
WFP Food aid Reconstruction	IOM	EU-ECHO
UNHCR Protection of refugees	ProVention Consortium	FAO
UNRWA Emergency relief Reconstruction Development	UNDP	ICDO
OCHA Coordination Civil-military relations Advocacy	UNICEF	ICVA
ISDR Disaster reduction		ILO
		NATO/EAPC
		OSCE
		UNAIDS
		UN-HABITAT
		UNITAR
		UNMAS
		WHO
		World Bank and regional development banks

Organizations in category I are listed in descending order according to SDC-HA's financial contribution; those in categories II and III are listed alphabetically. For the full names of organizations, see the back page.



Fig. 6 SHA secondments to multilateral partners, 2004



* SDC-HA uses the term "secondment" to describe the deployment of a SHA member to one of its partner organizations. Such deployments are made under a contract agreed between SDC-HA and the SHA member and may be governed by a memorandum of understanding with the partner organization (as is the case for deployments with ICRC, UNHCR, OCHA, WFP and WHO). They do not constitute secondments in the United Nations sense, when candidates on temporary release from their normal employers undergo selection and recruitment by the receiving organization for short-term assignments to specific posts.

Human resources

SDC-HA's human resources are involved in its multilateral activities in two main ways. Headquarters staff are actively engaged in humanitarian dialogue with partner organizations and other donors and in diplomatic and coordination efforts within the multilateral system, for example by bringing parties together in international conferences. They also participate in partners' decision-making bodies.

The Department also secondments* personnel and external specialists to its partner organizations, especially those in Category I (Fig. 6). These may take the form of: short-term (3-6 months) field secondments of SHA members who can contribute expertise in such areas as logistics, construction or water supply; longer-term assignments of external experts or SHA members to partners' headquarters to undertake strategically important work; and 1-2 years placements of SDC Junior Programme Officers. In addition, Rapid Response Teams can be made available in emergencies, operating primarily in cooperation with UNDAC and to strengthen OCHA's "Surge capacity".

Budget-wise, secondments usually account for about 4% of the contribution for multilateral humanitarian aid. However, demand from key partners is increasing.

Five areas of focus are now envisaged in order to make Swiss expertise more effective in meeting needs within the multilateral context.

1. Review and redefine the role of the SHA Unit in multilateral humanitarian aid.

Aims include:

- increased professionalization of the Unit, recruitment of new members, structural adaptation to accommodate both core activities and new demands,
- increased number of secondments, where appropriate, based on a memorandum of understanding,
- more longer-term secondments to strategic positions in partner organizations to facilitate capacity-building in specific areas.

2. Select themes for multilateral dialogue and for involvement in standard-setting that best utilize the specialist knowledge and skills of SDC-HA staff.

3. Build capabilities through specialized training, field visits, internal rotation of personnel and targeted recruitment and by promoting mutual learning and exchange of multilateral and bilateral experience.

4. Strengthen internal systems for knowledge management to exploit and build on the collective experience, best practices and lessons learned in all aspects of humanitarian aid.

5. Raise the visibility and presence of SDC-HA and Swiss personnel within multilateral partner organizations.



Funding

About two-thirds of SDC-HA's annual budget is set aside for multilateral cooperation, agreed amounts being allocated to partner organizations in the form of both core contributions and earmarked funds (page 22).

While major changes are not envisaged for the coming years and SDC-HA wishes to be seen as a reliable and consistent partner, financing will continue to be kept under review to ensure a results-oriented partitioning. A balance needs to be found between according flexibility to partners through increased un-earmarked funding – in line with the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative – and retaining a steering influence over specific operational activities.

SDC-HA intends to:

- Emphasize the quality of projects supported by earmarked contributions, with regular review of their efficiency and effectiveness.
- Continue to allocate funds in a transparent manner, informing partner organizations of core-funding decisions before the beginning of each year and of earmarked contributions early in the year.

Equipment and materials

The Department will continue to put equipment and materials at the disposal of partner organizations, typically in emergencies requiring rapid deployment of WATSAN and medical equipment as well as tents and relief items. Food aid is primarily channelled through the WFP.

Achieving harmonization within SDC and other Government offices

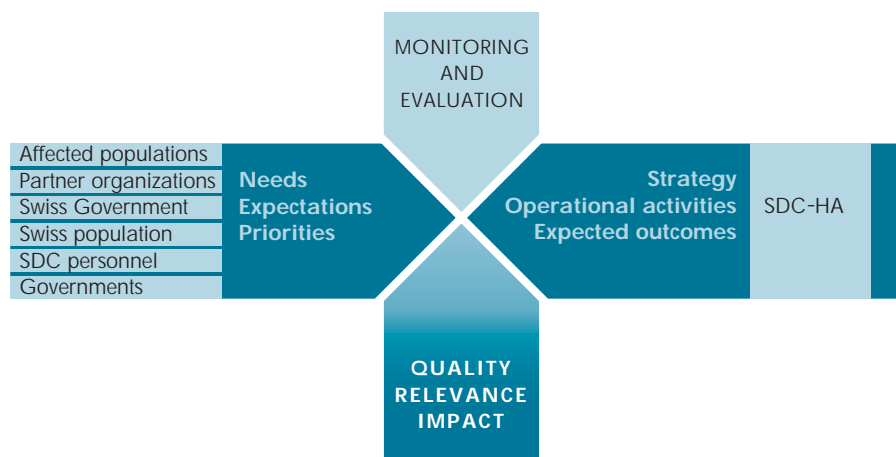
In order to increase efficiency and exploit potential synergies, SDC-HA is intensifying efforts to strengthen internal consultation and harmonization within the federal administration. The interdependence of SDC's responsibilities in different development domains and links with the Swiss Confederation's activities in such areas as migration, human rights and peace politics reinforce the need for regular information exchange and a clear definition of roles and tasks.

Specific aims are to:

- Ensure internal coherence between bilateral and multilateral programmes and between SDC's multilateral commitments in development cooperation and humanitarian aid.
- Promote greater awareness and involvement of SDC Cooperation Offices in multilateral activities.
- Build closer relationships with the Swiss Confederation Missions in Geneva, Rome, Brussels, Vienna and New York.
- Maintain regular exchanges with relevant Federal Departments, when appropriate through theme-specific working groups.



Fig. 7 Monitoring and evaluation of SDC-HA's multilateral activities



Monitoring and evaluation

With the aim of maximizing the quality, relevance and impact of its multilateral activities, SDC-HA monitors and evaluates its work at several different levels (Fig. 7):

- strategic direction,
- responsiveness to the needs and expectations of its stakeholders, and
- operational progress.

Strategic direction

An annual internal appraisal of the conceptual framework outlined in this document is envisaged, to ensure its continued match to the changing global context and challenges for humanitarian aid. As part of this exercise, the Department evaluates its activities on a continuous basis, taking a critical look at their outcome and impact.

Responsiveness to stakeholders

As a means of gauging its responsiveness to needs and the effectiveness of collaborations, SDC-HA listens to and pro-actively solicits the views of its stakeholders, including partner organizations, its domestic constituency within Switzerland and SDC itself. Regular requests for specific feedback from partners complement periodic evaluations.

Operational progress

Finally, at an operational level, individual divisions and desks within SDC-HA monitor their multilateral activities against indicators established annually for priority objectives. This monitoring, focusing primarily on measurable outputs, feeds into subsequent operational planning. It also creates a picture of progress and achievements that can be shared with stakeholders through various communication channels – SDC publications, conferences, special events and the activity reports accompanying the Federal Council's four-yearly submission Bill to Parliament to request continued funding for SDC-HA's work.

External evaluation

Additional feedback is provided by the periodic peer reviews conducted by OECD-DAC and external evaluations by independent experts. The results of evaluations are used to increase the coherence and efficiency of SDC-HA's multilateral activities and to adapt strategies and processes to changing demands and conditions.



Summary of objectives 2005–2007

PRIORITY THEMES

Humanitarian coordination, strategic planning and efficiency

- Continue strong support for the coordination mandate of OCHA and the IASC as a co-ordinating and decision-making body.
- Contribute to the further development and use of the United Nations Consolidated Appeals Process and Common Humanitarian Action Plans as tools for strategic and operational planning, coordination and unified communication in complex emergencies.
- Through participation in donor groups, including the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative, develop coordination guidelines to promote a harmonized flow of funds to areas of greatest need.
- Contribute to standard-setting and the establishment of international humanitarian policies through active participation in formal and informal committees, networks and think-tanks.
- Promote inclusion of civil society, the private sector and the research community in the multilateral system and clarification of their roles, whether in dialogue, as sources of information and innovative solutions, or in the implementation of specific activities.
- Encourage dialogue, conferences and coordination initiatives in Geneva, supporting its role as centre for humanitarian affairs.

Civil–military Cooperation

- Contribute to the wide dissemination and further development of the Oslo and MCDA* guidelines; encourage all partner organizations to respect and promote them.
- Promote application of the guidelines in the field, for example through support for partner organizations' activities in awareness-raising and training of civilian and military personnel.
- Further shape doctrine on civilian-military collaboration through active participation in the international debate on integrated missions.

*military and civil defence assets, see page 21, Ref. 8

Disaster reduction

- Support relevant partner organizations and multilateral initiatives with strategic and organizational input and by making specialist expertise available through secondments.
- Disseminate SDC-HA's prevention and preparedness frameworks widely among partners and promote their application as working instruments.
- Promote greater strategic and financial commitment by the multilateral community to planning for natural and technological disasters and mitigating their effects.
- Promote the "Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015" as the reference for global disaster reduction efforts.

From emergency relief to sustainable development

- Promote consistent collaboration between multilateral humanitarian and development organizations and coordinated deployment of people and materials in the field.
- Bridge the policy gap between different sectors, while acknowledging the political elements and conditionality inherent in certain foreign policy instruments.

continued on the next page

continued: **Summary of objectives 2005–2007**

Advocacy in the multilateral context

- Ensure that the concerns of SDC-HA's Advocacy Guidelines are firmly implanted in all cooperation with multilateral partner organizations.
- Pro-actively initiate advocacy activities and events and selectively support advocacy projects of partner organizations.
- In multilateral fora, continue to raise awareness of and commitment to the cause of populations affected by current and forgotten conflicts and by disasters, and promote the application of International Humanitarian Law, Refugee Law and related human rights.

Visibility

- Intensify efforts within Switzerland to ensure regular and transparent communication about SDC's multilateral humanitarian aid and to reinforce support among the Swiss population, cantons and political community.
- Raise SDC-HA's visibility within the multilateral system, for example by seconding more personnel to partner organizations and by ensuring public acknowledgement of its donor role.

IMPLEMENTATION AIMS

Working effectively with multilateral partners

- Select partner organizations according to specific criteria.
- Focus commitment by classifying partners into three priority categories.
- Concentrate cooperation on specific objectives linked to its priority themes with a planned allocation of financial and human resources.

Making the best use of resources

Human resources

- Review and redefine the role of the SHA Unit in multilateral humanitarian aid.
- Raise the visibility and presence of SDC-HA and Swiss personnel within multilateral partner organizations.
- Select themes for multilateral dialogue and for involvement in standard-setting that best utilize the specialist knowledge and skills of SDC-HA staff.
- Build capabilities through specialized training, field visits, internal rotation of personnel and targeted recruitment and by promoting mutual learning and exchange of multilateral and bilateral experience.
- Strengthen internal systems for knowledge management to exploit and build on the collective experience, best practices and lessons learned in all aspects of humanitarian aid.

Funding

- Emphasize the quality of projects supported by earmarked contributions, with regular review of their efficiency and effectiveness.
- Continue to allocate funds in a transparent manner, informing partner organizations of core-funding decisions before the beginning of each year and of earmarked contributions early in the year.

Achieving harmonization within SDC and other Government offices

- Ensure internal coherence between bilateral and multilateral programmes and between SDC's multilateral commitments in development and humanitarian aid.
- Promote greater awareness and involvement of SDC Cooperation Offices in multilateral activities.
- Build closer relationships with the Swiss Confederation missions in Geneva, Rome, Brussels, Vienna and New York.
- Maintain regular exchanges with relevant federal departments, when appropriate through theme-specific working groups.

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- 11 **Advocacy guidelines**. Bern, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation – Humanitarian Aid, 2004.

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Partnerships for the future. Bern, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, 2003.

Switzerland's international cooperation: annual report 2004. Bern, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, 2005.

Visibilitäts-Konzept:







Humanitäre Hilfe des Bundes: grössere Wirksamkeit durch Sichtbarkeit.

Bern, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation - Humanitarian Aid, 2003.

SDC publications are available in several languages and can be ordered or downloaded from the SDC website (www.deza.ch).

Summary information on main partner organizations

Listed in order of SDC-HA's financial support in 2004.

Partner organization	Organization's mandate	SDC-HA cooperation	SDC-HA contribution 2004	
			Total	General
ICRC (www.icrc.org) 	Protection and aid of those affected by war and internal violence; in conflict situations, coordination of international relief activities of International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement; promotion of humanitarian law and international humanitarian principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial contributions – Secondments – Member of ICRC Donor Support Group (Chair 2005–2006) – Bilateral dialogue 	92.4	69.5
WFP (www.wfp.org) 	United Nations agency combating global hunger: provision of food aid to save lives in war, civil conflict and natural disasters and in the longer term to promote economic and social development; promotion of world-wide food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial contributions and food (grain, dairy products) – Secondments – Participation in Executive Board (rotating as Member or Observer) – Bilateral dialogue 	37.8	1.5
UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch) 	Leadership and coordination of international action to protect those fleeing war, persecution or violation of human rights; safeguarding refugees' rights and well-being; promotion of durable solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial contributions – Secondments – Member of Executive Committee (ExCom) – Bilateral dialogue 	29.9	13.5
UNRWA (www.un.org/unrwa) 	Provision of emergency relief and basic services (education, health care and social welfare) to about 4.1 million registered Palestinian refugees living in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial contributions – Participant in the Major Donor and Host country Meetings (MDHM) – Bilateral dialogue – Funding of liaison office in Geneva 	14.0	12.0
OCHA (ochaonline.un.org) 	Coordination of humanitarian response of United Nations system in complex emergencies and natural disasters; policy development; humanitarian advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial contributions – Secondments – Member of Donor Support Group (Chair 2003–2004) – Bilateral dialogue 	6.5	1.2
ISDR (www.unisdr.org) 	United Nations focal point for coordination of strategies and programmes for disaster reduction; provision of forum for inter-institutional dialogue and information exchange on disaster prevention/reduction; policy development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial contributions – Secondments – Member of ISDR Support Group (Chair since the creation of the Group 2002) – Bilateral dialogue 	0.65	—

2004 (CHF millions)		CH donor ranking	SDC-HA objectives	Comments
Specific	Food			
22.9	—	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Specific support for ICRC core activities – More intensive policy dialogue and exchange on operational approaches – More secondments based on MoU* 	ICRC has special position, receiving about a third of the entire humanitarian aid budget, or a half of SDC-HA's multilateral contributions; long-standing understanding that the Swiss Confederation provides about half the ICRC headquarters budget
18.1	18.2	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Better linkage of food aid with other forms of aid to ensure food security – More secondments based on MoU – More Swiss professionals in WFP (e.g. through Junior Professional Officer training programme) 	Largest global humanitarian agency; the Swiss Confederation will be an Executive Board Member 2005–2008 and Observer 2009–2010
16.4	—	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Specific support for UNHCR's core activities in refugee' protection – More intensive policy dialogue and exchange on operational approaches – Increase secondments based on MoU* 	SDC-HA focuses on strengthening UNHCR's protection mandate and favours reinforcing institutional arrangements with appropriate partners for reintegration and development-related activities
2.0	—	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increased efficiency of UNRWA; better integration in United Nations system – Rapid and targeted support in emergencies – Improved donor coordination 	SDC-HA involvement is coordinated with other divisions in SDC (especially Middle East–North Africa division) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Political divisions III and IV and Directorate of Public International Law)
5.3	—	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Stronger role of OCHA in humanitarian coordination in emergencies, in advocacy and in defining policies – Support through secondments in strategically important areas – Greater awareness of needs in civilian-military cooperation 	OCHA coordination function carried out primarily through IASC and Consolidated Appeals Process; SDC-HA considers this mandate strategically vital for international humanitarian aid, especially in areas of preparedness, emergency relief and advocacy
—	—	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More efficient ISDR Secretariat, especially in role as catalyst or clearing-house for disaster reduction activities – Better integration of ISDR in United Nations system, including improved collaboration with UNDP and stronger connections with other multilateral networks (e.g. the ProVention Consortium hosted by IFRC) 	ISDR is both a strategy that combines the strengths of key players through the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and an institutional entity in the form of the Inter-Agency Secretariat

*MoU, memorandum of understanding



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EU-ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee of the United Nations
ICDO	International Civil Defence Organisation
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ILO	International Labour Organization
INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
NATO/EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	Development Assistance Committee of OECD
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDC-HA	SDC's Department of Humanitarian Aid and SHA
SHA	Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization